

## Slow Fish at the Barnes

Last weekend after the Stop Market wrapped up on Saturday, a small group of Slow Food, Slow Fish, Stop Network, and chefs from our community came together at an event to raise awareness and encourage more active thinking about the fish we consume and the world that exists below the surface of our waters. The Akiwenzie family, whose fish is available at various markets across the city, were kind enough to attend and speak, as well as supply the fish that our chef friends prepared for the crowd. Also with us was Dan Donovan of Hooked, and Slow Fish, whose perspective as a purveyor of responsible sea food and fighter for better policies, brilliantly complimented the Akiwenzies' tale of fishing and caring for the waters. Although the few hours were hardly enough to communicate the importance of this topic, the thesis was clear: as buyers and consumers of fish and sea food, we need to understand what we are implicated in. In an urban landscape where "sustainability" is most often used as a selling point, we need to see beyond what the stamp on the package communicates.

Clean fish can only exist at our markets if our lakes, seas, and oceans do not become manipulated aquariums, and our fisherman do not have to risk their lives to meet unrealistic quotas set by a system which has blindfolded the public into accepting the fact that one of its most precious natural resources has been divided up and sold off as private property. This is the problem, but what is the solution? We need to cook better, and buy better. Learning to prepare a wider range of sea foods will allow us to balance the impact of our consumption on marine ecosystems. With so much culinary available all the time for free, this should not be a problem. When possible, we should buy fish from fishermen and women at our markets, and ask them about what is going on where they fish. We should select our fishmongers carefully, and ask them for advice on what to buy and when. Let's welcome the challenge of learning to enjoy new and varied foods in hopes of prolonging the availability of good, clean, and fair food for generations to come.