



Poems Into Guns

poems 2017-2018
by Rick Lupert

Poems Into Guns

poems 2017-2018
by Rick Lupert

Poems Into Guns

Copyright © 2018 by Rick Lupert
All rights reserved

Ain't Got No Press
15522 Stagg Street
Van Nuys, CA 91406

Design and Layout ~ Rick Lupert

Author Bio Photo ~ Alexis Rhone Fancher

No part of this book may be used or reproduced in any manner whatsoever without written permission from the author except in the case of brief quotations embodied in critical articles and reviews. For more information or to contact the author for any reason try:

Rick@PoetrySuperHighway.com

or

<http://PoetrySuperHighway.com/>

First Electronic Edition ~ December, 2018

“Thoughts are the gun, words are the bullets,
deeds are the target, the bulls-eye is heaven.”

Douglas Horton

Poems Into Guns

I'd like to load poems into
all the guns instead of

the death they usually put in there.
Let the words clog up the

inner workings. Let a stanza
wrap itself around the trigger.

Let a dozen traditional haiku
take residence in the barrel.

I'd like to load poems into all the guns
and then still never fire them.

Let them linger in there
until the metal rusts it all away

and all that's left is living people
and metaphor.

Tree of Life

Eleven seeds stolen
from a tree, while a baby
earned its name

I don't know
any kind of bullets
but ones of hate

And the one meant
to provide comfort tells us
to take up arms

The only arms I need
are holding fast to the tree
I, its forever supporter

For Aretha Franklin

Another set of notes
from the soundtrack
to our entire lives
exists now only
as soul

mad respect

Ship of Cats

After my wife leaves for work
my bed turns into a sea of cats
that stretches as far as the

eyes can see, which in this case
is the wall on the other side of
the room. Their bodies raising

and lowering like the name
of any seafaring ship you've
heard of. I would be specific

but sometimes forcing the
reader to do the work of poetry
misses the point.

I like to think I'm in charge
but one flick of an ear and it's
my hands which rush to comfort

seeking the treasure of a purr.
I'm the one who fills their bowls.
I'm the one who swabs their decks.

I'm the one who rides these waves.
with the loyalty of one who
knows their rank, who would do

anything in service to their captain.
I'd tell you more, but if I don't feed
them soon, this whole thing

is going down.

Walk Out

These eyes have a history with shoes.
Piles of shoes, without feet, without legs.
Decades ago, their owners turned to dust.

Yesterday, an army of shoes,
shoes without bodies, shoes laid out
on a lawn, shoes ignoring a Capitol

A Capitol containing eyes, and hands
and pens and power, and men and women
put in shoes by turns of levers.

Today, people hardly old enough to
buy their own shoes, stepped out of
sacred halls, forewent pie and school,

filled their shoes with strength and statement,
cried names of seventeen gone.
Their bones younger than Columbine.

Their fingers, visibly on tomorrow's levers.
Move aside they say. *There'll be no more
triggers. No more piles of shoes.*

The Algae Rhythms Are Changing

The French ducks are changing the algae rhythms
the rhymes too

Now only twenty five peanuts will feast on your news
Their persimmons!
They're choking on your persimmons!

I would like to chew myself into little bits
Little tiny readable gums

Therefore, I ask for your flavor!
Please, before you breathe again!

Leave me a quack!
Leave me a communist!

Stick your Hell to my thing!
Any of my thing!

Do you like me?!
Stop it!

I need your pictures on my nude feed!
Show me everything!

I'm about to go down.
I'm about to get off.

I would die if you didn't vive le moi!
Maintenant mes amis!

This is so true! I checked with Snoopy!
Internuts!

For Bill Nichols

I'm thinking of Bill Nichols today
The man who handed you a guitar

The man who cautiously fielded your call
from that Pittsburgh bathroom

The man who took a lifetime of ingredients
and made us a you.

A gift cherished by everyone with a voice
and a desire to do the work.

I'm thinking of Bill Nichols today
the father, the husband, the man who

found his tribe. His conscience
alive and well in the melodies we sing.

Angels and Kittens

a poem for Torah portion Vayishlach

Jacob sent angels ahead of him to his brother Esau

Can you imagine having angels at your disposal?
Holy Roombas with wings available for all your tasks.
What would you do with them?

Would they sweep up your wilderness?
Guard every corner? Help with the meals?
What would they wear and

are you responsible to provide it?
Are their posters in their tents detailing
the benefits you provide?

Or are you the one getting all the benefits?
These angels who you send to do
the things that need to be done.

