

# Cultural Daily

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## George Wallace: “Poem in the Coffeepot”

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George Wallace is a New York native who has lived and worked across the US and in Europe. A prominent member of the NYC performance scene, he is writer in residence at the Walt Whitman Birthplace, editor of *Poetrybay* and co-editor of *great weather for Media*, and in 2015 was named laureate of the International Beat Poetry Festival. He is the author of 30 chapbooks of poetry, including *A Simple Blues With A Few Intangibles* (Foothills Publications, 2016) and *Poppin Johnny* (Three Rooms Press, 2009).

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## Poem in the Coffeepot

Life was good  
 It was finally good  
 There was God in the popcorn  
 Poems in the coffeepot  
 There was sandlots  
 And crackerjacks  
 And picklejars and  
 Pitchers of beer  
 There was tenements  
 And bosses and  
 Coney Island holidays  
 And the immigrants came  
 And the immigrants came  
 In their immigrant pants  
 And their immigrant dresses  
 And they built New York  
 Out of glass and steel  
 In their own immigrant image  
 Olive oil and eggplant  
 Prayer shawl  
 Candelabra  
 Chicken fat and wine  
 And they kept on coming  
 With their accents and their

Operatics and their strange  
 Music halls and melodramas  
 And stubborn political sciences —  
 Eastern Europeans, Southern Europeans,  
 Polish, Russian, Italians,  
 Jews, Greeks and Germans —  
 And they kept their big traps shut  
 When they were forced to but  
 They stuck to their guns  
 And they took the dirty jobs in the  
 Dirty factories and the lights went out  
 On Saturday night at quarter past ten  
 And bedposts shook and radiators  
 Rattled like an elevated railway and  
 Late night jazz — and the stubborn lights  
 of New York City glittering like a knife  
 Thrust deep into the heart of heaven  
 — And the immigrants of NYC  
 Wrestling with each other  
 In the dead of night  
 For love, for loss  
 For consolation  
 For unreasonable  
 Unstoppable  
 Unnatural  
 Hope

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