

# Cultural Daily

Independent Voices, New Perspectives

## Billy Burgos: Those Small Boxes of Infatuation

Billy Burgos · Tuesday, October 22nd, 2013

Billy Burgos is an active member of The Anansi Writer's Workshop and a mainstay in the local L.A. poetry scene. He has been published in numerous journals both in print and online. Billy is the co-editor of the poetry Broadsheet Sic 3 and has served as poetry facilitator of The Beyond Baroque poetry workshop as well as the host of The First Sunday Reading a monthly reading at Beyond Baroque Literary Centre in Venice Ca. In 2009 Billy was chosen as newer poet to watch by the L.A. Poetry Festival. His first collection of poetry titled *Eulogy to an Unknown Tree* was published by [Writ Large Press](#) in January 2013.

*Cultural Weekly is proud to premier these poems by Billy Burgos.*

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### Matter

Today on the radio while driving  
a scientist gives me a round number  
that is the supposed age of the universe.  
He tells me how Matter only makes  
up a small portion of its expanse.

.

He tells me of a glowing light  
in some corner of space that is  
emitting a heat signature from  
an explosion that started life billions  
of years before we were ever particles.

.

Somehow the busy street now appears  
smaller. I am a simple man. I can only  
see the universe as a black box with  
dark angles that never meet. I picture  
myself as a speck of dust floating aimlessly.

.

Then this feeling collecting in the fist  
of my heart. What should I make of it now,  
this worthless bit of emotion and quark?

.

There are only a few things I know for sure:

I care too much about my eventual outcome,  
 I forgive others sparingly and dole out love  
 in a similar way, the California sky today is  
 the bluest I have ever seen.

.  
 The scientist continues to speak but by  
 then I am somewhere else. Transfixed by all  
 the different back sides of cars flashing  
 red brake lights. Cars in the distance as far

.  
 as the eye can see. And I am repeating  
 to myself the words of some horribly  
 made-up tune, as inconsequential  
 as a speck of dust blowing about,

.  
*“my matter matters today,  
 but only for today  
 does my matter matter.”*

\*\*\*

## The Figurative Heart

We blame the heart so often.  
 We ask it to bear our guilt like  
 a wet bag of sand, then to hold  
 those small boxes of infatuation.  
 We ask the heart to lie to us  
 right behind the request to keep  
 the tune of our spirit playing on.  
 Yet when it lies, we blame that muscle  
 for each remembered deception.  
 At this red hour, with the darkening  
 city unrolling slowly like a dirty rug,  
 there is no figurative heart. There is  
 only this-and-now, the entire machine.  
 Even the threading of streetlights that  
 appear to lead off into nothingness eventually  
 end and come back. The night always brings back.  
 And maybe another -the heart only  
 speaks through the juried soul,  
 that invisible conduit that can bear nothing.  
 Like faith it is only an assured expectation,  
 something not-yet-beheld. We cannot  
 call it a liar, we can only call it god.

\*\*\*

## Mid(dle) Life Crisis

We grow up thinking of our

bodies as the vehicle that carries us.  
These little ignorant engines, whirring  
along some meager passageway

.  
knowing nothing of the “how”  
or the “why” but singing loudly  
nonetheless. Then at some improbable  
point, somewhere past the center of

.  
our lives we find ourselves in a quiet field  
with a small wind smoothing back all the  
tall bushes. And we can see clearly  
how many times sadness has punched us raw,

.  
clearly how many times we have  
lit the light of some greater love.  
Only then do we realize that emotion is  
the vehicle, the true soul-without-sight.

.  
Our grown body, merely a windblown sail  
that has driven us without direction. But  
so what if this is so? What truly matters then  
is not the epiphany but what it has become,

.  
some pliable mass, like a handful of putty  
squeezed so tight that all its color has blended  
into one beige tone. There is no precipice or prize.  
There is only us holding-the-gold in this silent field

.  
and the tall figure of a man in the distance  
waving us in to what we believe to be home.

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