



Poems for Peace 2012 Summary Report

OUTLINE OF EVENT:

SICA, as part of a global coalition of NGOs working with UK's nonprofit, Peace One Day, launched a global initiative, "Poems for Peace," to celebrate the UN's International Day of Peace, September 21. SICA's focus was on engaging people of all ages and ethnicities in something anyone could do — something that also celebrated peace.

So SICA invited people all over the world to actively participate in celebrating Peace Day by "sharing, singing, speaking, shouting, writing, reciting and celebrating aloud Poems for Peace" on Peace Day.

Anyone and everyone could be involved. Poets, poetry lovers, non-poets — just people. Our focus was on creating a way for people to easily participate by actively sharing poems people love — their own or their favorites — with others. Poems that celebrate or encourage peace. Events took place in theaters, cafes, cabarets, parks, homes, churches, schools, public plazas. Some were planned and some were more spontaneous. Events were open to anyone, and there was total engagement at all the events. And all ages participated.

We also asked people to try to document what they did: to write about it; to take pictures and videos and to post them on our special facebook page that we created especially for the occasion, www.facebook.com/poemsforpeaceoneday, or to comment and share poems on our special website for the occasion, <http://www.poems-for-peace.org>.

SICA also hosted a parallel poetry competition with a \$500 prize for the most outstanding poem for peace (heretofore unpublished). Award-winning poet, [Cyrus Cassells](#) served as the final judge for the poems. The winner was announced October 19, 2012.

2000 bookmarks announcing the competition and Poems for Peace events were circulated to bookstores and poetry groups in the US as well as to local Subud groups. 200 posters announcing the program at the Long Center in Austin were also distributed throughout the city

of Austin, and hundreds of flyers were emailed and distributed everywhere. (pdfs of [bookmarks](#) and flyers attached. Flyers are in [English](#) and [Spanish](#).)

See also:

www.subud-sica.org/index.php?hkat=5&ukat=1

www.subud-sica.org/index.php?hkat=7&ukat=34

www.facebook.com/poemsforpeaceoneday

<http://www.facebook.com/groups/poesieperlpace>

www.poems-for-peace.org

A SAMPLING OF SICA POEMS FOR PEACE EVENTS THAT TOOK PLACE ALL AROUND THE WORLD ON PEACE DAY 2012:

- **SICA Poems for Peace Events in USA:** Events took place in Austin, TX; Indianapolis, IN; Chico, CA; Los Angeles, CA; Portland, OR; Seattle, WA; Santa Fe, NM; Chicago, IL.
 - **Austin, Texas:** Poems for Peace event at The Long Center for the Performing Arts in Austin, Texas. Well loved local Arts Critic, Performer and Theater Director, Robert Faires together with his extremely talented actress/wife, two very gifted and popular local performers, and two local poets shared poems at a free lunchtime event at the Long Center for the Performing Arts, also known as “Austin’s Creative home. This event also got a lot of local media coverage. [Click here to see video of this event.](#) ([pdf of poster](#) and [show program](#) attached)
 - **Indianapolis, Indiana:** Poetry, Song, Story and a Concert Performance of Edward McGuire's "Martyr" with Csaba Erdélyi (played viola for the soundtrack of “Amadeus”) at the All Souls Unitarian Church in Indianapolis, IN. "Martyr" was inspired by the events in Northern Ireland in the 1970s. Program also featured presentations by the poet laureate of Indiana as well as the head of the local Center for Peace and Justice. (This event was on the Sunday following Peace Day).
 - **Santa Fe, New Mexico:** Prize-winning poet, Victor di Suvero, and friends shared Poems for Peace at Pennywhistle Press, Santa Fe, NM, 12-2PM. (Pennywhistle gave SICA the Many Voices One Heart image we've used on all our posters, flyers, bookmarks, this page, etc.)
 - **Chico, California:** In Chico, CA, SICA together with local community college, poetry group, and Center for Peace and Justice hosted an event that included writing and sharing Poems for Peace.
 - **Los Angeles, California:** In Los Angeles, a few people gathered in the park near the Museum of Art to share poems with one another. One member then went to public libraries and randomly placed copies of poems on the theme of peace in library books.

