

Seattle City Council

**Public Safety, Government Relations, and Arts Committee Meeting**

Friday, 2:00 PM, February 23, 2007

**Words' Worth**

The Poetry Program of the Seattle City Council

Curated by **Brian McGuigan**

Today's poet is **Harvey Goldner**

**Harvey Goldner** lives in Seattle, which is perhaps the world's most beautiful city, whenever the sun is shining, which is rarely. His poems have appeared widely in various journals, print and online, both in North America and the U.K. His most recent chapbook, *Her Bright Bottom*, was published by Spankstra Press (2006). A collection of his poems, *The Resurrection of Bert Ringold*, is forthcoming from Cinco Puntos Press (El Paso, TX) in the autumn of 2007.

**Emerald Sink City Blues**

by Harvey Goldner

Because Seattle's so sad, so slow, we  
slurp cup after cup of espresso and  
frequently force ourselves to go  
to clubs and shows which feature local  
comedians and loco bozo jokes of  
rock & rap & roll, but even so  
it's no go. Even after much pounding  
laughter and many bitter  
drafts of caffeine, we  
still feel sad and slow.

So what's the deal? Why,  
in spite of our brave efforts,  
do we feel so low? What power  
drags our collective ego, down so?  
The sloppy weather? No, I don't  
think so. Some grave phenomenon  
sinks us even amid brief summer's  
hot green and gold.

You know. It's the  
Norwegians.

Yes, somewhere in Ballard  
(perhaps in a tavern)  
sit a dozen or so  
Norwegians  
who, dreaming as one,  
generate a magnetic mood so heavy and icy  
blue that neither I, you,  
nor yo' mama  
could possible stand up  
and mambo under it.

But what can we do? What can  
we do, short of exploding  
our brains with Colt 45's,  
or taking graceful swan dives  
off the Aurora, or spiking  
our caffeine with amphetamine,  
or moving to Florida's Okefenokee  
or Arizona or even Southern— God no!—  
California?

You know.  
We can form a committee  
and take up a collection  
to send those dozen or so  
Norwegians  
to a farmhouse outside Fargo,  
North Dakota, in the middle of no-  
where, hopefully below  
six feet of snow,  
where those  
Norwegians  
can amuse themselves,  
but under quarantine.  
And, ja, I think I'll go too.

-- end --