

Seeking Jonathan Green

Written by Margaret Evans

Wednesday, 08 May 2013 08:48

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Lowcountry artist Jonathan Green will be at the Red Piano Too Art Gallery signing the newly released book "Seeking" on May 17th from 1:30 ♦ 3:30 pm. "Seeking" is a compilation of poetry and praise inspired by the art of Jonathan Green. Twenty-nine different authors and poets were inspired to write about Green's work.</p>

Edited by Kwame Dawes and Marjory Wentworth, this collection features sixteen color paintings by Green in addition to a preface on the history of the project, information on the painting "Seeking," and an artist's statement.</p><p>A prolific author and editor in myriad genres, Kwame Dawes has written sixteen collections of poetry, most recently Back of Mount Peace and Wheels. Dawes won an Emmy Award for his poetry and reporting on HIV/AIDS in his native Jamaica, and he is also the recipient of a Pushcart Prize, the Forward Poetry Prize, and the Hollis Summer Poetry Prize. Dawes is the Glenna Luschei Editor of Prairie Schooner and a Chancellor's Professor of English at the University of

Nebraska-Lincoln.
South Carolina Poet Laureate Marjory Wentworth's poems have been nominated for the Pushcart Prize four times. Her collections of poetry include "Noticing Eden," "Despite Gravity," "What the Water Gives Me," and "The Endless Repetition of an Ordinary Miracle." Wentworth is also the author of an award-winning children's book, "Shackles," and of "Taking a Stand: The Evolution of Human Rights," with Juan E. Mendez. In the preface of "Seeking" Wentworth writes:</p><p>A small image placeholder with a margin of 10px and float left.

"This book demonstrates the inherent power of one painting to communicate universal feelings and experiences that unite us all. Jonathan Green's infectious excitement for the arts and his passion for collaboration are embodied by this project. His painting "Seeking" deeply touches everyone who sees it, and the stories and poems created in response articulate much of the shared experience.... By bringing people together in celebration, once again Jonathan reminds us that we are not alone on our spiritual journey."</p><p>The best art has the uncanny ability not only to give pleasure, but to inspire a response. The best artists are a force for all art, and renowned Gullah artist Jonathan Green's work has inspired a wide range of responses from artists around the world. In "Seeking" we see how Green's art prompts works of poetry, prose, and memoir. It's evocative power lies in the intimacy of this dialogue, which speaks to the shared sense of landscape and culture that Green stirs in these writers, ranging from close friends and fellow artists from his home state of South Carolina to nationally established authors who regard Green's work as an important cultural institution. The contributors have allowed themselves to be challenged by Green's brilliance, his honesty, his intense spirituality, and his deep love of people. Inspired by a personal quest toward induction into a spiritual community, Green's painting "Seeking" is rich with history, myth, and truth. The writers in this collection have found fertile ground for their own responses to Green's work, and the result is an engaging and enlivening chorus of celebratory voices.</p><p>Accompanying Green at the signing will be Saint Helena Island resident and author of "Amadeus the Leghorn Rooster," Deloris B. Nevils. She is also one of the contributors to "Seeking."
Commenting on the book, American poet and Virginia Tech professor Nikki Giovanni wrote:
"Art is as necessary as wine to our happiness. Each has a special place and, properly used, makes our days more gentle, our touch more loving, our loving more perfect. Jonathan Green and poems are challenge and caress; query and conclusion; that which is sought and SEEKING. We bathe in and drink this water. We watch it unfurl. It is so refreshing. We exhale."</p><p>In further

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comments, Simmons College, Michael Weaver wrote: "The writings in "Seeking" celebrate the visionary art of Jonathan Green, a member of the Gullah culture whose body of work affirms the sacred and the spiritual as spaces that are alive. In the Gullah culture, a pilgrimage into the world of nature evokes God's presence in the dreams of the seeker, and the poems and prose works in this collection celebrate that journey, that faith, and that hope. Inspired by Green, the writers in this collection take us back time and again to the scared place in our interiors. The world of nature is a dwelling place for the divine that lives both inside us and outside of us. The dangers lie everywhere, according to Green's work, but so do the signals of how to cherish the "ways of being" that account for resilience. This is a tender collection marked by what inspired it, an abiding faith in the beauty of what is in the woods and the truthfulness of what the woods are."

Gallery owner, Mary Inabinett Mack said, "We are extremely pleased to have Jonathan come to the Red Piano Too and sign his book." The signing is free and open to the public. Try not to miss this extraordinary opportunity to meet nationally recognized artist and Lowcountry native Jonathan Green. For information call the gallery at (843) 838-2241 or email: Redpianotoo@islc.net.

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