

## **FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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### **Massive Global Movement Gives Voice to Local Issues through Music, Art, Photography, Poetry, Mime and More**

*Over 800 Events Planned in 115 Countries for*

*100 Thousand Poets for Change*

Santa Rosa, Calif. (September 19, 2012) – September 29, 2012 marks the second annual global event for 100 Thousand Poets for Change, a grassroots organization that brings communities together to call for environmental, social, and political change within the framework of peace and sustainability. An event that began primarily with poet organizers, 100 Thousand Poets for Change has grown into an interdisciplinary coalition with year round events which includes musicians, dancers, mimes, painters and photographers from around the world.

Local issues are still key to this massive global event as communities around the world raise their voices on issues such as homelessness, global warming, education, racism and censorship, through concerts, readings, lectures, workshops, flash mobs, theater performances and other actions.

But these locally focused events have taken on a more continuous and expansive form through the new disciplines represented this year. For example, photographers are making a long-term project out of the event; they will document the involvement of their communities and explore connections with the broader global issues to turn into future exhibits. More and more organizers and participants of the one day, annual event are making plans to continue their actions after September 29. Many have formed groups in their cities that will continue to work year-round towards the goals their community seeks.

“Peace and sustainability are major concerns worldwide, and the guiding principles for this global event,” said Michael Rothenberg, Co-Founder of 100 Thousand Poets for Change. “We are in a world where it isn't just one issue that needs to be addressed. A common ground is built through this global compilation of local stories, which is how we create a true narrative for discourse to inform the future.”

More than 200 hundred bands will be performing around the world, from Los Angeles, New Orleans and Detroit to Serbia, Nigeria and Italy. The musicians involved in this movement are once again using their songs and performances to try to communicate their concerns to the world. As Ross Altman, singer-songwriter, activist and educator, reminds us: “from Plato, who banned

[musicians] from the Republic, to Putin, who had Russian punk band members of Pussy Riot arrested, charged, tried, convicted and sentenced to two years in prison for a song prayer, musicians throughout history have been regarded as a danger and threat to change the social order.”

In addition to the hundreds of musicians expressing themselves through song, numerous Mimes for Change events in Egypt, Turkey and Uruguay will take place in addition to the day long poetry festivals in Los Angeles, Guatemala City, Pune, India, La Plata, Argentina and Genoa, Italy; thousands of musicians, poets and artists are participating around the world, totaling nearly 800 events globally, including:

- 25 different events in the San Francisco Bay Area, the birthplace of 100 Thousand Poets for Change, including poetry readings by Beat Legend Michael McClure, former US Poet Laureate Robert Hass and other major poets at the famed Watershed Environmental Poetry Festival
- In [New Orleans](#), 15 live bands will perform to raise funds for the APEX Youth Center and Homegrown Harvest Music and Arts Festival
- In Hollywood, Florida, Global Vibes will host an event called, “War Destroys Children’s Lives” at two venues and feature over 15 “Bands for Change”
- Peace On Streets, R.O.A.D., Tasker Elite and SHARP will host performance artists, poets, musicians, hip hop artists and various youth and parent groups who will perform and lead workshops throughout Philadelphia to bring awareness to the ongoing problem of street violence in their city
- Wordstock, a 3-day festival at the Bamboo Arts and Celebration Center in De Leon Springs, FL will include poetry slams, concerts, and an art exhibition focusing on images of war and peace
- The Occupy Wall Street Poetry group kicks off a weekend of events in New York City with a poetry reading at the famous St. Mark’s Poetry Project
- In Jamaica, a week long Street Dub Vibe series called “Tell the Children the Truth” will include concerts, spoken word performances, art exhibits, lectures and workshops to bring attention to the damaging culture of secrecy and denial surrounding the abuse, poverty and illiteracy impacting the nation’s children and destroying their future.
- Poetry and peace gatherings are planned in the strife-torn cities of Kabul and Jalalabad, Afghanistan
- In Cairo and Alexandria, Egypt, poets, musicians and mime artists, in response to violence in the world and the major changes taking place in the Arab World, will perform in public spaces and theaters and explore new ways to communicate

their concerns, and their roles as artists, in influencing the future of their country

- In Volos, Greece, there will be 5 days of poetry and music events, including an exhibition of photography looking at the new phenomenon of homelessness in Greece
- An event in Blackpool, England will celebrate activist poets and writers of past generations through a special performance of *Bullets and Daffodils*, a play about the life of peace poet Wilfred Owen

Organizers and participants are hoping through their actions and events to seize and redirect the political and social dialogue of the day and turn the narrative of civilization towards peace and sustainability. Those that want to get involved can visit [www.100tpc.org](http://www.100tpc.org) to find an event near them or sign up to organize one in their area.

### **About 100 Thousand Poets for Change**

100 Thousand Poets for Change began in Sonoma County, Calif. The official Headquarters' Event will take place at the Arlene Francis Center in downtown Santa Rosa and will feature poetry readings, group meditations, workshops, and music and dance of various styles including hip hop, flamenco, African drums, reggae, salsa, folk and more. The HQ event will also live-stream other 100 Thousand Poets for Change events worldwide. This 3-day event is sponsored by the Peace & Justice Center of Sonoma County and the Sonoma County Arts Council.

Immediately following September 29th, all documentation on the 100TPC.org website, which will include specific event pages with photos, video and other documentation compiled by each city coordinator, will be preserved by Stanford University in California. Stanford recognized 100 Thousand Poets for Change in 2011 as an historical event, the largest poetry reading in history. They will continue to archive the complete contents of 100TPC.org, as part of their digital archiving program LOCKSS.

Co-Founder Michael Rothenberg ([walterblue@bigbridge.org](mailto:walterblue@bigbridge.org)) is a widely known poet, editor of the online literary magazine [Bigbridge.org](http://Bigbridge.org) and an environmental activist based in Northern California. Terri Carrion is a poet, translator, photographer, and editor and visual designer for [BigBridge.org](http://BigBridge.org).

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