

## SLAM

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**Rock(y) the Mic**, did not attend Friday's slam. Heiser, who opened for keynote speaker Marc Bamuthi Joseph, said she did not know about the slam till two days from the event.

"I wish we had known about it in advance," Heiser said.

Before performing, Head gave the audience a synopsis of the spoken word club.

"Rock(y) the Mic meets at 7 p.m. every Thursday in the student org suite," said Head. "We meet there and geek out about literature and poetry and it's a lot of fun. There's also free food. That's why I go."

After a reluctant audience member stepped up to host the event, a sign-in sheet made rounds through the potential poets and the event proceeded. The participation, excitement and viewership did not match the events put on by Rock(y) the Mic, according to Sandford.

"The slam we put on last semester was massive," Sandford said. "It was nothing like this."

**Erik Gregori, 21, a visiting poet from New York**, said the event met all his expectations.

"I've never read my poems on stage like this," Gregori said. "I go back and forth between love, god and socially-conscious stuff. Reading poetry is a great way to be truly awake."

## POET

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"I don't want to be in the dark. I don't want to be dark. I don't want to be. I don't even want to be," Joseph said before he jumped up on stage to tap dance.

According to Joseph, when the slaves were first brought to America, they used tap dancing as a way to recreate the sound of African drums. He said his father did not approve of him learning to tap dance back in 1984.

Joseph then went on to speak about family, community, equality and common ground.

**Tamiko Murray, a women, gender and sexuality studies lecturer at UNCA**, said she loved his connections with environmental justice and specifically how Joseph reaches out to communities of color.

"His statement that a segregated social movement would mean we all lose, really spoke out to me," Murray said.

Students in attendance said they were surprised by the performance.

"I really didn't know what to expect coming into this," said **Valentin DeLeon, a senior mechatronics student at UNCA**. "I came because I have an internship at the student environmental center and I'm working on conference to diversify environmental movement, specifically focused in western North Carolina."

Joseph's speech included a lot about the importance of family and the struggling relationship he has had with his father.



Photo by Amanda Cline - Staff Photographer

Marc Bamuthi Joseph spoke to an audience in Lipinsky Auditorium last Thursday night.

Murray said she enjoyed his use of personal testimony and experience to discuss social justice and putting it in a poetic rhythm made it even more entertaining.

"I think he was using it more as a tool," DeLeon said. "I think his message was much bigger and the poems were to keep people interested, but he was very artful with his words

and movements."

Murray said she thinks students should explore Joseph's works.

"He is inspirational, he's an innovator, and I love how he used the concept of home and community to educate about social and environmental issues," Murray said. "Students who were not able to attend should explore his work because he is a brilliant thinker."

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