

Jay Are Double You

Are you double, Jason?
would be a better query
have I profited much?
yes indeed and very
especially if measured via
freelanced ROI or any one of these:
craft, contacts, critical eye
tax-deductible annual fees

one anagram of James River Writers:
Smarter, Wrier Jives
and I agree
it's consonance (but not hyperbole)
to say that JRW in a verb
is
superb for me
throwing ink was solitary for a while
every man for himself in the info@ slush-pile
but now I've got founding bibliophiles
Phaedra, David, Dean on speed-dial
we trade wine, wisdom, indie presses
and editors' secret hotmail addresses

when I was on the board, we shook the budget loose
heck, we showed a German film
about French monks and Chartreuse
and I thought they'd wheel me out on a gurney
when the Chair approved my Scrabble tourney
JRW is proof that literary doesn't mean MFA elite
when you save seats for slam poets
(they're more than alliterative punks)
and graphic novelists
(Dash Shaw's a Richmond hunk)

even before this 501(c)3
rooted the herds
to locally harvested words
the microclimate of Virginia
was ripe for writing
it produced the drink-it-in-a-gulp
pulp of Baldacci
Trigiani's quaffable yarns by the bobbin
and lay-it-down-to-savor tomes
of Toms Wolfe & Robbins

you can't spell m-e-t-r-o-p-o-l-i-s
without p-o-e-m-s-o-r-l-i-t
and thanks to this past decade
you've got to admit
that the hamlet of Richmond's got game
and big city talent in the flock
JRW is the shepherd's name
corralling a legion
when you've got locals in letters
it betters the whole region
but we sheep graze on print
and fatten our fiction noir
with persistence and patience
for that Annual Conference abbatoir
the one-on-one with agents
 some manuscripts get fed and watered
 while lesser authors just get slaughtered

Dear All of Those Who Toil Daily,
to articulate, conjugate, syndicate
let's pause to celebrate
the collaborative
whose comparative adjective
deserves an upgrade to superlative form
for a tenth year of polished service
in the biz where first drafts are norm
I'm recasting Virginia's biblio brightest
James River Write

Writer

Writest

— **Jason Tesauro, 9/2012**