

Unveilings... ..

By

Gary Beck

WHY I LIKE IT: *Poetry Editor HEZEKIAH writes... Gary's 'Unveilings' are as riveting as reflective, revealing as recondites. We get our share of poetry on this sweeping, suffering-sickness scourge saga, But Beck's Covid Chronicles are both engaging and amusing, (I, in particular, present as not a bad looking man--when not even armed on a heist--in the Age of Plague: Ball cap, mask, sunglasses. And the money, not to mention the money I've saved on face powders, rogue, lipstick and chondrolaryngoplasty--you can't get a closer shave than trimming of a little trachea of the top.) 'Pandemic,' "I walk plague streets / hat low on head, / mask tight on face, / sunglasses hiding eyes, / A complete disguise." 'Transmission,' "I don't know how I got it. / I took all the precautions," . . . "I can't give it to / whoever gave it to me, / but I'll pass it on . . ." Beck take a break from Coronas after 19 or so and move on to global warnings and "whiteout" . . . a testament to the narrow minded." . . . "unable to connect / local to global." Upbraiding the weather lady, "Unless she's a recording, / a sleekly designed android" . . . "while I succumbing to illusion / as alienation subtracts me / from the community of Man." In spite of himself, Beck is infectious, how ever afflicted by endemic visits and enviro-conflicts. In 'Presence' he exhibits a theatrical passion for the supernatural, bless his soul, the ghost of Enrico Caruso no less--go Figaro...*

Pandemic

I walk plague streets
hat low on head,
mask tight on face,
sunglasses hiding eyes,
A complete disguise.

I scrupulously maintain
six foot distancing,
but strangers come closer
intruding in my space,
willing to deliver
contagious disease.

I do not warn off
dangerous incursions

provoking paranoia
tempting me to draw
my chastising pistol.

Transmission

I don't know how I got it.
I took all the precautions,
wore a mask, distanced,
but I still got it.
yet don't look too bad.
So when I go out
no one knows I've got Covid.
If I give it to someone
they won't know where they got it.
I can't give it to
whoever gave it to me,
but I'll pass it on
so someone else gets sick.

Time Out of Joint

Once everyone believed
the world was flat.
Most listened to science
and agreed it was round.
Some still believe it's flat,
a testament to the narrow minded.
Many do not believe
in climate change,
denying the wildfires,
hurricanes, tornados,
other natural disasters,
have nothing to do
with global warming,
ignoring the scientists.
These same deniers
accept daily weather changes,
one day warm, next cold,

as condition normal,
unable to connect
local to global.

Snow Storm

The snow keeps falling
faster and faster.
I can no longer see the building
just across the street.
I sit in internet cave
coddled with electric comforts.
The weather man keeps telling us
it's a big blizzard.
We need no PhD
to tell us that.
The whiteout is complete.
I sit in internet cave
in total isolation,
insulated from reality
by the white blanket
covering the outer world.
For a few moments I wonder
has everything disappeared?
Am I left alone
in the indifferent universe?
Then the smug voice
of the overpaid newscaster
reminds me life goes on...
Unless she's a recording,
a sleekly designed android
meant to convince us
existence continues,
while I succumbing to illusion
as alienation subtracts me
from the community of Man.

Presence

Theatre professionals once knew
that every theatre has a ghost,
that's why we have a ghost light,

so the ghost can find his way
through a darkened theatre.
All my theatres had a ghost,
always benevolent,
never intrusive,
a positive presence.

My theatres were constructed
in non-theater environments,
adapted to odd spaces.
The oddest and best
was on Broadway and 42nd Street,
the Old Knickerbocker hotel
that was one of the poshest
in the early 1900's,
until it closed in 1921.

We had 10,000 square feet
on the 12th floor.
It was my first theatre,
not someone else's venue
and after the first night's rehearsal
I sat alone, enjoying the place,
when soft, beautiful singing filled the room.
I recognized an aria
that I heard before
and assumed it came from another floor.

I was curious the next day,
learned no one was above or below.
I heard a different aria that night
and tried to trace the source,
but couldn't find it.

The next night I had company,
my stage manager,
and production manager,
who also heard the wondrous song.
We did some research and learned
Enrico Caruso had his suite
in the space we occupied
and sang the national anthem
from his window at the end
of World War I.

My first theatre. My first ghost.

And what a ghost!
He sang to us many times
and we never told others,
for who believes in ghosts anymore?

THE POET SPEAKS: *Most of my poetry in recent years has been issue poetry, often concerned with the growing problems of a confused and divided society, with economic inequality a recurring theme. My influences are many, Grey, Whitman, Elliot, the French Symbolists, Lermantov, e.e. cummings, the list goes on and on. Poetry is a unique form of communication for me that can dazzle the senses when I read. I write in many formats, fiction, drama, essay, but poetry allows my most direct approach to readers, for immediate impact of deeper understanding.*

AUTHOR BIO: Gary Beck has spent most of his adult life as a theater director and worked as an art dealer when he couldn't earn a living in the theater. He has also been a tennis pro, a ditch digger and a salvage diver. His original plays and translations of Moliere, Aristophanes and Sophocles have been produced Off Broadway. His poetry, fiction and essays have appeared in hundreds of literary magazines and his published books include 32 poetry collections, 14 novels, 3 short story collections, 1 collection of essays and 5 books of plays. Published poetry books include: Dawn in Cities, Assault on Nature, Songs of a Clerk, Civilized Ways, Displays, Perceptions, Fault Lines, Tremors, Perturbations, Rude Awakenings, The Remission of Order, Contusions, Desperate Seeker and Learning Curve (Winter Goose Publishing). Earth Links, Too Harsh For Pastels, Severance, Redemption Value, Fractional Disorder, Disruptions, Ignition Point, Resonance and Turbulence (Cyberwit Publishing. Forthcoming: Double Envelopment). Motifs (Adelaide Books). His novels include Extreme Change (Winter Goose Publishing). State of Rage, Wavelength, Protective Agency, Obsess, Flawed Connections and Still Obsessed (Cyberwit Publishing. Forthcoming: Call to Valor). His short story collections include: A Glimpse of Youth (Sweatshoppe Publications). Now I Accuse and other stories (Winter Goose Publishing). Dogs Don't Send Flowers and other stories (Wordcatcher Publishing). Collected Essays of Gary Beck (Cyberwit Publishing). The Big Match and other one act plays (Wordcatcher Publishing). Collected Plays of Gary Beck Volume 1 and Plays of Aristophanes translated, then directed by Gary Beck, Collected Plays of Gary Beck Volume II and Four Plays by Moliere translated then directed by Gary Beck (Cyberwit Publishing. Forthcoming: Collected Plays of Gary Beck Volume III). Gary lives in New York City.