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

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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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