

# Cultural Daily

Independent Voices, New Perspectives

## Rick Lupert: Three Poems

Rick Lupert · Wednesday, June 19th, 2019

### What I Remember, This Morning

So much has happened since  
my eyes opened at eight o'clock  
and my arrival at this restaurant.  
But I'm forgetting most of it  
because this carrot bread couldn't  
be any more legitimate. I know  
for sure my mouth opened and  
the carrot bread went inside.  
I have a vague memory of  
handing a postcard to a woman  
named *Keeley* who made promises  
that all efforts would be made to  
transport it to our blonde offspring  
on the west coast. I remember  
getting in a Toyota driven by  
a man who wouldn't say much.  
I'm confident I dragged a brush  
across my teeth and, I'm not sure  
I even want to tell you this, but  
I pressed a hot iron up against  
a buttoned down shirt. It is the  
fourteenth anniversary of the day  
we put on the black and white Chinese  
outfits of our love. Now they call that  
*appropriation*. This is everything  
I remember.

*From Rick's new book, "Hunka Hunka Howdee!"*

\*

### Unsolicited

When I saw the word *unsolicited*

in the submission guidelines  
 I took it as a life-goal.  
 I marched straight to my bank  
 with my latest non-conforming epic.  
 I yelled *nobody move, I'm going to read this!*  
 The security guard wept.  
 The tellers' screams were real.  
 They desperately tried to stop me  
 with bags of money, but  
 I didn't want it. Just an audience.  
 Just an afternoon stopped  
 with a stanza. When I left  
 no-one tried to stop me.  
 I ran to City Hall –  
 Right into the lobby!  
*Tell the mayor I need THIS*  
*passed into law!*  
 I brazenly recited every haiku  
 I'd ever written about the Torah  
 and a few micro-poems  
 I came up with while  
 sitting on a train. The city council  
 closed shop for a week.  
 I found this encouraging.  
 I got myself a barcode. I rewrote  
*Leaves of Grass* on my tongue.  
 They made a film about it.  
 My words come out of the  
 mouths of Chucky dolls.  
 People bled in the theaters.  
 People sawed off their own  
 arms and legs.  
 People shouted *Poetry?!*  
*Why Poetry?! No-one asked*  
*for poetry!*

\*

## Unetaneh Tokef

*Let us speak of the awesomeness*

### I – Fear and trembling

Any good Californian knows  
 to be afraid of days that shake.

I'm afraid of days that shake,  
of days so holy, you can't stand still.

I'm afraid of books that shake open  
and read themselves.

I'm afraid I won't find my name  
on the pages of the book.

I'm afraid of things that make  
the angels afraid

that highlight the guilt,  
of even the angels

## **II – God judges us**

This is where we learn how we'll go  
Who by old age? Who before they've

had the opportunity to be old?  
Before a single wrinkle comes to visit?

Who by failed election?  
Who by blaming the other side?

Who by menage a-hurricane?  
Who by the climate changing them

right off the Earth? Who by  
freak paper-cut accident?

You never know. You never know  
how you'll go, until your gone

and then what can you  
say about it?

## **III – We are helpless**

In case you didn't know  
you are a walking, living,

breathing sack of dust.  
You have always been this dust

and when you forget how to talk

you will dissipate in the wind.

So if you were wondering  
when was the time to say you're sorry

it is now, before the wind  
takes your breath away.

#### **IV – God is enduring**

If we could say Your name  
it's all we would ever say.

It's how we would order our coffee.  
It's the only command we'd tell

our Siris and Alexas. It's the only  
thing that could have the potential

to replace the word *love*. Or maybe  
that's been *Your* name this whole time.

Thank You for putting even one vowel  
of Your name into ours.

It is the smallest glimpse  
of eternity.

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