

Seattle City Council

Public Safety, Government Relations, and Arts Committee Meeting

Tuesday, 2:00 PM, May 15, 2007

Words' Worth

The Poetry Program of the Seattle City Council

Curated by **Brian McGuigan**

Today's poet is **Crysta Casey**

Crysta Casey was a Marine Corps journalist when she declared herself a "Resident Poet." She was locked up in a military psych ward for "being under the delusion that she's a poet." Crysta has been writing poetry ever since.

His Self-Portrait

by Crysta Casey

A self-portrait hangs
above him as he sleeps
restlessly on the mattress.
His legs kick like a horse's
pawing the dirt, *clump, clump*,
tangled in a blue quilt.
In the portrait, his face glows orange,
the background purple,
the complimentary colors
of a sunset in Vietnam.
But the eyes, the eyes
(and the heart he painted
black below the left breast),
suffer the sorrow
of a drafted man
who didn't want to kill
and later met the refugees,
strung electric wire
for the relatives of those
he bombed. His legs run away

with his dreams, tangled
in the blue quilt of night.

*I woke once to my husband
bare ass naked on all fours,
pawing the wooden floor
with his bowie knife.*

*I called him
out of sleep as he fought
the dreamed enemy,
and later, fully awake,
he walked into the woods
with a bottle of whiskey
and all his pills.
After three months, a father
and his son were looking
for fossils and found his bones.*

My lover's eyes
are closed tonight
beneath blankets,
and though he is not at peace,
I will let him sleep.

-- end --