

What? Why?

The man they called Black

I was first introduced to Nobius Black and his print zine, Calliope Nerve, back in the mySpace days by space poet, J. D. Nelson. It was one of those bulletins, you know, that we used to pay attention to. Something about an actual print zine that comes to your mailbox and it was free. I sent a quick email requesting a copy and a few short days later, it came. In a regular-sized envelope, one page printed on both sides.

There were many things that I loved about this zine. It was a nice change from all the internet reading to have something print to hold in my hands. It was free. But most of all, I loved the way Nobius laced together the subtitle, poems, and quotes into a cohesive theme. It started the tick tick tick in my brain that led to Rural Messengers Press and the mailers.

After corresponding for a while and trading print lovelies through the mail, Nobius asked if I might be interested in joining an APA. I'd never heard of an APA before. He hooked me up with the Central Mailer and soon enough there was a sample issue in my mailbox. It was a big, stapled mess with some odd-shaped booklets, CDs and other groovy stuff tossed in for good measure. One guys zine was a sort of travelogue about his train travels and general obsession of trains. Another was about old radio shows, obscure music and another with more poetry. I don't recall if Non-Creative Garbage was included in this APA or just mentioned. Nobius many times mentioned that Non-Creative Garbage and it's editor/publisher James Dilworth inspired him to start Calliope Nerve. And so it goes ...

I've spent a lot of time and effort in the past year doing things that I hope build community in our lil lit world. Some things worked, some things didn't. I don't think I'm anything special, I'm just doing my part. It all exploded on a stage in Toledo, Ohio a couple weeks ago. It was amazing and impossible to walk away from without my perception of so many things both affirmed and changed. I was really sort of high for about a week, not from any substance ingested but from the whole vibe and couldn't quite comprehend what it meant in terms of future plans and plots but I knew some things would have to change. It was in the midst of those feelings that I found out that Nobius had died. His real name was Matthew Evelsizer, not Nobius Black. I can't help it though, he'll always be the man in black to me. Serious, soft, funny, dark, unique and inspiring. I will miss him for a long time to come.

So, yes. This is a I loved him and I will miss him letter but this is also a call to action. As writers, editors and publishers, it's gotta be just you in the room doing what you do. But when it comes time to release it to the world, it does matter how you do it. It does make a difference and it is a choice that you make. Whether you are conscious of it our not, if you gotta have an agent to talk/work with other editors, writers and publishers, that says something about you and your work. If you're only open to what you already know, same same. Hello, it's the big circle-jerk.

I've thought about it and now it's time to act accordingly. I'll be publishing a free zine called Citizens for Decent Literature in the style of Calliope Nerve. It will be distributed to contributors, the Citizens for Decent Literature APA (yes, that too) with extras stuffed in your mother's underwear drawer, thrown out windows and left in public restrooms. I'll put the archives online. If you wanna submit, do it here... <http://theliteraryunderground.submishmash.com/submit>

If you're interested in getting in on the APA, message me and I'll send you the info. Membership is going to be limited not to certain whos but to certain numbers until I figure out how it's all going to work.

Spread the love, always,
Michele

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