

Seattle City Council

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

Tuesday, 2:00 PM, July 17, 2007

**Words' Worth**

The Poetry Program of the Seattle City Council

Curated by **Brian McGuigan**

Today's poet is **Ira Parnes**

Ira Parnes grew up on the verdant Banks of the Delaware River in Milford, New Jersey. He has worked mainly as a roofer in the greater Seattle area since 1993. Mr. Parnes has a degree in Public Art from the University of Washington and is a combat veteran of the Global War on Terrorism. His poetry has been frequently published in the independent presses of Seattle, and he has written two collected works; *Olympian Lowroad* (Somanybirds Publishing) and *Fever Dream* (Spankstra Press).

**I live in a field of high-pressure systems**

by Ira Parnes

Infinite voltage in a dangerous drain basin  
This is like  
a windshield to a white out  
or a car wash time machine – you go in, ten A.M., you come out  
and it's dusk  
the GRASS has a supernatural glow to its GREEN like a cemetery lawn on chrome film  
this HAPPENS to people  
I got here because I could not read or write  
But someone fixed my teeth at an early age, gave me chlorine pills and a sixty-foot length  
of bait hose  
Now I OWN the BAIT HOSE FACTORY  
If you want in on the glory, it isn't hard  
just hear my tapes each day  
And we'll build a bridge to Eastern Block Galaxies  
They park at the intersection of 85<sup>th</sup> and Aurora  
Right there by Jack in the Box  
I pass it now in my night flights  
In a world they can't touch  
We can all have this: deep sweaters and a sunburn  
Essential oils and alpine instruments  
A neglected bassoon and a flugel horn welded to a single shot Italian twelve gauge  
My red windbreaker is a lightning rod for open-hearted ministrations on the Avenue  
If you see me, wave, so I know there are more of us

-- end --