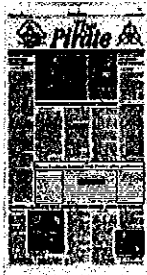


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Berea freshmen interact with Poetry Alive performers

by Leah Rees

When teachers inform students that they are to recite poetry in class, it is often followed by the grumbles and groans of uninterested teenagers. The interactive program of Poetry Alive has discovered a new way to encourage student interest in poetry.

On Nov. 1, the Berea Community freshman class had the honor of participating in a Poetry Alive production held in the Kennedy Theater. Former skeptical students became enthralled by the poems when they were acted out before them.

Founded in Black Mountain, NC, in 1984, Poetry Alive performers have worked to bring poetry across the nation in new ways. Traveling teams of two actors visit schools and other locations bringing poetry through workshops, performances, and classroom follow-ups. Every year, around 2,000 performances are given to approximately 600,000 students. The Poetry Alive actors who visited Berea Community were Anita Ross and Alan Malone.

"I really loved the program; the actors were very vibrant and really engaged the audience. They read poetry from all eras from modern to Shakespeare. I really hope they come again," said Ms. Jody Flara, high school drama and English teacher.

The mission of the Poetry Alive program is to engage students in a new presentation of poetry. Actors recite and act out the poems while the audience watches. Some of the poems even included interaction with the audience.

The event was organized by Linda Taylor, the school Gear Up coordinator. This program was funded by the Gear Up program, which is a grant provided to schools in six year intervals which help to prepare students for postsecondary schools.

During the presentation, Berea freshmen Sabastian Rose, Nathan Vaughn, Bradley Dean, Josh Hoffman, Brandon Knight were all actors in the poem of "Casey at the Bat." Mr. Todd Baldwin, a high school social studies teacher, also had a chance to "sit in" on a love poem.