

Cultural Daily

Independent Voices, New Perspectives

Todd Fox: Three Poems

Todd Fox · Wednesday, May 24th, 2017

Todd Fox, a teacher and writer, is a product of Long Beach State's MFA program (1999). Excelling at eating and sleeping, but needing to do less of both, he continues to look for a better, more effective way to push the square wheel forward. His poetry has been published in *Sheila-Na-Gig*, *First Class*, *Heeltap*, *The Brobdingnagian Times* (from Cork, Ireland), *Angleflesh*, and elsewhere. Beyond poetry, he is making steady progress on the American poet Gerald Locklin's biography, but there's lots to do there. A visual catalog of Locklin's work, which was the impetus for the biography project, can be accessed at www.geraldlocklin.org.

The Girl at the Coffee Shop

Who told me she found a new job
Leans forward on the counter, saying my order
Before I do: "Large French roast over ice, right?"

I ask, "Is this it?" She forces a smile, her eyelids
Meeting slowly. They touch, then reopen.
"Wish me luck," falls off a breath her mouth
Previously held captive.

Her brown hair is pulled back loosely. Longer strands
Wrap around the bundle as wispy threads dangle in her face.
I attempt to plead, "Don't leave," but cannot evict the words.

Grabbing my waiting coffee, I look into its blackness
And smell the bitterness as the hot aroma condenses and cools.

Looking up, I say "Good luck."
The sun momentarily forces it way through a cloud bank,
Thick and gray—then is forced back, like a solicitor
Getting the front door slammed in his face.

Why I Like Champagne

Corks don't go back in.

The Color Surrounding You

(For Julie Kimball)

I see you, standing alone,
Tall, with platinum hair, against
The haze of a cadmium-cerise sky.

I was alone that night, too.
Our empty hands could have held
Each other's—fingertips tracing the outline
Of lips and shoulders, soft, round, smooth.
Nightfall appeared Sloe-black,
Then finally, just black.

You wait alone, forty minutes
After sunset on a Sunday in late August.
The heat of the asphalt warms your sandaled feet,
Toenails painted emerald green.

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