

How to Talk WITH Children about Global Warming

Not-selling books while not-busking

I was playing the guitar in the street in Prague near a place named “Angel” (Anděl). I had two signs in my guitar case. One said “I want the amount of money such that I would have more democracy and less global warming.” The other said “Rage. Poetry by dissident and Charter 77 signatory Milan Kohout.”

Apparently some people thought my guitar playing was adequate, or else they thought that giving me a certain amount of money would help me find more democracy and less global warming, or else they just are in the habit of giving street musicians a few coins, because several people put money in my guitar case.



Vzteky (Rage). Poetry by dissident and Charter 77 signatory Milan Kohout.

A man approached and stood, listening to my music. His clothes were filthy and ripped, his hair was uncut and uncombed, he was carrying two large plastic bags full of unidentifiable stuff, and he didn't look like he had showered recently. That, plus he had the 1000-yard stare. I can't be sure that he was homeless, but if I had ordered a slightly spooky-looking homeless person from central casting, he would look the part. (continues) →



D. Franklin (manta) is a performance artist, somatic movement educator, video artist, and translator based in Prague, Czech Republic. Originally from New

York City, he is a graduate of Harvard (A.B. cultural anthropology 1987), the Boston School of the Museum of Fine Arts (Dip. Fine Arts 1995) and Université Paris 8 St-Denis (M.A. digital humanities 2015).

Franklin's career spans the remarkable. He has performed with a Czech dissident artist and in a cult film/performance (Milan Kohout, Michael Pope's *Neovoxer*). He has managed an acupuncture clinic for people with AIDS and has led Shintaido movement workshops in the US, Japan, France, Italy, the Czech Republic, Hungary, and on a deserted island. He has supervised film and TV crews with political figures, rock stars, and iconic intellectuals in the lens (George W. Bush, Bill Clinton, Amanda Palmer, Noam Chomsky).

His current work-in-progress, *How to Talk with Children about Global Warming*, is a dance performance, series of drawings, street performance, and album of electro-acoustic music based on his science fiction novel of the same name.

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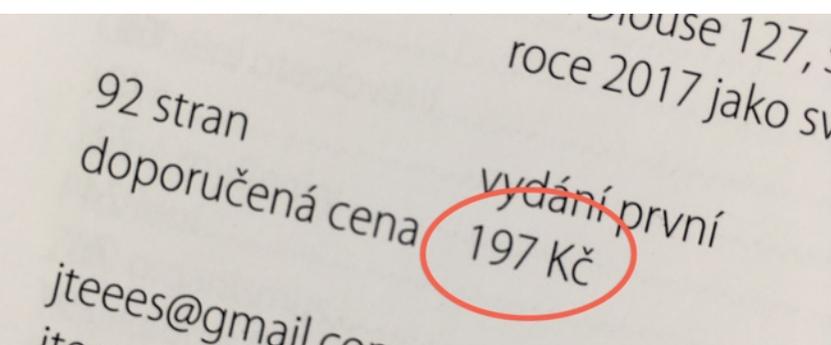


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Not-selling books while not-busking (continued)

I offered him the money that I had collected in my guitar case, assuming that he might need it more than I did. He refused. I offered him one of the books of poetry, wondering as I did so if this offer made any sense, uncertain about his needs and wants, but not assuming anything.

He accepted the book of Rage, and thanked me, and after listening a little while longer continued on his way. I played a little while longer and decided it was time to go.



On my sign, it says the price of the book is 200 CZK (about US \$9.50). That is for the sake of convenience, to avoid making change if someone buys the book. In fact, the publisher's recommended price is 197 CZK. Prices such as \$1.99 or \$24.98 are common in the USA, but I suppose that just as there are more V's and Z's and Y's in Czech than in English, perhaps the number 7 seems friendlier than the numbers 9 or 8.

When I counted up the money that strangers had dropped in my guitar case, it was precisely 196 CZK. I think a lot about this homeless man, for whom poetry was more important than money, and to whom strangers gifted a book, while perhaps thinking they were paying for music.

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And now we bring you a short excerpt from *How to Talk with Children about Global Warming (the novel)*. If you would like to hear the prologue to the novel audio-book style, you can find it [here on my SoundCloud](#). If you would like to hear more of the novel than just the prologue, you'll need to join my [Patreon](#) (Patreon is a crowdfunding platform for artists). But never fear, just like public radio, I'll keep broadcasting and pester you for money occasionally, which money you will trust me to spend wisely.

So here's an excerpt from Chapter 5:

In a few minutes she was going to read a chapter from *How to Talk with Children about Global Warming* to actual children. For the first time. Her first audience. Kids can be fierce critics. The butterflies in her stomach stirred, wings fluttering in the darkness of her innards, making the inner darkness less dark than the outer darkness. Moths? She had had nightmares about this moment. She picked up her already brisk pace.

This is the story she read them:

Sometime in Fairytaleland, vaguely the Middle Ages in Europe. Knights and kings. Or Africa? It's about public rhetorical skills. No, this is for mainstream middle-class kids to relate to. The Middle Ages.

Once upon a time there was a king— it certainly must've been a king, because gender stereotypes would impossibiliate a queen from doing the kind of thing I'm about to describe— who decided that there should be a royal language that only he would be allowed to speak...



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CREDITS

A huge thanks to Jiří Dvorský, Michaela Vojteková, Tereza Soldátová, Lenka Jišová, Magda L. and others.

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This artwork is funded by my Patreon members, THANK YOU! Your support makes this art possible.

