

Speaking Out

This isn't poetry of the page
 This is... is this?. This is...
 Me reaching out to gently touch you

I have been looking for my voice

In their voice my voice stuttering, other voices merging to
 shouts uttering muttering confusion
 jamming my words
 leaving world noise crashing into me
 It shuts me down

Everyone pretends
 to be something else
 People trying to be: loudest, sweetest, prettiest, smartest
 est est est, always est
 pretending to be est

I have been looking for my voice
 to get attention
 my voice trying to be someone else
 Being taught to make noise is to feel alive
 Pretending to be
 est, smoothest, est coolest, est est est
 Those est actions might speak louder than words
 but they aren't me

I don't want
 noise
 I want, to float
 Words like wind, to move, just to move
 I need my voice to reach out... as me

To find my voice
 I will change the rules
 shift the world
 with gentle words
 lift the world
 so you might hear what I have to say

I have been looking for my voice
 Because without it
 I am alone

I am not alone
 Speaking now quietly
 It becomes possible to hear... you
 Its hearing you...
 You hearing me...
 In sharing
 That alone goes away

In sharing...
 I found my voice

===== Paths =====

Why live pretending to be someone else?

To learn of myself, I explored spoken word¹ poetry. On one level, becoming a spoken word poet was an interesting choice, as later I remembered, oh yah: I have this lisp. I know I have a lisp, but it doesn't define me to me. Over the years the lisp has relaxed quite a bit, to be very minimal, but it's a part of me and while I never hear my lisp, at times I remember and smile knowing it's there to distinctly mark me. It's funny, I remember being eight years old and purposely making the decision to keep the lisp. I knew it was wrong to have others tell me how I should define myself.

The importance of my becoming a spoken word artist was to learn how to focus an experience into a coherent topic for direct communication with others². My written-word poetry in comparison was turned inward for self communication. Over time my poetry has merged into combining aspects of both spoken word and written word. The spoken word poetry tends to expose my actions and feelings to the world (body and spirit), while the written poetry moves with the spinning of my mind. Combining these two forms helps me discover a more complete expression of my own nature.

The lesson I learned from being both a spoken and written word artist is how we are each a poem of our own personal expression. Our portraits glimmer from many different angles of expression. Finding ourselves is as much a matter of speaking out loud, as to think and accept what we feel inside. We have to speak to be heard, for silent we only take upon our internal meaning, and the corresponding nature that others will assign to us.

Read the poems in the book aloud and within your mind and you will discover different meanings in each poem. The poem in this section especially calls out to be read aloud to a mirror, to an audience. Discover that your own nature calls out to be spoken for.

- 1) Spoken word poetry is quite different than written poetry. The word choices and grammar are changed entirely for verbal impact. When spoken, the poet mixes in body language for additional meaning. The words tend to be very exposing while nuances are carried thru voice tone. Another difference is that the mental medium is quite different: a listening mind interprets language differently than the mind which reads a poem. Overall the spoken word style is a very vibrant, dynamic performance art which reveals our humanity in raw and cutting angles. Performing spoken word becomes a disturbingly honest opening of one's soul revealed for all to see and hear. When done to form, it isn't acting; it's performance art of a very personal nature.
- 2) If someone else cannot understand my writing, then it is often true that I don't truly understand my poetry.