

# BOWERY ARTS + SCIENCE

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## Bowery Poetry Club Announces Sept. 11 Memorial Film Premiere, Reception

*"In times of crisis, poets lose words. Find them here."*



NEW YORK, NY., (Aug. 7, 2014) — Executive Producers Bowery Arts+Science and Kathy Komaroff Goodman announce the U.S. premiere screening of director Nikhil Melnechuk's Sept. 11 memorial documentary short, "Witness Downtown Rising Renga." Hosted by the Bowery Poetry Club at 308 Bowery, 6 p.m. Sept. 8, 2014, the premiere is free and open to the public. A reading and reception will follow.

Melnechuk's pensive film documents New York painter Todd Stone's artistic collaboration in-memoriam with a diverse array of celebrated poets led by Bob Holman. Stone, who has painted ground zero since the morning of Sept. 11, was given two years of studio space on the 48th floor of World Trade Center 7 by developers Silverstein Properties. Stone's work, collected in the series "Downtown Rising—Studies in Resilience," depicts the rise of 1 World Trade Center throughout a decade of healing in downtown Manhattan.

As that decade drew to a close on the eve of the National Sept. 11 Memorial's opening ceremony, Holman and Melnechuk visited Stone's studio with poets Eileen Myles, Patricia Smith, Quincy Troupe, Margret Porter Troupe, Tahani Salah, Jason Blasso, Paolo Javier, Stephen Motika and David Acevedo. There, the poets responded in verse to Stone's paintings and to life amid a shifting downtown landscape. As portrayed in the film, their response took the form of a *Renga*, a traditional Japanese collaborative poem.

"The kind of festive party that I had assumed would occur, didn't," Holman says in the film. "What there was instead was a deep feeling of place." That feeling of place permeates Stone's paintings, the poem and film. Together they create an artistic body of work gesturing toward a profound sense of closure.

"Witness Downtown Rising Renga" premiered at Berlin's ZEBRA Poetry Film Festival in 2012. The film makes its U.S. debut this fall in conjunction with its DVD release, accompanied by the first publication of the *Renga*. A select number of DVD and book packages will be available for purchase at the film's U.S. premiere.

The film is available for early press review at <http://vimeo.com/boweryartsandscience/wdrr>, and its password is: *witness*.

Bowery Arts+Science is a non-profit arts organization based in downtown Manhattan. Founded by Holman in 1995, BAS continues its mission to encourage cooperation among and advancement of artists and cultural workers; to develop and produce works by emerging poets and performers; and to promote the exploration, improvement, and advancement of the arts as a changemaking force in society.

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