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Tiger Bones: A Video Poem

By: **Allan Scherlen**

Abstract

This video poem, "Tiger Bones," is a joint production of poet Allan Scherlen and video editing specialist, Dylan Beiler. An earlier version of the poem called "The Tiger Bones of Borges" was published by Vermillion, in Flash Issue 9, July 2022, the student-run online literary magazine of the English Department of The Catholic University of America, in Washington, DC. The guitar is by Alex McAllister and tiger artwork is by Antonia Scherlen. The magical events of this poem occurred in the late 1970s in Austin, Texas where Borges was a guest lecturer. Scherlen has had other poems published by new words press, Progenitor Art and Literary Journal, and New Note Poetry. He is originally from San Antonio, Texas, travelled extensively in Mexico and China, and, like Borges, has been a long-term librarian and poet hidden away at Appalachian State University.

Scherlen, Allan. 2023. "Tiger Bones," Hong Kong Review, <https://www.hongkongreview.co/>. Video of the Poem is at YouTube: https://youtu.be/Bbxhu99fO7A?si=ZWrkT6tqa_bgAHAs. The video is linked from their homepage at: <https://www.youtube.com/@thehongkongreview>. (November 2023)

Tiger Bones

I remember him - back in the 70s
we gathered to hear the great blind writer
and Argentine poet, Jorge Luis Borges,
reciting in a Austin, Texas hall;

the sound of Borges's "Other Tiger,"
was in my mind -
as he stood to move off stage -
and I joined his fans
following close behind -

He was 80 and couldn't stand;
and blind with a cane, so we easily
approached and I said, "thank you;"

as I touched the fabric
stretching over his bony shoulders;
like the tiger in his poem, his bones
held "Splendor,
Beneath the Quivering;"

and Borges nodded to me
as our bodies flowed apart,
leaving the memory of my hand
brushing his tiger bones –
under an old striped coat.

