

Exploring Contemporary Canadian Voices

the spoken word



Toronto Poetry Slam Team 2007

White Noise Machine (TPST)



- Profane, profound, political – White Noise's poetry swings between baroque and bombastic.
- A regular on Toronto stages, a repeat slam champion, three-time hometown rep in the Canadian Festival of Spoken Word.
- Perilously in love with anyone who is in love with language.
- City hall columnist for Toronto's NOW Magazine, under the bizarre pseudonym [Mike Smith](#)



Before Viewing

White Noise Machine

Before viewing *Advertising*:

- What's your favourite or least favourite commercial? What do you like or dislike about it?
- In what ways are you influenced by ads? Give examples.
- According to the Media Dynamics publication, Media Matters, a typical adult has potential daily exposure to about 600-625 ads in various forms. 272 of these exposures come from the major traditional media (TV, radio, magazines, and newspapers). What might the others be?
- What are some pitfalls of a consumer society?



View *Advertising*

2 minutes, 50 seconds



The image shows a screenshot of a YouTube video player. At the top left is the YouTube logo with the tagline "Broadcast Yourself™". To the right of the logo is a search bar and navigation links for "Home", "Videos", and "Channels". Below the navigation is the video title: "White Noise Machine Slam Round 1, \"Adv Aloud 2007, Canada\"". The video player itself shows a man with glasses and a dark jacket, smiling and looking to the right. Below the video frame is a progress bar with a play button icon on the left and a circular progress indicator.

After Viewing

White Noise Machine

After viewing *Advertising*:

- Whose point of view does White Noise take and why?
- What is the tone of voice White Noise uses? Does he change his tone of voice? Where and why?
 - ▶ Tone is a manner of speaking, writing, or creating that reveals the attitude of the speaker, author or producer towards a subject or audience. Tone may be formal, informal, intimate, solemn, somber, playful, serious, ironic, condescending, etc.
- What techniques does he use to enhance the performance? (e.g., repetition, slang, speed of delivery)
- What is White Noise telling us about advertising in our society? How does it affect us individually and as a society?



- WRITE about how advertising affects your life. Use specific examples of ads. Do you feel these ads make you predisposed to want to buy their products. Why?
- WRITE your own poem, short story or skit that is condescending towards something in our society, like White Noise Machine's parody of advertising. For example, an ad that urges you to buy a 'green' car and save the world when you feel the company really just wants your money.
- PERFORM your piece.



