

Billy Collins & Aimee Mann: An Evening of Poetry, Acoustic Music, and Conversation



In 2014, we created an experimental program that fused spoken word and musical entertainment, joining former US Poet Laureate Billy Collins with Academy Award-nominated singer-songwriter Aimee Mann.

Format of the event:

Billy Collins, Aimee Mann, and Aimee's bass player Paul Bryan take the stage, and Billy says a few words about how they met in 2011 at a Poetry Night event at the White House hosted by the Obamas. The two of them reminisce about the event and then Billy leads off by reading a few poems. Aimee (with accompaniment by Paul Bryan) then sings a few songs. Between these "sets," Billy and Aimee exchange a bit of entertaining commentary about each other's work, offering insights into the differences and similarities between writing poetry and lyrics, their writing processes, who they are writing for, etc. Aimee takes a poem of Billy's and sets it to music to demonstrate how it might be done, what works about it, what doesn't... The evening is a harmonious volley of poetry, music, and commentary on both. Billy brings poems are often full of humor and thoughtful delight; Aimee presents lyrics and music that are rich and moving; together they create a confluence of their two distinct audiences -- audiences that otherwise might not have converged but who leave the evening enchanted with the discovery of a new favorite artist.

Links:

Billy Collins

<http://barclayagency.com/collins.html>

Aimee Mann

<http://www.aimeemann.com/>

Santa Rosa: <http://tickets.wellsfargocenterarts.org/single/eventDetail.aspx?p=1278>

Press Democrat article: <http://www.pressdemocrat.com/article/20140418/entertainment/140419537>