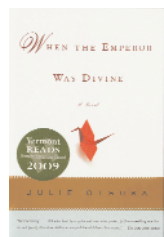


Burlington Book Fest This weekend



Interested in joining other YWP writers who will be blogging about the Burlington Book Festival being held Sept. 25-27?

Want to interview **Julie Otsuka**, author of *When the Emperor was Divine*? Or joining in a discussion group about the book? (The book is the *Vermont Reads* selection sponsored by the Vermont Humanities Council.)

Go to: youngwritersproject.org

For more information about the Burlington Book Festival, which runs Friday through Sunday, go to:

burlingtonbookfestvital.com

Directions

By **Shelby Miller**

Hazen Union School, Grade 11

Left, right,
Up, down,
north, south,
east, west.
So many different directions,
so many different ways to be pulled.
I'm being pulled in every direction
by everyone around me.
I can't think for myself,
can make decisions for myself.
I'm lost in my own head,
my thoughts, emotions,
my own guilt. Everyone has a different
opinion,
everyone has something to say,
some different.
They pull me in one direction,
while someone else pulls me in another.
They don't mean to,
at least I don't think they do,
but they do it,
just the same. I'm so confused
with everything,
I don't know how to sort it all out.
I don't know how to get everything under
control.
I want to fix everything,
be who everyone wants me to be,
but I can't,
and the things they say,
the way they act,
it doesn't help. What if I get pulled in so
many directions,
so many different ways,
that I can't fix it,
I can't get a hold of things again.
Then what?

NOTE: These pieces were written by students who attended this summer's Lake Champlain Chamber Music Festival, led by world-renowned violinist Soovin Kim.

Music and rain

By **Ruby McCafferty** | *Edmunds Middle School, Grade 8*

My favorite part of music
is the
silence
between notes.
That split second of
nothing
when you can hear
a quiet
so pure
it just
steals your
breath
and it's only
made more beautiful
as the sound of rain begins to
softly

whisper down
and that whisper becomes louder
louder
louder
and before I even realize it
the silence is gone
and the rain is
softly thundering
and the melody is so
graceful
as it dances.
No more silence.
There's nothing left but the
music
and
rain.

Soovin Kim

By **Jordan Cannon** | *The Schoolhouse, Grade 6*

Soovin Kim held a free concert at the Firehouse Art Gallery in a room upstairs. The room was filled with people and color. Walls were decorated with paintings and a collage made of wood. People sat in black-backed chairs, wearing pink, red, yellow, blue, green and striped clothes. It was crowded, with chairs filled, people standing in the back, and a line out the door.

He launched the concert by telling the audience about the festival that's going on, and saying how much he liked the blog entries on **youngwriterspro-**

ject.org. He played Bach's Partita No. 2 in d minor, which he thinks is one of the most beautiful pieces Bach wrote.

Watching him play the violin was amazing. He swayed back and forth, reeling back at dramatic parts as though something had hit him, getting louder, softer, faster, slower. His fingers raced along the fingerboard, doing quick chords and unbelievable string crossings. The sound was rich and beautiful.

The audience loved him. He was friendly, and people seemed excited that he was there.

Audience

By **Avni Nahar**

South Burlington High School, Grade 9

(Excerpt: Full story on youngwritersproject.org)

... I look around at the audience, and watch as faces young and old absorb the music. Some nod their heads slightly, others stare. The guy in front of me wags his head enthusiastically. One boy yawns, but we won't talk about him.

My attention goes back to the performers, and after less than half an hour, the [Schubert] Marches are over. The pianists hold the silence for a moment, and then break out into huge smiles. They look relieved and joyful all at once, and just seeing their faces makes me smile too. When they bow, Ignat Solzhenitsyn looks so young, so pleased and proud — almost embarrassed. The music transforms him, I think. And it's true, the music does transform him. Along with everyone else.

The voice

By **Emily Luce**

Champlain Valley Union High School, Grade 9

Yu's voice.

Perfect.

No faults

as she sings her way through
the beautiful German
and vibratos.

Eyes closed,
hair pulled back,
ever so carefully.

As she crescendos,
nothing but volume changes.

Her eyes still closed,
hair still pulled back.

But the tone grows.

GROWS.

To wonderful heights.

The heights never reached before so
beautifully.

Next Prompt

Send us your best work! We publish best work in this section of the Free Press each Wednesday.

Headline. Write an attention-grabbing news headline and then create a story about it.

Alternate: Listening in. Take a moment to listen to conversations at school, home or in a public place such as the hallways, cafeteria, playing field, a restaurant or store. Take some of that dialogue and write a story or poem. Fill in the gaps. **Due Friday**

To see the prompts for the full year and to submit work go to:

youngwritersproject.org



Young Writers Project is an independent nonprofit that engages students to write, helps them get better at it and connects them with authentic audiences for their best work.

YWP provides writing prompts for this newspaper series; maintains youngwritersproject.org, a supportive online community for students; trains college mentors to provide students with feedback and builds *Digital Writing Classrooms* for schools and afterschool programs. For more go to: ywpschools.net.

THANKS: YWP depends on the generosity of businesses, foundations and individuals to keep going. Today we'd like to offer special thanks to:

The Windham Foundation

One of the aims of the Grafton-based foundation is to promote the vitality of rural Vermont through support of educational projects.