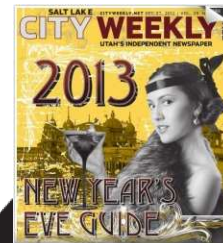


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## Artys 2011: Staff Choice Page 4

By City Weekly Staff

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POSTED // SEPTEMBER 14, 2011 -

### BEST BEASTS IN BEANTOWN Salt City Slam

Every year, the contingent that represents Salt Lake City at the National Poetry Slam kicks things up a notch. This August, the five-person team of Jesse Parent, Cody Winger, DeAnn Emmett, Brian Gray and Ryan Joseph Carter traveled to Boston and became a force to be reckoned with. The group made its best showing since 2004, when the SLC team first dared to dream on the national stage. Not only did they place 19th out of 76 teams, they gained a fearsome nickname: the "Salt Beast." We'll snap to that.

### BEST ELIZABETHAN LAUGHS

Utah Shakespeare's *A Midsummer Night's Dream*  
For the 50th season of the Utah Shakespeare Festival, director Fred Adams mined the comedic heart of Shakespeare's extraordinary take on the seam between dreams and reality with such aplomb that, at times, the festival audience seemed to pinch itself at how hard it was laughing. While Max Robinson's Nick Bottom's shift from puffed-up weaver and frustrated would-be thespian to enchanted donkey generated much hysteria, it was Ben Charles' Puck who stole the show. Whenever he scampered around the stage, squatted on his haunches and studied the characters whose destiny he was about to play with, or addressed the audience with impish glee, Charles captured both the light and the darkness of the forest where Shakespeare's multilayered gem takes place with exquisite style. [Bard.org](#)



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