

# Cultural Daily

Independent Voices, New Perspectives

## Scott Silsbe: Three Poems

Scott Silsbe · Wednesday, February 26th, 2020

### Bill Fox's Guitar

I helped the guys from Cleveland load their gear up the stairs.  
And up by the stage, one of them handed me Bill Fox's guitar.  
I cannot remember now how it became clear to me that it was  
Bill's guitar, but I want to say that it was passed to me almost  
like a rather holy object and pretty much identified as such—  
“This is *Bill's* guitar.” I put it carefully in a corner of the stage.  
And I looked at it. And I thought, “Most people would look at  
that and think that it's just a guitar case. Just an ordinary case  
for a guitar.” But I had a deeper knowledge, an understanding  
of what was in that guitar case and who the guitar belonged to.  
And the songs that had been played on that guitar. Songs that  
I knew, songs that I could sing. So I stood there and stared at  
Bill Fox's guitar in the upstairs room of a bar in Pittsburgh—  
imagining the rooms that guitar had been in, all of the nights  
and stories and melodies that were the history of that guitar.  
And I knew it wasn't an original thought. But because it was  
Bill's guitar, it felt like something—like something special  
or interesting or unique. Even though I knew that it wasn't.  
But it felt like. And that feeling—that feeling *was* something.

\*

### Driving Around Pittsburgh Through an Early March Snow Listening to the Jimmy Woods Sextet's *Conflict*

The singular imagination aims at producing  
that which is both ephemeral and eternal.  
At least I think that's what Bachelard meant.

Today I drove while white fluff piled up  
on my windshield and on the sidewalks  
and streets and the roofs of the buildings  
around me and while somehow, recordings  
of songs from some fifty-five years ago

made their way through the stereo system  
of my beat-up, silver bullet of a minivan.

And it didn't matter how much time was left.

\*

## In Moments

We were out in Jeannette on a Friday night  
and Don was talking about the night before.  
He said, "There were these moments..."  
and I can't remember whether or not  
he used the word "transcendent,"  
but he very well might have.

But anyway, I knew what he meant.  
I might've tried to articulate the same  
kind of thing to Bob as he left my place  
one night after we had a good practice.  
I can almost hear us there on the porch,  
Bob saying, "It sounded good tonight,"  
and me replying, "There were moments."

*(Author photo by Chandra Alderman)*

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