Cultural Daily

Independent Voices, New Perspectives

In Memory of Robin Williams, a Poem by Jim Meskimen

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Our friend and *Cultural Weekly* reader Jim Meskimen, the talented actor, impressionist and voice artist, recently created a video poem in memory of Robin Williams. It moves us, and we think it will move you.

Jim wrote: “Robin got his TV start on Happy Days, which was the show my mom, Marion Ross was on for 11 seasons. So I watched the rise and fall from close to the start.

“I was more than a little jealous.

“I met Robin two or three times and he was always charming and low key.

“Professionally, I have done the voice of his Genie character for a variety of Disney projects, so I have had a lot of exposure to his sound, and have a real appreciation for what he did with that marvelous character.

“As an impressionist myself, I have only admiration for his vocal ability and his acting. This poem comes from the heart.”

IN MEMORY OF ROBIN WILLIAMS
by Jim Meskimen

THEY DIDN’T BURN ALL THE PIANOS
WHEN FREDRICK CHOPIN DIED

DIDN’T OUTLAW OIL PAINTS
WHEN PICASSO TOOK HIS FINAL RIDE

NO ONE PUT A STOP TO BASEBALL
WHEN MICKEY MANTLE’S TIME WAS UP

OR BANNED ALL RUSSIAN NOVELS
WHEN TOLSTOY WENT BELLY UP

ON SHAKESPEARE’S DEATH, NOBODY SAID
“NOW HATH ARRIVED THE DAY–

FROM THIS POINT HENCE LET NONE DARE
PUT FORTH PEN TO WRITE A PLAY!”

WE CELEBRATE WHAT’S LEFT
BY THE DEPARTED, IT’S OUR CHOICE

YET IT DOES SEEM SACRELIGEOUS
TO DO ROBIN WILLIAMS’ VOICE

A VOICE THAT WAS DESIGNED TO SOOTHE,
SOFT, DEEP TONES TO RESONATE

AND CASCADE GENTLY OUTWARD
FROM BEHIND A SMILING FACE

A VOICE THAT COULD ACCELERATE
TO CATCH UP WITH THE MIND

LIKE SHIFTING INTO OVERDRIVE
TO NOT GET LEFT BEHIND

A VOICE THAT COULD CHANGE CHARACTER
LIKE SECONDS ON A CLOCK

OR HIJACK NATIONALITIES
FOR A SPIN AROUND THE BLOCK

SHIFT AGE, SHIFT VIEWPOINT, SHIFT I.Q.,
WHATEVER’S NOT NAILED DOWN

DESTROY, REBUILD, DESTROY AGAIN,
A FORMIDABLE CLOWN

WE’LL HEAR THIS VOICE IN FUTURE TIMES
IN RERUNS ON TV,

IT WILL OCCUPY THE WORLD WIDE WEB
LIVE ON, DIGITALLY

WE’LL HEAR IT’S ECHOES COME
FROM OTHER MOUTHS AND OTHER LIPS

IN TRIBUTES AND HOMAGES, AND,
LIKE PSYCHEDELIC TRIPS

WE’LL THINK THE OWNER’S BACK AGAIN
WITH HIS FAMILIAR SOUND

BUT THEY’LL ALL BE IMITATIONS–
JUST AN AUDIBLE REBOUND

NEW JOKES AREN’T IN THE PIPELINE NOW,
NOT THAT THE WELL WENT DRY-

BUT THE JESTER WHO POSSESSED THIS VOICE
JUST CHOSE TO SAY GOODBYE

WITH THE WEALTH OF JOY HE LEFT US
WE SHOULD PROBABLY REJOICE

BUT IT’S HARD TO TO GRASP WE LOST THE GUY
WHO USED TO HAVE THIS VOICE.

RIP ROBIN.

Top image: Robin Williams in ‘Good Will Hunting’. Photo courtesy Miramax.

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