

## **Doug Holder**

At the Poetry Workshop: Portrait of Poets at Adjoining Urinals

\* for Martin Espada

I got off to a bad start  
when I mispronounced  
his Hispanic name  
my crucial nixing of  
the well-appointed accent mark.

I noticed  
the barely concealed smirk  
that spread over his cracked lips  
when I read from my work,  
the pronounced wince,  
when I  
tried to be flip.

And then in the men's room  
I found myself  
adjacent to him  
this man of letters,  
with both of our hands on our members.

"Fodder for poetry," I cracked.  
Not even a smile  
just a look bordering on vile.  
I bowed my head  
and focused on my work below  
a stream-of-consciousness  
I just let it flow.

**Doug Holder** is the founder of the Ibbetson Street Press in Somerville MA. His work has appeared in *Cause and Effect*, *Raintown Review*, *Iodine*, *Hazmat*, and many others. For many years he ran poetry groups at McLean Hospital, in Belmont MA for psych patients. His latest collection is *The Man in the Booth in the Midtown Tunnel* ( Cervena Barva Press)