Remember, they are a gift
and it is not really you who
they are working for.

*Jacob became very frightened and was distressed;
so he divided the people who were with him...into two camps.*

It's a smart plan, Jacob.
They always tell you to diversify your portfolio
in case one investment doesn't work out

in case the basket holding your eggs
tips over and you find yourself bemoaning
useless sidewalk omelets.

In case of war with your brother
who you haven't seen in twenty years
who may have an itch to get his birthright back

who loved the soup you made him
but can still fill your fingers
on the back of his foot.

*I have become small from all the kindnesses
and from all the truth that You have rendered*

I always thought it was Steve Martin
who first said "let's get small", but he
was channeling Jacob this whole time.

Jacob, small from kindness – The way praise
should be received, keeping your head
the same size it was before

you knew you did anything good.
The truth shall make you small –
a manageable bite-size so

everyone you encounter will want to
put you in their pockets, take care of you
like kittens, giving you the humility you need

to found a whole new nation.

Lyfting

Addie asks me if I have my wedding ring on.
It's been like this ever since that one northeastern debacle
when I didn't.

I'm sitting behind our Lyft driver whose seat is
so far back, the space between my knees and his body
is uncomfortable.

It's good practice for being on the plane
I imagine someone telling me in a comforting manner.
His music is louder than it should be in this situation

and he's already taken us on the wrong freeway.
To be fair, there are those who believe that
all freeways are wrong.

Also we can tell his relationship with the law
may be suspect as the number on his speedometer
is one larger than most legal bodies would prefer.

Yes, I'm wearing my wedding ring,
I tell Addie.
Til the day I die.

Conversation Between The Peabody Duckmaster and the Ducks While Riding the Elevator Back to the Rooftop Duck Palace

Duckmaster: You guys were great today. All day – the quacking,
the splashing...and you nailed the red carpet back
to the elevator. The kids loved it.

Ducks: Quack.

Duckmaster: I know!

The Future Mayor

We meet the self-proclaimed future mayor of Memphis
in an art gallery collective space on Main Street.

He scoffs when we tell him we're going to Graceland.
He says they only tell you about Graceland and

Beale Street, and the Civil Rights Museum, and not
the *real Memphis*. *His Memphis*...the one of art collectives

and Slave Haven. The one of barbecue joints we couldn't
possibly eat at because of our personal prohibitions.

I tell him there's a reason Niagara Falls is one of the most
visited tourist attractions. It's not because it's popular.

It's because it's awesome. I keep one foot each on and off
the beaten path. I lift what enters both eyes equally high.

I think he sees my point and realizes we *did* wander
into an arts collective. He wants us to come back for

his coronation, though I don't think that's the word he used.
He's got agents in Los Angeles and says he's going to need us.

He is friendly like most people we've met in Memphis.
They rival Ireland with their eagerness to smile.

We smile and walk away towards the famous Beale Street.
Tomorrow we'll meet the King, or at least his ghost.

I haven't slept since the word Monday lined our calendars.
My ability to keep my eyes open, has left the building.

A Few Morning Quickies

I
I'm all for collecting
and redeeming points
but the Hilton HHonors
tote bag feels like it would
be too much of a public display of allegiance.

II
The Tennessee state Museum
next door to our hotel is closed
for relocation. Maybe if I walk around with a
Hilton Honors Tote bag, the concierge
will give me the keys so we can
develop a private tour of the
hollowed out shell of Tennessee.

III
Juan drives us to breakfast.
I want to walk around Nashville
with a Juan branded tote bag.

In Line at the Buffet at Wynn,

Las Vegas, August 2018

I'm waiting in line at the Wynn Buffet.
Brunch is on the distant horizon and
line politics are on full display.

A woman the aisle over isn't aware
how her backpack intrudes on the
airspace of this one.

A man in front of me is perusing
criminal mug shots on his phone.
Occasionally he'll hold one up to

his friend and say "how about this one?"
His friend shakes his head and says "no."
Every time. Even U.S. Marshalls need to

eat buffet from time to time. Eventually
someone in their party mutters something
about the VIP line and suddenly

they're gone, presumably with champagne
in their hands and all the food we have
miles yet to eat in their mouths.

It's okay. They weren't particularly good at
filling in the space in front of them.
They should have special lines for

People who are focusing on their phones
instead of moving forward. "Take all the
time you want lines" they'll call them

I think as I finish writing these words
with awkward amount of space between
me and the people in front of me

and feel the hungry stares of the
brunch starved ones behind me.

