

Cultural Daily

Independent Voices, New Perspectives

Preparing for Launch

Chiwan Choi · Thursday, January 10th, 2013

On Saturday, [January 12, 2013](#), we release our sixth book, *Eulogy to an Unknown Tree* by Billy Burgos. We had a meeting this past Saturday to make sure everything is in order. I think we're in good shape (assuming, you know, the actual books arrive by Friday) and the excitement/terror ratio has improved greatly.

So here's a rundown of the different facets of the publication event and how we made our decisions:

Location

We have gotten comfortable with holding all of our events in downtown LA. Not only is it our home base, but it is a vibrant, creative, and supportive part of the city with places like The Last Bookstore and Billy's Coffee Shop and numerous galleries and studios, not to mention the subway/bus stations.

But with this book, we decided to move it out west, to Beyond Baroque in Venice. There were a couple of important factors behind this choice. One, Billy has been a part of BB for a little while now, hosting a monthly reading there. That made it a natural fit, where he'd have something of a built-in crowd used to seeing him on stage there. Also, both Billy and his work is connected to the literary history of Los Angeles and in that sense, there is really no more historical a space than Beyond Baroque.

Ordering Books

Unlike most publishers we know, we don't work with a set number for a first run (or any subsequent run) of a book. We gauge the content, the author's schedule, personality, and various other individual factors. We talk to the writers about what they envision with the book, what they want to do with it, how much they want to hustle.

After talking with Billy, we have settled on 250 copies for the initial order. It's not too many, but enough to cover the book release, the Susan Hayden hosted Library Girl reading the following day, [Tongue & Groove](#) a couple of weeks later.

One of the first concerns that Billy expressed to me when I showed interest in publishing *Eulogy* was our ability and flexibility in getting books in his hands to sell at events. I think this addresses that, while not tying up first royalty checks with big initial expenditures.

Guest Readers



Once again, we wanted Billy to feel this is his special day from beginning to end. So as much as we wanted to invite a handful of writers to come and read, we didn't want them to take away from

what we were celebrating.

The solution was to invite some of Billy's favorites and ask them to each read pieces from *Eulogy*. This is a great way to celebrate the book while giving love and respect to the artists, such as Conney Williams, who have inspired Billy in his life and work. Here are some of the details:

PR & Media

There's one thing Writ Large Press has been horrible at and that is getting our books in the hands of reviewers and bloggers. We have to figure out a way to maneuver this area. If any of you want to share your experiences and expertise on this, I'm all ears.

As far as other PR work goes, it's been interesting trying to promote an event during the holidays. We put in work until a few days before Christmas and then decided to put it aside until after New Years Day. I don't know if this was the right decision, but it doesn't appear to have hurt us so far.

[Our Facebook event has crept past 100 RSVPs](#). I know that Facebook RSVPs are often meaningless because we click "Attend" even when we know we're not going to even be in the same country. But still. This is as big a response we've had to any Facebook event that we've created so far.

For what remains of this week, I'll be on Twitter and Facebook and Tumblr, posting the various blurbs that we have received. We'll also be publishing an essay written by [Afaa Michael Weaver](#) regarding *Eulogy*. It was meant to be the Foreword for the book, but after much thought, due to its length and depth, we decided it was best to publish it as an essay on our site.

Other Stuff

A downtown friend is reaching out to her connections and trying to score a case of wine for us! That. Would. Be. Awesome. We're also looking into some live music, possibly an accordion player.

Oh! My old [Square](#) card broke. Luckily, a new one arrived. I think every writer, artist, small press, and anybody that needs to sell things has to have some sort of credit card reader. I have both the Square and [PayPal](#) readers. Because you don't want someone to not buy a book because they don't have cash on them.



Well, that's about everything. Wish us luck on our book release. We are proud to be the publisher of Billy's first book. It's stunning. If you don't believe me, look at what Nick Flynn, author of *Another Bullshit Night in Suck City*, has to say:

"These poems are full of compassion and intelligence but mostly—most thrillingly—they just fucken sing. Open *Eulogy* to an Unknown Tree and enter a world of weight and light and come out the other side transformed."

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