

FSCC Gordon Parks Museum/Center for Culture and Diversity High School Poetry/Essay Contest 2011 Sponsored by the Bourbon County Arts Council



WHO CAN ENTER? Any student currently in the 9th – 12th grades in an FSCC regional area school.

PURPOSE: Because Fort Scott native Gordon Parks was an accomplished photographer, writer, poet, and filmmaker, the Gordon Parks Center seeks to nurture young talent to follow in his footsteps.

THE CONTEST:

POETRY: After reading Gordon Parks' "No Apologies," (Entire poem at right) use the first stanza of the poem and then finish it with your own poetry or your own essay.

*"Fate holds no reason to frown at what
Providence granted me.
My thanks remain uncountable.
After long talks with my past I now realize
that life held a divine purpose,
For shoving me into places that were as
changeable as the wind."*

WHAT ARE THE PRIZES?

- Recognition will be given to between 10 and 15 students for their poem/essay. Each student recognized will receive a poster of Gordon Parks, a Certificate of Accomplishment and a copy of Mr. Parks' autobiographical novel, *The Learning Tree*.
- All winning entries will be on display at the annual Gordon Parks Celebration of Culture and Diversity (October 6-9, 2010). There will also be a luncheon on Friday, Oct. 7 from 12:00 p.m. to 1:00 p.m. for all winners to read their work. (Luncheon provided for the student and their teacher)

HOW IS THE WORK JUDGED?

Is the work well written and show creativity? Does the work show an understanding of Gordon Parks' poem, yet is clearly an original poem or essay?

WHAT ELSE DO I NEED TO KNOW? A student may enter twice (from separate categories). There is no entry fee.

- Poems are limited to one page. All entries should be typed and submitted as a WORD document.
- Essays must be no longer than 2 pages in length using Times, 12 point font, double spaced, typed and submitted as a WORD document.
- Entry must be the original creation of the submitting poet.

HOW DO I ENTER? Deadline is **September 16, 2011**. **Email your entry and include ON A SEPARATE PAGE FROM YOUR POEM OR ESSAY: your name, grade, school name, school address and teacher's name and teacher's e-mail to: gordonparkscenter@fortscott.edu.**

"NO APOLOGIES" BY GORDON PARKS

Fate holds no reason to frown
at what Providence granted me.
My thanks remain uncountable.
After long talks with my past I now realize
that life held a divine purpose,
For shoving me into places that were as
changeable as the wind.

In between the floundering of then and now, the eyes
of fate were following me --- watching, always watch-
ing with narrowing glances.
Now, having given deep thought to life's offerings,
I realize everything that happened
should have happened.

So my heart lifts praise to a smiling autumn –
To those fallen years that no longer exist.
With this, and with no respite, I give thanks –
To each dawn,
To each night,
To all the falling and climbing that patiently carried me
through unpredictable wanderings.
Crowned in the confusion that hammered my journey,
One golden thing stood: Love – serene love.
Nothing could banish love from my wilderness.