No Note

In the Indian providence of Gujarat
40,000 families
Are indentured to mine the salt flats
colorblind by age 12
from reflected sun rays searing their retinas
when they die
their salt seasoned bodies
won't burn:
unable to be cremated
in accordance with Hindu custom
they work all of their lives in hell
knowing that they will never see heaven
1 out of every 4 in this room
a miner,
bound to salt flats of Major depression
salt powdered palms grip medication
like prescription purgatory with a warning label
in 38 years I only tried to escape once
48 Tylenol Pm lay in my hands
skeleton keys to a phantom paradise
I failed to make the paper
to be the fodder of a poet's
attempt to standardize suicide
declaring open season on a closed casket
hunting for explanations with buckshot blame
grazing, teachers grading papers with tears
wounding parents they never met
summarizing the contents
of a conflicted mind
that jumped off cliffs notes
It takes a minute to commit suicide
a lifetime to live through it
but 3 minutes to write a shitty poem
I am not here to pay respects:
The salt of the Earth endures seasons only those
who labor to live understand
If I die (hopefully in the late winter of my lifespan)
whatever you do
Don't write a poem about me

Lee Knight Jr.

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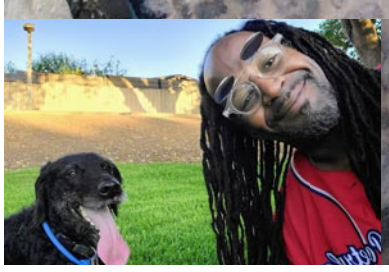

Lee Knight Jr has been inspiring poetry slam stages since 2001. He has been a coach and member of 8 national poetry slam teams, was awarded 4th place in the National Poetry Slam individual competition in 2006, and helped Team Berkeley and Team Palo Alto win group piece finals in 2009 and 2014 respectively. Beyond national borders, Lee has shared his poetry and perspective on various international city stages throughout Germany, France, England and Austria. His poetry is powerful, captivating and educational, empowering listeners to examine not only the world around them, but themselves. His words will resonate with the listener long after his sojourn on the stage.