- **SICA Poems for Peace, England:** An Evening of Poetry and Song featuring Adrienne Thomas and Kadarijah Gardiner (aka Jean Harvey who starred in original production of The Mousetrap in UK) at Café des Artistes, in Lewes, UK.
- **SICA Poems for Peace, Italy:** Multiple Events:
 - A meditation on Peace with Lucio Mustafa followed by distribution and reading of Poems for Peace at Water Clock, Pincio-Villa Borghes
 - A poetry collective experience and reading/feeling of poems in a Roman terrace near St. Peter, Rome
 - An interactive poetry installation in which attendees write and share short poems in response to pictures of Iraqi children affected by the recent war. Monterotondo
 - A performance in Anticoli Corrado, a former slaughterhouse. Features Brunella Pandya and a “poetry jam.”
 - Poetry evening in Gaeta, Piazza della Libertà. The seventh heaven and Glory Sapio have free extemporaneous poetry with Antonio Sanna, Gloria Sapio, Maurizio Shola Birgitt Starp Repetto, Anticolane Women Association, Piero Splendors, Tullia Ranieri Emiliano Pannunzi Proietti, and many others
 - Sing for Peace: Sandra Causing offers 11.30 a.m. en route to Via Indipendenza hours 19.00 path towards "Gaeta Vecchia" read verses, exchanging smiles, walking together, hugging, roundabouts, squares off premises, in downtown features small squares ...
 - Corigliano Scalo. Vintage Cafe. Anna Lauria offers her space with visual poems on peace, photographs and paintings of good authors, a floral exhibition dedicated to peace, peace cake, readings and poems scattered everywhere, music, songs, artists, photographers, poets, philosophers, thinkers, supporters of peace, etc.
 - An interactive performance created by Ivan Cozzi with an installation and a chain of voices that send a message of peace throughout the valley. In the center will be a mandala that echoes the SICA star starting from the word peace. In the Poet's Quarry in Carrara where Fernanda Pivano scrawled lines from the Beat poets of the world and cried out against the events of September 11 in the US.
- **SICA Poems for Peace, France:** Artist/puppeteer, Erica Sapir, (Puppeteers without Borders) created an interactive poetry installation in the lavoir of her ancient French village. (A lavoir is where women used to come to do their washing. Now a lavoir is where children have water battles and posters of candidates are featured in election times). She hung art poems, like laundry, in the lavoir and filmed reactions.
- **SICA Poems for Peace, Germany:** Maria Ismanah Schulze-Vorberg, Poetry of Light artist and photographer, hosted an event in her home community of Koenigswinter.
- **SICA Poems for Peace, New Zealand:** A group of native Spanish speakers met at the home of Matthew and Rosario Moir in Auckland, New Zealand, over a nice dinner to

share poems they loved as children — and to honor the poets whose works they loved.

- **SICA Poems for Peace, Australia:** Three Events
 - A Poetry Pop Up Event took place in the Darebin Parklands in Melbourne, Australia. This event also coordinated with Be The Peace — a pulse of meditation and prayer on Peace Day. (Be The Peace was also another member of the coalition of NGOs working with Peace One Day.)
 - Children at a school in Gillie, Queensland, illustrated images to accompany words: cooperate, kindness, love, friendship...etc. The music teacher then put a song together to the tune of a well-known children's song, and the children sang the song on the school parade and put a display in the school library of their work. (You can see the children singing on our facebook page: www.facebook.com/poemsforpeaceoneday)
 - An informal gathering took place in the home of the Fravals in Melbourne to share poems.
 - Poems for Peace was acknowledged with the reading of a Rumi poem, This Marriage, during the celebration of Marriage between Bjorn Vaughn and Lalita Geiger, 21 September 2012, in Perth Western Australia

- **SICA Poems for Peace, Ukraine, Russia, Moldova, and Lithuania**
 - Cherkassy hosted a poetry evening to share Russian and Ukrainian favorites (Anna Akhmatova, Boris Pasternak, Iosif Brodsky, Taras Shevchenko, Lesya Ukrainka, Vitaliy Korotych) as well as original works by Elena Gusak-Ershova, Volodymyr Pysmennyi, and Roberta Kalinnihenko. Many of the latter were also songs.
 - There were also events in Moscow, Moldova, and Lithuania, but we do not have all the details.

