

You Know It, Poet! Local poet Jay Walker rereleased three books of poetry



Jay Walker at the Feb 16, 2019, re-release of his three books of collected poems, Stillwater Books, Pawtucket, RI. (Photo: Michael Bilow)

Being a poet is not easy; publishing a body of work is even harder. But it's a challenge Jay Walker, who is not new to the poetry scene, is up for. With three books to his name, he's starting off the new year by republishing them and he celebrated their rerelease with a reading and book signing at Stillwater Books on February 16.

Walker's love for poetry started during his college career at RIC. "I found a poetry reading on campus and the people there introduced me to the different poetry readings in the city," he said. He got involved with Providence Poetry Slam, which he said combined everything he "loves about writing, and performing in one thing."



Jay Walker at the Feb 16, 2019, re-release of his three books of collected poems, Stillwater Books, Pawtucket, RI. (Photo: Michael Bilow)

In 2009, Walker got the opportunity to publish his first book: *Sifting Through The Ashes of Me*. His second and third books, *Where I'm Comin' From* and *Flower*, were released in 2011 and 2012. Of the three, Walker says *Flower* is his favorite due to the title piece. "The message is a pretty powerful one about holding on," he said. "There was a time where I forgot that message. We're all human, we all make mistakes, and there was a time where I didn't feel my worth and took action against myself. When I recovered from that, I just started writing all the negativity out."



Jay Walker at the Feb 16, 2019, re-release of his three books of collected poems, Stillwater Books, Pawtucket, RI.
(Photo: Michael Bilow)

Although Walker's writing skills have grown during his poetic journey, he says his writing habits have stayed quite the same. When I asked him about the hardest part of writing a book of poetry, he said, "I don't really think any part of it was hard, because I was writing it a piece at a time. I slaved over one piece, and then put it aside and slaved over another. Then after I accumulated a bunch of pieces I decided what would go in the book and what would not." He found focusing on each piece individually, instead of writing for a finished product was the easiest way [for him] to get it done. Jay also said he kept in mind that, "Not everyone is born good, you develop skill over time, so it's okay to suck at first."

You can purchase Sifting Through The Ashes of Me, Where I'm Comin' From, and Flower, online on Amazon, at Barnes and Noble, or Stillwater Books.