

Special Event Spotlight: *We're Pleased to Present...*

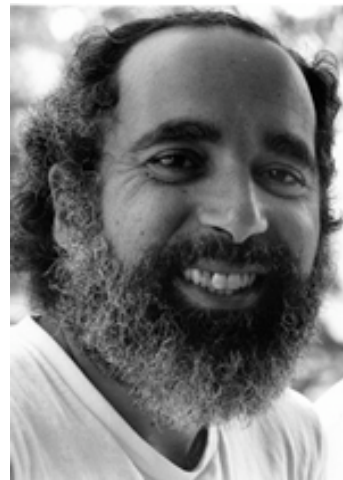
A Night of Poetry and Music Featuring

JD Parran



Multi-Instrumentalist and Composer
Photo credit: Yusef Jones

& Michael Castro



Poet, Translator, and Co-founder of River Styx

Saturday, Sept. 12, 2009, from 6:30-8:30 PM.
Cicero's, 6691 Delmar Blvd., St. Louis 63130.

Cover charge of \$10 per person

Please [register in advance](#)
Tickets available at the door



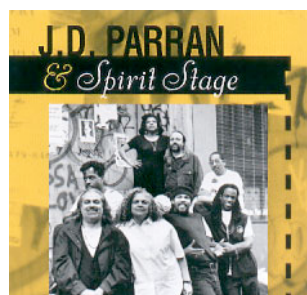
Join us for an amazing night of music and poetry with JD Parran and Michael Castro. This event celebrates their CD entitled *Kokopilau*, issued by St. Louis-based Freedonia Music. *Kokopilau* is a ceremony of the ancient future, celebrating a thirty-year collaboration between multi-instrumental master JD Parran and warrior poet Michael Castro that began with the St. Louis Black Artist Group & The Human Arts Ensemble in the 1970s. Retelling mythic tales of life, death, and rebirth with voice, tenor sax, indigenous hand-crafted instruments, and postmodern techniques, it's a spontaneous bop Kabbalah.

CDs will be available at the performance. You can also purchase their CD at [Freedonia Music](#) or through [iTunes](#).

JD Parran is a multi-instrumentalist and composer, who has mastered a wide variety of woodwind instruments (from the familiar tenor saxophone to the rarely heard alto clarinet, E-flat contrabass clarinet, bass saxophone, and bamboo flute). He has appeared on more than fifty recordings over the last three decades, including collaborations with The Band, Anthony Braxton, Don Byron, Anthony Davis, Julius Hemphill, New Winds, Yoko Ono, Alan Silva, Stevie Wonder, Amiri Baraka, Eugene B. Redmond, Quincy Troupe, the late Reginald Lockett, and many others.

He is a lecturer at City University of New York, and he also teaches at The Harlem School of the Arts where he has served as Director of Jazz and African-American Music Studies (HSA JAAMS). Also, he is a regular guest lecturer at New York Arts Program and NYU and was also Visiting Professor at Mills College, Oakland, CA. In addition to his teaching and performing careers, he has been commissioned as a composer by organizations such as the National Endowment for the Arts, Meet the Composer, the New York State Council on the Arts, the Jerome Foundation, and the Helen W. Buckner Foundation.

His latest two releases as a leader, *JD Parran & Spirit Stage featuring the poetry of Shirley LeFlore* and *Omegathorp: Living City* (co-led with Mark Deutsch) are both available on Y'All Recordings.



[JD Parran & Spirit Stage](#) featuring the poetry of Shirley LeFlore

"J.D. has captured threads of expression that connect the diversity of diasporan idioms resonating in the African American experience and has done so in a hip and urban manner."

-Alvin Batiste

JD Parran & Mark Deutsch [Omegathorp: Living City](#)

"Serious and extraordinary work...What is unique about this is that this sextet features the unique instrumentation of alto & contrabass clarinets (both rare clarinets for soloists), a bazantar (hybrid 5-string bass with 29 sympathetic strings & 4 drone strings) or sitar and cello with electronics, piano, voice and percussion...a sublime and mesmerizing blend. Absolutely riveting. Y'All does it again."



