

NO SUCH THING AS A FREE OPEN MIKE

You gotta listen if you want to be heard
in this place of draft beer, music, and word.
We don't sell free lunches, we don't sell free meals.
We gather to enter a whole other deal:

Listen to mine and I'll listen to yours.
Belt out your chorus then lend us your ears
and be sure to purchase a few fucking beers.

Sign your name and get in the line-up.
The Spirit shall move you, despite the sign-up.
Step up to the mike and bring us your gift.
Ring it out joyful or lonesome or miffed.
And after you've gathered applause and three cheers,
remember to purchase a few fucking beers.

Your tales, no doubt, shall unveil the Divine.
Your tunes, no doubt, shall make war to unwind,
make world peace to spread among sisters and brothers.
But the meter I bleat may not meet your druthers
and sometimes a song seems to drone on for years.
That's when we numb it by glugging some beers.

(stanza break)

Life is short. We have too little time
to gladden each other with music and rhyme.
So bring us your story or poem or song.
Gift us with glory. Just don't take too long.
Gargle your quota, (say, five fucking beers?)
and sound out the noises you want us to hear.

We promise to listen, a kind-hearted throng,
whether your verses might stink it up strong
or smite us alive with a pure, golden fire
till each of us pernes in old Bill Yates's gyre.
And, dumbstruck by beauty or bored unto tears,
remember to purchase a few fucking beers.