We're Going to Japan

In my best non-lying voice
I tell Addie *In Japan, if you belch
they give you 10,000 yen.*

successfully ruining next
summer's vacation

On Top of a Colorado Mountain

*How many chipmunks am I
allowed to bring home?*

I ask Addie via electronic message.
They come right up to you in the line

and eat any nuts you happen to have with you.
They're ripe for the petting.

As many as they let you take on the plane.
Addie answers

Kol Nidre

I heard *Kol Nidre* on a violin tonight.
They should take all legal documents
and set them to music.

All vows –
This legal document
written in unholy language

a prenuptial agreement
for our inevitable failing.
This relationship with

the year itself
a contract awaiting
the biggest signature.

Please, cancel my subscription
but charge my card anyway.
I don't deserve the content.

Every promise I make
a guaranteed broken one
between today and

a year's worth of
Jewish days from now.
The next time the shofar

is dusted off,
we'll have this conversation again.
Forgive me this year

and last year and next.
Forgive everyone who ever
stood at the mountain.

Forgive our promises
our oaths, our vows, all vows
You made the whole world

and on this day and every day
You knew this would happen.
Pardon me. Please.

about the author

Rick Lupert has been involved with poetry in Los Angeles since 1990. He is the recipient of the 2017 Ted Slade Award, and the 2014 Beyond Baroque Literary Arts Center Distinguished Service Award, a 2 time Pushcart Prize Nominee, and a Best of the Net nominee. He served for two years as a co-director of the Valley Contemporary Poets, a non-profit literary organization based in the San Fernando Valley. His poetry has appeared in numerous magazines and literary journals, including *The Los Angeles Times*, *Chiron Review*, *The CCAR Journal*, *Rattle*, *Stirring*, *PoeticDiversity.org*, *Zuzu's Petals*, *Caffeine Magazine*, *Blue Satellite* and others. He edited the anthologies *A Poet's Siddur: Liturgy Through the Eyes of Poets*, *Ekhrastia Gone Wild*, *The Night Goes on All Night - Noir Inspired Poetry* and *A Poet's Haggadah: Passover through the Eyes of Poets* anthology and is the author of 23 books: *Beautiful Mistakes* (Rothco Press), *17 Holy Syllables – A haiku for Every Aliyah of Every Torah Portion*, *God Wrestler: A Poem for Every Torah Portion* (Ain't Got No Press), *Professor Clown on Parade*, *Romancing the Blarney Stone*, *Donut Famine*, *Making Love to the 50 Ft. Woman*, *The Gettysburg Undress* (Rothco Press), *Paris: It's The Cheese*, *I Am My Own Orange County*, *Mowing Fargo*, *I'm a Jew. Are You?*, *Stolen Mummies*, *I'd Like to Bake Your Goods*, *A Man With No Teeth Serves Us Breakfast*, *We Put Things In Our Mouths*, *Sinzibuckwud*, *Death of a Mauve Bat*, *Nothing in New England Is New* (Ain't Got No Press), *Lizard King of the Laundromat*, *Brendan Constantine is My Kind of Town* (Inevitable Press), *Feeding Holy Cats* and *Up Liberty's Skirt* (Cassowary Press). He hosted the long running Cobalt Café reading series in Canoga Park for almost twenty one years (1994-2014) and has been lucky enough to read his poetry all over the world.