- **SICA Poems For Peace Award:** SICA also hosted a parallel poetry competition with a \$500 prize for the most outstanding poem for peace (heretofore unpublished). Cyrus Cassells

IMPACT:

All the groups that participated want to do “bigger and better” next year. There was something surprisingly special about sharing poems. It seemed to really connect people deeply to their own deep place inside which can be a real source of peace-building.

Everywhere people's feeling were stirred, in a very positive way, about the importance of building peace and nonviolence in the world – and the awareness that it starts with oneself. And there was a real feeling of love and respect for one another, among the speakers and listeners at every event. Special.

I don't know if this glowing feeling was intensified by the fact that you didn't have to be a poet or someone special to share your love of a poem. Something I read suggests that poems are

one of the few art forms that are not easily commodified. It's easy to turn most works of arts into commodities these days — which puts them closer to a material realm. Does this put poems on a more compassionate, human level? I don't know. But people were really deeply touched.

Here in Austin we are already in discussion with Austin Community College, University of Texas and people from Texas State University in San Marcos about hosting a pan-college/university event across central Texas next year on Peace Day (and perhaps a few extra days around Peace Day) that begins and ends with Poems for Peace but that also includes sessions on peace-building, with speakers from peace-studies departments, philosophy, etc.

We also had quite a bit of good media coverage here in Austin. That may be in part due to my having been an active member of the arts community locally for some years, so know lots of people and they know me — and they like me as I like them. So that helps.

Also, as a result of seeing the impact that poetry can have, and that sharing poetry can have with a non-poetry public, we are in conversation with an Indian filmmaker about launching an educational poetry teaching initiative, in India, using the making of poems to help children traumatized by violence, poverty, etc., recover their sense of self and self-worth.

SOME TESTIMONIALS:

"I hope we're seeing the birth of a new Austin tradition" — Robert Faires, arts editor, Austin Chronicle.

"I'm the woman who spoke to you after that most wonderful reading last Friday — which by the way — has sustained my body, heart and soul all week." — audience person at Austin event

"And in conclusion RK sang her own poems accompanying herself on guitar also. . . and it was SO sincere, from the very depth of her soul that we were impressed tremendously..." — audience person in Ukraine.

"All blessings to you and thank you again for organizing this wonderful event. And thank you for the light that shines through you." — another person in Austin audience

"I wish you could have one of these every day." — Lowell Bartholomee who filmed Austin event.

"Hi, please excuse me....but I read about Peace Day and your Poems one Day page thru the JES/JIS group. My school's music teacher, whipped up words to a known tune. The children illustrated images to accompany words: cooperate, kindness, love, friendship...etc. We sang the song on our school parade and put a display in our school library of their work. Congratulations on your "continuing" to teach us all to be better folk. Cheers, Fiona Cole, (nee Markgraaff) Class of '80." (a former student of SICA chair, Latifah Taormina when she taught at Jakarta International School.)The event Fiona describes was in Queensland. It's on our Facebook page.)

MEDIA COVERAGE

We hired Hook 'em Marketing of Austin, Texas to help us with social media, press coverage, interviews and releases. We also hired Have Art Will Travel in Seattle for Outreach to centers and bookstores. Both did additional pro bono work. Basic [press release](#) for Austin is attached.

Sampling of coverage:

<http://austin.broadwayworld.com/article/Subud-International-Cultural-Association-Hosts-POEMS-FOR-PEACE-921-20120917>

<http://www.uia.be/node/864792>

<http://austin.ynn.com/content/entertainment/arts/288393/arts-minute--sept--19> (TV (500,000 people reached via this TimeWarner station))

http://austinist.com/2012/09/13/poems_for_peace_day.php

We also had radio interviews on KUT in Austin, TX and also on KHSU in Arcata, CA (both are national public radio stations. KUT's listening audience is 600,000; Arcata's is 200,000).

twitter.com/poems4peace