

# Cultural Daily

Independent Voices, New Perspectives

## SURVEILLANCE: The Public Impresses Itself With Duplicity

Ashaki M. Jackson · Wednesday, March 16th, 2016

1.

After the body falls back  
riddled with bullets  
do not expect it to respond to demands  
Lean into its irony—the dead Black body  
asked to defend its death  
and forgive

2.

During autopsy the dead Black body  
unfurls its arms presses its pinched fingers  
against its wounds to extract taxpayers' bullets  
The dead Black body does the work  
for you  
The public decides if  
the dead Black body has value  
The public pulls other dead Black bodies  
out of its hats  
convince themselves that they have  
solved the trick  
present their best guesses in search of applause  
from an audience  
of dead Black bodies

3.

There is video that corrects  
police reports The public asks  
Do we have enough footage  
The view count increases  
exponentially The public  
searches for the sleight of hand  
Rewind  
Let us see again where the traffic stop  
becomes murder

4.

The autopsy answers Homicide  
The public asks What is the dead Black body's criminal history  
The public adds qualifiers adjusts

the narrative    reduces the dead  
 Black body's worth  
       are confident in its threat  
 Here is the sleight  
 5.  
 {applause}

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For 10 weeks, we will feature one poem per week from *Surveillance*, the new chapbook [available now](#) from Writ Large Press. These poems by Ashaki M. Jackson explore police killings of Blacks captured on video and the public's consumption of these videos. Previous poems: [1](#), [2](#), [3](#), [4](#), [5](#), [6](#), [7](#)

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