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Pantoum by Thelonious Monk

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Pantoum by Thelonious Monk

Abstract

The inside of the tune makes the outside sound good.
After two takes, you're imitating yourself.
Talking about music is like dancing
with my elbow, sometimes, because
after two takes, you're imitating yourself. I hit the piano
with my elbow sometimes because
the piano ain't got no wrong notes.

Keywords

piano, jazz, Thelonious Monk

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Pantoum by Thelonious Monk

by Richard Prins

The inside of the tune makes the outside sound good.
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with my elbow, sometimes, because
after two takes, you're imitating yourself.
I hit the piano
with my elbow sometimes because
the piano ain't got no wrong notes.

I hit the piano
to bring something to jazz I reject.
The piano ain't got no wrong notes
tonight. Sharp as possible, always
to bring something to jazz I reject.
Everyone is influenced by everybody
tonight. Sharp as possible, always.
Where's jazz going? I don't know; maybe.

Everyone is influenced by everybody.
When you're swinging, swing some more.
Where's jazz going? I don't know. Maybe
you've got to dig it to dig it. You dig
when you're swinging. Swing some more.
Talking about music is like dancing:
you've got to dig it to dig it, you dig?
The inside of the tune makes the outside sound good.

Richard Prins is a New Yorker who sometimes lives in Dar es Salaam. He received his MFA degree in poetry from New York University. His work appears in publications like *Baltimore Review*, *Los Angeles Review*, *Painted Bride Quarterly*, *Rattle*, *Redivider*, and *Thrush Poetry Journal*.