Cultural Daily

Independent Voices, New Perspectives

Joan Jobe Smith: Bukowski / Movies

Joan Jobe Smith · Thursday, August 9th, 2012

Joan Jobe Smith, Founding Editor of *Pearl* and *The Bukowski Review*. Her art, poetry, stories and reviews have appeared internationally in more than 1000 publications that has included *Ambit* (UK), *Beside the City of Angels, Outlaw Bible* and *Wormwood Review*. A Pushcart Prize recipient, a Forward Prize finalist (1999), she's published 22 books of poetry + a cookbook; fall, 2012 Silver Birch Press will publish her literary profile,*Charles Bukowski: Epic Glottis: His Art & His Women (& me)* and World Parade Books will publish her memoir *Tales of An Ancient Go-Go Girl*.
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Bukowski Chugs Cheap Beer @ the Go-Go a No-No

Bukowski laughed har har har when I told him I'd
been a go-go girl for 7 years, the bad luck time for
breaking a mirror, minimum sentence for a felony
conviction. In 1973 Bukowski'd thought me one of
those feminists who wanted to kick his ass, booed,
stomped en masse out of his poetry readings. Worse,
he'd thought me another bored housewife going back to
college, my hard working schmuck hubby buying my
books, tuition and bellbottoms, cooking his own supper,
diapering the baby while I read Sexton, Plath and Jong
and flirted with cute professors. Bukowski never drank
at any of those go-go bars I worked those 7 years. Too
expensive, too uppity and all that rock 'n' roll too noisy.
No, he preferred the basso nova and cheap beer at the
Go-Go a No-No's where barmaids wore overalls, not
fringed bikinis and could toss out any drunk, including
him, with one bare hand. Midnights Buk phoned me long
distance, drunk because his Woman had left him again,
he listened intently to my go-go girl tales about men like
him, broke, lonely who drank too much, said wild things,
talk of men not like him: astronauts, murderers, rich men
wearing diamond pinky rings while Bukowski chugged his
cheap beer in his cheap apartment in L.A., blew smoke
from cheap cigars into the telephone at me sipping cheap

white wine 40 miles away till one night Bukowski finally
said: You gotta write about all that madness, kid. So I did.
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What I Learned At The Movies

When I hear shocking news, I will faint.
When my fiance leaves me holding a candlestick on the haunted house staircase to go for help 20 miles away, the vampire will bite my neck.
When my fiance and the bad guy fight over the nitroglycerin/ uranium or something that will destroy every living thing on earth if spilled, I will hit on the head with a Ming vase, Baseball bat or Maltese Falcon my fiance. When the handsome singing cowboy who saved my life and my father's ranch from the dastard banker or Apaches kisses me and rides off into the horizon on his white horse, I will smile and disappear.
When I am in the family way and ride a horse or walk down stairs, I will fall and the lose the child I am carrying. When my child coughs or sneezes, he/she will die. When my child dies, my husband will blame me and I will take to streetwalking and drinking whisky with stevedores along the wharf, lose my looks and will to live and throw myself beneath the wheels of a locomotive or a black La Salle sedan. When a telegram arrives, it will always tell me that my fiance has died in the War. When the moon is full, a man will either kiss me or kill me. When I wear marabou and contemplate suicide while gazing at the Manhattan skyline, Fred Astaire will ask me to dance. When Elvis tries to kiss me on the balcony, a gang of girls will ask him to sing while they push me over the railing into a swimming pool. When Marilyn Monroe is near, I will suddenly bear a striking resemblance to a bean and egg burrito. When I am 40 like Blanche Dubois, yet still have smooth crème fraiche skin, I will place paper lanterns over light bulbs of desire to hide my aging face to spare young men from shrinking from the hideousness of my old woman-ness and when I am 50 like Norma Desmond, even though I still have skin as smooth as cream cheese, I will beg for a close-up so's to terrify every man on earth with my antiquity and when I am 70 or more and must scrub floors to earn a living, I will work on my hands and knees with rags and buckets while the men use mops and smoke cigars. And when I cry OH! and they call for a doctor and he tells them to boil water, I will die.

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