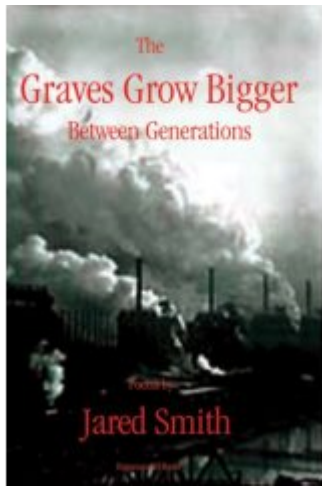


The Graves Grow Bigger Between Generations by Jared Smith



The Graves Grow Bigger Between Generations. Poems by Jared Smith.
(Higganum Hill Books PO BOX 666 Higganum Hill CT 06441
rcdebold@mindspring.com \$12.95

Like Eliot, Stevens, and others, Jared Smith has been a businessman as well as a poet. In fact for years Smith was a highly sought after energy consultant. But Smith's, (who graduated with an MFA in Writing from New York University), real calling is poetry. He was part of the literary scene in Greenwich Village in the 70's writing for such journals as the "Home Planet News," and the "New York Quarterly;" publishing his work regularly, downing shots with Gregory Corso, the whole ball of wax. But "real" life reared its ugly head, and Smith had to make a living—and as you well know you ain't going to make it writing poetry. Poetry has never been a magnet for the greenbacks. After years in the hallowed halls of government and the boardroom Smith is back to his eternally young muse Poetry. In his new collection of poetry from Higganum Hill Books: "The Grave Grows Bigger Between Generations," Smith not only writes about the hardscrabble life of the workingman, but his own rebirth as a poet. In his brilliant poem "Having Never Wanted To Own The Business" he writes to the ephemeral, dust to dust nature of the corporate milieu, and indeed of all of life, no matter how exalted:

" I can tell you that having come back from countless halls.
I am a name on better than a thousand roll-o-dex from NY to

Wilderness House Literary Review 3/1

Washington,
each one retired to rooms with shoeboxes of data cards and dust.
My eyes are the marble of office complexes and monuments.
Rodents scurry through my corridors with wireless whiskers
intent on gnawing their way to eternity on cockroach eggs."

And here with bright flashes of evocative imagery the middle-aged
businessman comes back to the trappings and truths of the poet's life:

" I have come back to the page-torn poetry books I read and wrote
and to the fiery shriek of invisible angels celebrating
my return and the echoes of my now never empty room
and to the shared nights of readings, cryings, lovings,
amid the shingles of material poverty where soup bones boiled
all day and a can of beans was what we ate on a good day
and we drank each evening on what we could borrow
amid cigarettes and marijuana and loud music espresso machines
and made love in that until the sun rose and we had to hand in
our time machine cards that marked down our uselessness,
making ourselves a mockery of the machinery of diatribe."

And in the poem "Poets" he defines the poet as an enemy of the leaders,
the establishment, and the status quo. Smith reminds us of the vital role
of the poet, the absolute necessity for a weaver of words, a visionary,
someone who can see beyond the quotidian.

"The enemies of our leaders are poets
who listen to winds at night as they walk dark alleys,

who stop at lonely diners for a cup of coffee
before jotting down a few notes and going off
into the shuffle of their tired footsteps;
who come together again in the workplace
speaking in tongues marketers do not understand,
and seducing women with eyes that do not waver.

The leaders cannot lead without the words
a culture creates within itself

Wilderness House Literary Review 3/1

within its needs,
poets.”

Highly Recommended.

Reviewed by Doug Holder