Before Viewing

White Noise Machine

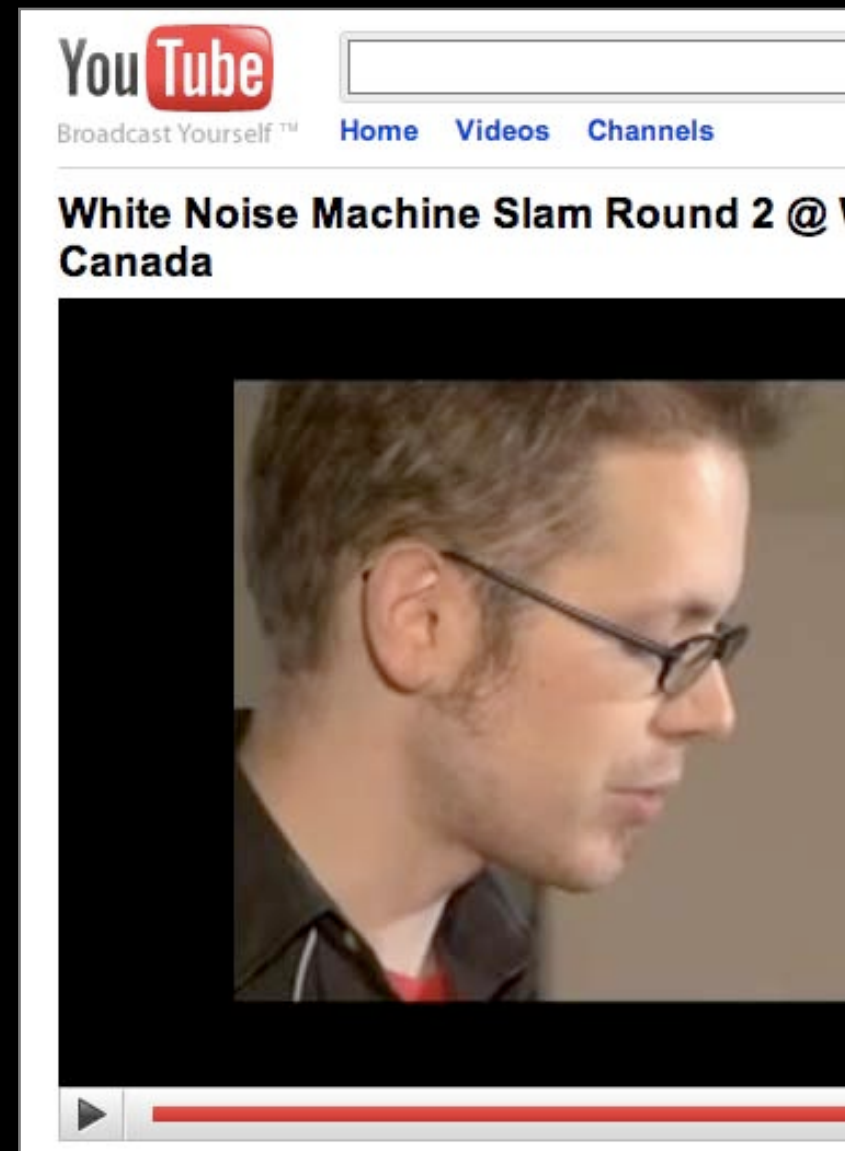
Before viewing *This Poem will Never be Finished*:

- What are your concerns for the future of the world we live in?
- What are your hopes?



View *This Poem*
will Never be
Finished

3 minutes, 45 seconds



After viewing *This Poem will Never be Finished*:

- White Noise reads this piece sitting down, rather than standing and performing from memory. How does the reading affect you differently from his stand-up performance style?
- What are the narrator's fears for his daughter?
- What are his wishes for his daughter?