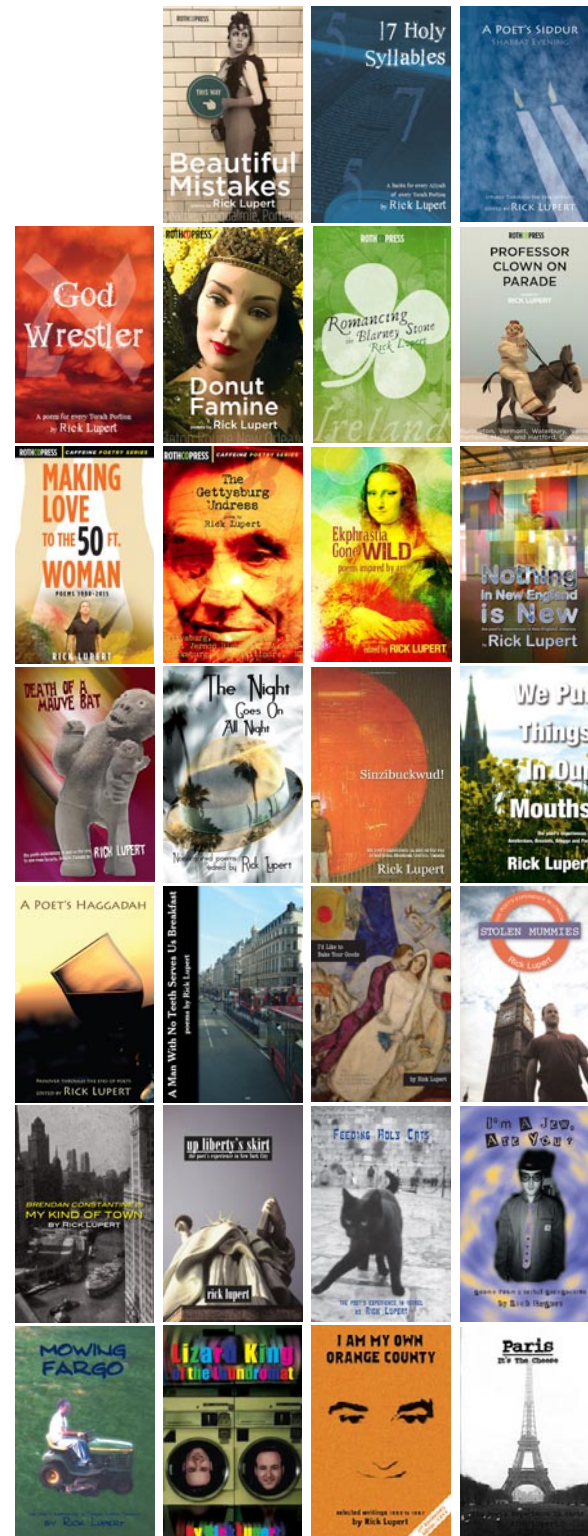
Photo by Alexis Rhone Fancher

Rick created and maintains the Poetry Super Highway, an online publication and resource for poets. (<http://PoetrySuperHighway.com/>)

He also writes and draws (with Brendan Constantine) the daily web comic "Cat and Banana" and writes the Jewish Poetry column "From the Lupertverse" for www.JewishJournal.com.

Currently Rick works as music teacher at Southern California synagogues and as a freelance graphic and web designer for anyone who would like to help pay his mortgage.

He lives in Van Nuys, California with his wife Addie, son Jude, and five cats. (Which is far more cats than his wife would prefer.)



Rick's Other Books:

- Beautiful Mistakes**
Rothco Press, May., 2018
- 17 Holy Syllables: A Haiku for Every Aliyah of Every Torah Portion**
Rothco Press, May., 2018
- A Poet's Siddur: Shabbat Evening: Liturgy Through the Eyes of Poets**
Ain't Got No Press, November., 2017
- God Wrestler: A Poem for Every Torah Portion**
Ain't Got No Press, August., 2017
- Donut Famine**
Rothco Press, December., 2016
- Romancing the Blarney Stone**
Rothco Press, December., 2016
- Professor Clown on Parade**
Rothco Press, December., 2016
- Making Love to the 50 Ft. Woman**
Rothco Press, May., 2015
- The Gettysburg Undress**
Rothco Press, Sept., 2014
- Ekhrastia Gone Wild (edited by)**
Ain't Got No Press, Jul., 2013
- Nothing in New England is New**
Ain't Got No Press, Mar., 2013
- Death of a Mauve Bat**
Ain't Got No Press, Jan., 2012
- The Night Goes On All Night**
Noir Inspired Poems (edited by)
Ain't Got No Press, Nov., 2011
- Sinzibuckwud!**
Ain't Got No Press, Jan., 2011
- We Put Things In Our Mouths**
Ain't Got No Press, Jan., 2010
- A Poet's Haggadah (edited by)**
Ain't Got No Press, Apr., 2008
- A Man With No Teeth Serves Us Breakfast**
Ain't Got No Press, May, 2007
- I'd Like to Bake Your Goods**
Ain't Got No Press, Jan., 2006
- Stolen Mummies**
Ain't Got No Press, Feb., 2003
- Brendan Constantine is My Kind of Town**
Inevitable Press, Sept., 2001
- Up Liberty's Skirt**
Cassowary Press, March, 2001
- Feeding Holy Cats**
Cassowary Press, May, 2000
- I'm a Jew, Are You?**
Cassowary Press, May, 2000
- Mowing Fargo**
Sacred Beverage Press, Dec., 1998
- Lizard King of the Laundromat**
The Inevitable Press, Feb., 1998
- I Am My Own Orange County**
Ain't Got No Press, May, 1997
- Paris: It's The Cheese**
Ain't Got No Press, May, 1996



**KILLING
PEOPLE
IS
RUDE**

