

Michael Ruby

SUBWAY POEMS

3-7-12

Every so often,
waiting for the subway,
I see someone
who died many years ago.

7-20-12

The wrong train comes,
the G train.
That seems about right.
Today, I mean.
This year, I mean.

10-10-12

I used to have
all the time
in the world
to look
at clouds.
But now
I only have
a few minutes
each day
as I walk
to the subway
on 7th Ave.,
which happens
to be
a good place
to look
at clouds.
Hallelujah,
Jesus!

8-30-13

WHAT ARE YEARS?

That's
that woman
all these years
later

That's
that guy
all these years
later

That's
what happens
to people

10-25-13

Remember Dr. Zhivago's death?
That's how it'll be for me, won't it?

10-28-13

There are an unusual number
of zombies on 7th Ave. today.
It's hard to walk to the subway.
Zombies—and midgets—and freaks.
Old freaks I grew up with
and who never changed,
God bless 'em. God bless 'em,
God fucking bless 'em...
And a massive truck driver
with his massive truck
straight out of R. Crumb's Zap Comix,
ready to grind to pieces
every zombie, midget and freak
who gets in his fucking way.

And people in black leather jackets
like me, or the late Lou Reed,
he'll grind us to pieces, too.

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Each day,
as I walk past
La Bagel Delight,
I hope to see
our old neighbor
Selwyn there,
hanging out
on a bench,
bumming cigs,
but I don't,
I don't see him,
and I fear
I never will again.

That time
a month ago
was an apparition,
a one-shot deal,
“not a precedent,”
as my father
or father-in-law
used to say.

Michael Ruby is the author of five full-length poetry books: *At an Intersection* (Alef, 2002), *Window on the City* (BlazeVOX, 2006), *The Edge of the Underworld* (BlazeVOX, 2010), *Compulsive Words* (BlazeVOX, 2010), and *American Songbook* (Ugly Duckling Presse, 2013). His trilogy, *Memories, Dreams and Inner Voices* (Station Hill, 2012), includes *Fleeting Memories*, an Ugly Duckling web-book with 80 photos. He is also the author of three Dusie chapbooks, *The Star-Spangled Banner*, *Close Your Eyes* and *Foghorns*, and is the co-editor of Bernadette Mayer's forthcoming collected early books from Station Hill.