

# Cultural Daily

Independent Voices, New Perspectives

## Billy Collins: "The Music of the Spheres"

Billy Collins · Thursday, January 12th, 2012

*Former poet laureate Billy Collins' most recent book is *Horoscopes for the Dead* (Random House, 2011). We are proud to be premiering this poem today.*

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### The Music of the Spheres

The woman on the radio  
who was lodging the old complaint  
that her husband never listens to her  
reminded me of the music of the spheres,  
that chord of seven notes,  
one for each of the visible planets,  
which has been sounding  
since the beginning of the universe,  
and which we can never hear,  
according to Pythagoras  
because we hear it all the time  
so it sounds the same as silence.  
But let's say the needle were lifted  
from the spinning grooves  
of those celestial orbs-  
then people would stop  
on the street and look up,  
and others would stop in the fields  
and hikers would stop in the woods  
and look this way and that  
as if they were hearing something  
for the first time,  
and that husband would lower  
the newspaper from his face  
look at his wife  
who has been standing in the doorway  
and ask Did you just say something, dear?

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