Activities 1

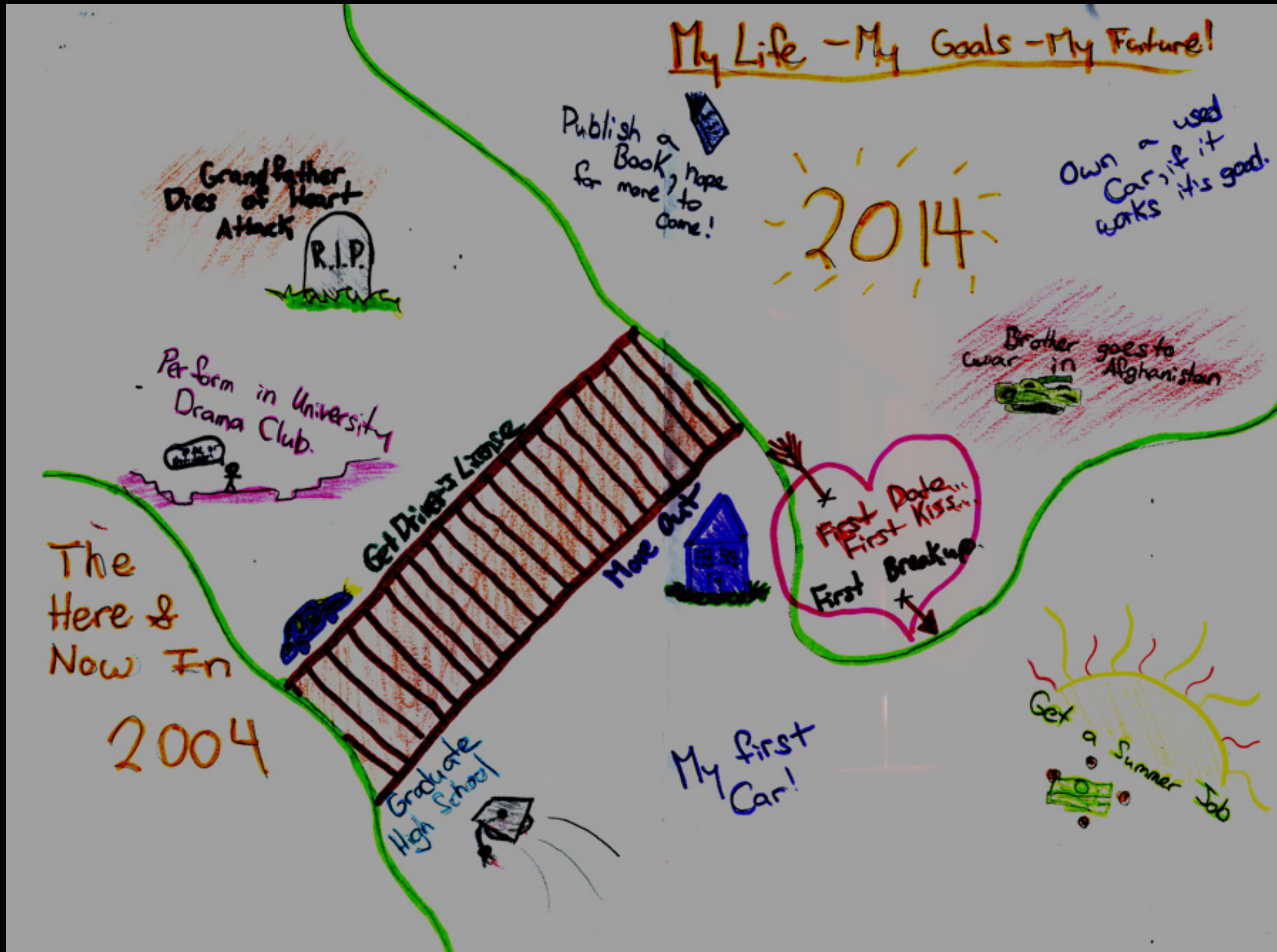
White Noise Machine

- WRITE a letter to a future child of yours (or a child of the future). Include at least 3 fears and 3 wishes.
- WRITE a journal entry responding to this poem. How does the different performance style affect your response to the poem?
- CREATE a mind map of your future, extending out 5-10 yrs. Start with your present and create a pathway of words and images of things that might happen in the world around you, as well as things that you would like to accomplish and things that will affect your life. Remember to put in both good and bad occurrences as well as hopes and fears.
- A mind map is a good way to generate ideas for any type of writing. ([Sample mind map by Elspeth Reid.](#))



Activities 2

White Noise Machine



View *Interview* *with White Noise* *Machine*

5 minutes, 14 seconds



- WRITE a journal entry commenting on something mentioned in the interview, or ask a question that was not in the interview. What more would you like to know about White Noise Machine, aka Mike Smith?



Credits

Videos – Filmed at the 2007 Words Aloud 4 Spoken Word Festival based in Durham, ON. The videos were produced/directed by Liz Zetlin and Myke Dyer.

Words Aloud 4 Festival 2007 – Presented by the Words Aloud Poetry Collective in collaboration with the Durham Art Gallery.

Words Aloud gratefully acknowledges the support of – The Ontario Ministry for Tourism, Heritage Canada, Canada Council for the Arts, Ontario Arts Council, the League of Canadian Poets, the Municipality of West Grey, and our generous sponsors: Mosaic, United Media Arts, Edgehill Country School, Ann Wylie Toal Designs, M'wikwedong Native Cultural Centre, Image Business, Millennia Books, The Garafraxa Street Bookstore, Spruce Ridge School, PEN Canada, The South Grey Bruce Youth Literacy Council, The Chicory Common Cafe, Rogers TV, RVS Drapery, Gary Byers, Dunlop, Johnson & Pust, Barristers & Solicitors, The Hanover Public Library, Above Stedmans, The Métis Centre, The Owen Sound & North Grey Union Public Library, The Colour Jar, Akimbo and our amazing volunteer community.

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