

Cultural Daily

Independent Voices, New Perspectives

Rhys Langston Podell: Three Los Angeles Poems

Rhys Langston Podell · Friday, February 11th, 2022

Rosarito Beach, April 2017

the view between
hustling children, eyes up, hawking *chicle*
while my conscious consumption
says “no” between sign language
and two silent tongues

is a rehearsal
not faltered reconnaissance,
choosing the words to order,
utilitarian, though friendly

and my vacation is not a work day,
this half-searching for
convenient *asada* and arbitrage

so traffic back to the hotel
fails to be an endearing reminder of
home and slow escapism,

here where crossers and passers
walk the freeways frankly

*

The Virgil, February 2020

silent backstage migraine
before the doors pound
the head does
evasive maneuvering, protectionist
like huffing and
puffing legal remedies
at the state level

there is a furnace here

a shower filled with
amplification, a clove of
steel-smelling binges

perhaps not very important
depersonalization
but I am waiting
to be an act,
call to attention myself
as displacement
in matured liberal arts
terms gone the way of
booking agent delivery

Black comics in a white novel
space, hard juxtaposition
in smooth vowels

I laugh exiting the
bleaching lights
to praise
unwound after a tight 15

my mother was an audience
now that I am of age
to own my frankness
and I am here for the color
she gave me

the anise liqueur and mulita
with merch money
dimming pain
now buzzing
and the woman who is subletting my
personal involvement drives me
to my bed and
work order form

tomorrow if the headache doesn't leave
my exuberance will flicker
in its stead
either way

*

Barnsdall, March 2020

reclaiming mind against the dictum
charge your phone on a hill
in an art park

as a public health crisis

echoing siren on the unseen boulevard
below in the same arrhythmia
undiagnosed at this moment, personal nationalism
corporally broaching my subject,

on a predicate's edges
to fall like I am jumping
into a retweet about
rock-bottom healthcare

not the specialist I am, no
bespoke regicide hotline
with a high deductible upheaval
electing for broken electronics,

I will schedule therapy once
played enough quartets of snark
and I plant my bare feet
far from my initial thoughts' street view;

to see now
all metaphor unbecoming

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