

# Cultural Daily

Independent Voices, New Perspectives

## Richard Vargas: "salvation... for Ray Bradbury"

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Richard Vargas has edited/published five issues of *The Tequila Review*, 1978-1980, including poetry by Gerald Locklin, nila northSun, Kirk Robertson, Michael C Ford, Alberto Ríos, Jimmy Santiago Baca, Ron Koertge, Dennis Cooper, and others. His first book, *McLife*, was featured twice on Garrison Keillor's Writers Almanac, in February, 2006. A second book, *American Jesus*, was published by Tia Chucha Press, 2007.

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### salvation... for Ray Bradbury

i was in the third grade  
 spending the weekend  
 at my nana's when i found  
 my uncle's old playboy magazine  
 laying on his bed in plain sight  
 i picked it up and flipped  
 through the pages  
 i knew it was supposed  
 to be a big deal from the way  
 grown-ups talked about it  
 but i have to tell you  
 i wasn't impressed  
 although i now had a  
 pretty good idea why  
 ladies were so soft  
 in certain places  
 the cartoons were interesting  
 but they weren't funny to me  
 and just as i was going to  
 put it down i came across  
 an illustration of a T-Rex  
 and since i was all about  
 dinosaurs i started reading  
 the text which turned out  
 to be a story about men  
 paying money to travel

back in time so they could  
hunt the biggest baddest  
meat eater ever to roam  
the planet and when T-Rex  
showed up some guy  
got scared and ran off  
stepping where he  
wasn't supposed to  
squashing a bug which  
totally changed evolution  
the story struck me like  
lightning and my blood  
began to boil between my ears  
i started looking for anything  
the author had written  
finding his books at the  
local library as his words  
and stories eased the pain  
of growing up with a father  
who i thought loved the needle  
in his arm more than me  
the next year my old man  
o.d.'d and i sought comfort  
in the pages of those books  
looking for something to step on  
a bug to squash and turn back  
the clock so i could start over with  
my not-so-happy 10 yr old life  
then i started to write stories  
diving deeper into the  
sea of words and language  
until i couldn't come up for air  
and that led to my  
first poems  
now  
48 yrs later  
i'm still at it  
and Ray,  
you magnificent  
storytelling s.o.b.  
it's just me  
apologizing  
for how long it's  
taken to say  
thanks

*You may also be interested in this video from Ray Bradbury: [Love What You Do, Do What you Love.](#)*

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