

Cultural Daily

Independent Voices, New Perspectives

An Asian-American Poet Walks into a Bar

Adam Leipzig · Wednesday, May 4th, 2016

An Asian-American Poet walks into a Bar.

He says, This is a Bar.

The people who are inside the Bar enjoy being inside. Or they don't know they are in a Bar because they are inside it and are adequate not knowing.

This Bar doesn't serve cocktails, although the Asian-American Poet likes his whisky. This Bar has height and width. It has weight. It is a Bar as in a barricade, an ulterior closure. There's a velvet rope and a big guy in a black suit who will let the Asian-American Poet in, and maybe a few others, but only sparingly, as long as they agree to abide by the rules of the Bar.

The Asian-American Poet walks on and names the Bar. He names it [here in these digital pages](#). Which, in the great Internet of Things, not that many people read. But the people in the Bar do.

They call him names. They say he is a bigot and a racist. They say that Asian Americans are more privileged than white Americans so why is the Asian-American Poet complaining. They say this is a smear and call Cultural Weekly disgusting. Some of them use language that is so crude I won't approve their comments for publication.

Who are these people?

I mean, really, *who the fuck are these people?*

When a white producer called out Hollywood for its casting racism, not [once](#) but [twice](#), they didn't attack him.

They attack the Asian-American Poet who names the Bar.

Which is why he had to name the Bar. Because the Bar is like air. It surrounds us but it is invisible. Until the Asian-American Poet walks in. He's not the first to do it, nor will he be the last. It's just that he did it here, a few days ago, which is why I am writing about it.

What the Asian-American Poet has done is this: By naming the Bar, he called it out. Well, he'd always seen it, as had many outside the Bar. For everyone else, he made the unseen seen.

By their reactions, those people, the people who rendered invective and indignation in their responses, dropped their invisibility cloak: They were holding it around themselves like a sheet when you are naked, but they needed their hands to type comments so they had to drop the sheet and now they are exposed, pale, cold.

We're going to keep publishing people who name the Bar. Even though it pisses people off. Or because it pisses people off. They're just a bunch of naked people inside a Bar.

We're on the outside where we can feel the air.

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