-Bruce Lee Gallanter, Downtown Music Gallery

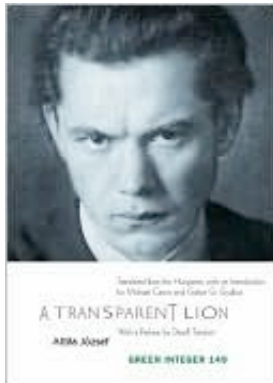


JD Parran's current, hot, spoken-word project is with poet, funk lyricist Diem Jones on the Equanimity project. The CD, released in 2007, is available through the [Diem Jones website](http://www.diemjones.com).

On this well-produced YouTube video below, Diem Jones and band members JD Parran, Baloti Lawrence, Len Wood, Dave Saffell, Shaffee Jackson, Manos and Zuri Universe Soul perform "Nomaad" (the first selection on the Equanimity CD) at the San Jose Jazz Festival on August 12, 2007.

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=i2tH-3KtBc&feature=related>

MICHAEL CASTRO is a native of New York City who has lived in St. Louis for most of his adult life. He is a poet and translator. With Gabor Gyukics he translated the anthologies *Swimming in the Ground: Contemporary Hungarian Poetry* and *A Transparent Lion: Selected Poems of Attila Jozsef*. One other book of translations from the Hungarian, *Gypsy Drill: Poems of Attila Balogh*, is due out this year. He has published six books of his own poetry, most recently *Human Rites* and *The Man Who Looked into Coltrane's Horn*, and authored the literary history, *Interpreting the Indian: Twentieth Century Poets and the Native American*. Castro is the co-founder of River Styx, a community based literary organization that has produced *River Styx Magazine* and readings in St. Louis since 1975. Castro has done many public readings and multi-media poetry performances in St. Louis, around the country, and abroad in London, Edinburgh, Budapest, and New Delhi, and he hosted the radio programs *River Styx Poets* (KDNA, 1969-1972), *Ars Poetica* (KWMU, 1975-1978), and *Poetry Beat* (1989-2004). He currently teaches at Lindenwood University.



[A Transparent Lion: Selected Poems of Attila Jozsef](#)

Publisher: Green Integer Books

Pub. Date: September 2006

ISBN-13: 9781933382500

138pp

"Only gifted linguists who are also accomplished poets can translate great lyric poetry. (W. S. Merwin's translations of Pablo Neruda have always served me as a benchmark.) With *A Transparent Lion*, Castro and Gyukics prove they are up to the task."

Jordan Zinovich, *Pacific Rim Book Review*

On Michael Castro's Poetry

"Michael Castro is a legend on the St. Louis poetry scene, as an editor, arts activist, and radio host, and for his poems, which have been widely published. His voice is wide-ranging and versatile. Whether in long lines . . . or in terse measured syllables, his voice is original."

Charles Guenther, *The St. Louis Post Dispatch*

“Terrifically joyous book. Lovely & deeply one of a kind. Deeply engrained spirit w/in wide branches & flowerings.”

David Meltzer, author of *Selected Poems, Tens*

“Castro faces the twentieth century’s instabilities unflinchingly, with unflagging energy and even humor, infusing our reading with pleasure.”

Diana Matza, *Jewish American Poetry: Poems, Commentary, and Reflections*

“a fine poet . . . a fresh and strong voice.”

David Nelson, founder *The Last Poets*

“a pleasure to encounter . . . very satisfying.”

The Jerusalem Post

“A confluence of drums, cantors, trees, griots, cellos, shamans koras, xylophones & shakers, this bardic scatman’s conch/us/nest offers high yields of love; beams in on abuses of art, humankind, & planet--& dreams us toward painful clarifications.”

Eugene B. Redmond, author *The Eye in the Ceiling*; editor, *Drum Voices Revue*

“I loved *Human Rites*. A terrific book! A lot of variety and heartfelt poetry.”

Jerred Metz, author of *Drinking the Dipper Dry, The Temperate Volumptuary*

“It’s like a great meal.”

Phil Sultz, artist

Michael Castro is available for readings, talks, and performances with musicians.

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