

# Cultural Daily

Independent Voices, New Perspectives

## Linda J. Albertano: Three Poems

Linda J. Albertano · Wednesday, October 14th, 2015

Linda J. Albertano is a performance artist who's represented on more than a dozen spoken-word albums including her solo CD, **Skin**. Since 1980, she's unleashed her vocabulary at countless language meccas in Europe as well as America including the **John Anson Ford Theater**, **Lollapalooza** and **South by Southwest** in Austin, Texas. She was among those representing Los Angeles at the **One World Poetry Fest** in Amsterdam and has also performed in London and Edinburgh.

Selected by the **LA Theatre Center**, she unveiled a full-length original work, **Joan of Compton...** complete with poets, dancers and a 30-piece marching band from South Central LA. Then for the **Santa Monica Arts Council**, she mounted **Calisaladia** – a condensed history of California – with a large multi-cultural cast on the beach in Ocean Park With Anne Waldman, Lewis MacAdams and others, Albertano presented at **Allen Ginsberg's Memorial** at the **Wadsworth Theater** And she's featured on the **Venice Poetry Monument** with such local notables as Wanda Coleman and Charles Bukowski.

In the new millennium, she studied West African music and instruments with traditional masters in Guinea, Conakry returning to perform for more than a decade at such venues as **The Getty**, **Royce Hall**, **California Plaza** and the **World Festival of Sacred Music** with kora (West African harp) virtuoso, Prince Diabate.

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## Dear Diary

Un, deux, trois, quatre, cinq, six, sept, huit, neuf, dix...

**Dear Diary,**

Bonjour! Comment-allez vous?

**I have a confession to make.**

Il y a longtemps que je ne te pas vu

.

**I spent the night with his best French book.**

La plume de ma tante est sur la table de mon oncle.

**But it's not what you think, Diary.**

Du beau, du bon, Dubonnet.

**We just lay in one another's arms all night long and talked about you.**

Vive la difference!

**Diary, I'm so confused.**

Quesque c'est? Quesque c'est le probleme?

**Sometimes, I think he really wants to know me.**

Je t'aime, je t'aime, je t'adore.

**But other times, he doesn't seem to want to know me at all.**

Il n'y a que des fruit ou du fromage pour le dessert.

**What do you think Diary?**

Je ne sais pas, je ne sais pas.

**Is he all signed up on someone else's dance card?**

Voici Marie, elle est Americaine.

**Or do I still have a chance to run with him in the three-legged race of life?**

Toujours, toujours, toujours.

**I dunno what to do, Diary.**

Aujourd'hui nous sommes etudiantes.

**Should I try to meet someone new?**

Sprechen ze Deutsche? Sprechen ze Deutsche?

**Or should I just wait?**

Vingt-et-un, vingt-deux, vingt-trois, vingt-quatre, vingt-cinq, vingt-six, vingt-sept...

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## Of The Earth

Deep in the earth a pickaxe arcs through  
atmosphere like a meditation beyond the caprice  
of being...a sparkle of stars on the tongues  
of believers.

Each pock of the pick ignites a dazzle  
of saline shards... lit from the utmost reach  
of time to be resurrected in midnight cylinders  
of blue.

Upon which unnumbered umbrellas  
shield children from an elaborate universe  
as they spill shimmers of quiet points behind  
their shoes.

Then aboard boxcars, all glide seamlessly under  
the big dipper for destinations exotic  
and mundane.

Someone sips a margarita.  
Someone seasons a steak.  
Someone kisses the tears from a  
toddler's cheek

And in the dark, from great dunes surrounding  
the lake, salt floats upward on rivulets  
of white air...penitent supplications whispered  
into the thick and final dome  
of night.

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## Twinkie Defense

Somewhere in San Francisco  
someone is having a Twinkie  
and some deep-fat-fried Cheetos  
for breakfast.  
Later in the day  
someone will shoot the mayor.  
Someone will not be held responsible.

Somewhere in East L.A  
someone is having a breakfast  
of goat's milk yogurt, wheat germ  
blackstrap molasses, and alfalfa sprouts.  
No matter what happens  
later in the day  
someone will be held responsible.

Somewhere in San Diego  
someone is having a cigarette  
for breakfast  
with a cappuccino  
and a prosciutto croissant.  
But someone is not responsible.  
Someone will never be held responsible.

Somewhere way South of the border  
someone who's spent a lifetime  
harvesting sugar cane, coffee, and tobacco  
for someone in San Francisco  
and someone in San Diego  
is having a particularly  
medieval experience.

And is held responsible.  
Responsible! Responsible!

Someone is held entirely  
responsible.

*(Author photo by Alexis Rhone Fancher)*

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