

Seattle City Council

Public Safety, Civil Rights, and Arts Committee Meeting

Tuesday, 2 PM, June 15th, 2004

Words' Worth

The Poetry Program of the Seattle City Council

Curated by **Terrilynn Towns**

Today's Words' Worth poet is **Mike Dillon**

Mike Dillon is an award winning journalist and publisher of Pacific Publishing Company, which publishes the Queen Anne News, Magnolia News, Capitol Hill Times, Beacon Hill News & South District Journal, North Seattle Herald Outlook, Madison Park Times and Kirkland Courier. His two books of poetry are "the road behind," published by Red Moon Press, and "Riverbank," published by Bellowing Ark Press. He has read at a number of Seattle venues, including the Seattle Art Museum and the Frye Art Museum.

Vigils

By Mike Dillon

When you turned out the light you thought
just another bad night's sleep ahead.
And at first you slept until a doubled fist
dug into your hip socket and yanked
your trout-white pain from the deep.
And so the fight was on with something mulish,
something heavier than the midnight stone
that squeezes your breath into the hovering ghosts
of those things you know you did a long time ago.
All night you two wrestled until the first robin
caroled, a strange voice croaked: "Let me go."
And it was your voice, sure as rifle crack,
you heard declare: "Not until you bless me."

You rise from the empty, storm tossed bed.
You draw back the yellowed curtain,
your mind clear as blue sky after a week of rain.

Out the window, more rain.
Dried blood throbs beneath your nails.
Out on the sidewalk you notice you are limping.
You look around and see the others, too,
are limping, some more, some less.
Like a child you want to call out to them
but instead keep silent as they thread
their ways through the rain
with the mysterious blessedness of the wounded,
walking on, walking < just like you.

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