

RICHARD BURGIN

Author, Musical Composer, Editor of Boulevard Magazine



**Topic: What Editors Want
Thursday, October 20, 2005
7-8 PM**

Barnes & Noble, 8871 Ladue Road, Ladue 63124

For a map, driving directions, and more, visit [Calendar](#) and click on Meeting Details

Note: Richard Burgin has kindly agreed to autograph books at this event.

RICHARD BURGIN is a fiction writer, editor, composer, critic and college professor. Born in Brookline, Massachusetts, he graduated from Brandeis University and received advanced degrees from Columbia University in New York. Burgin is the author of 11 books, including the novel *Ghost Quartet*, (1999), and the short story collections *The Identity Club: New and Selected Stories and Songs* (2005), *The Spirit Returns* (2001), *Fear of Blue Skies* (1998), *Private Fame* (1991), and *Man Without Memory* (1989). The latter three books were each listed as a Notable Book of the Year by *The Philadelphia Inquirer*. Burgin's stories have won four Pushcart Prizes (only Joyce Carol Oates has won more) and 13 others have been listed by that prestigious anthology as being among the year's best. The title story of his just published book *The Identity Club* will be reprinted in *Best American Mystery Stories 2005*. *The Identity Club* (distributed by W.W. Norton) also contains a CD of 20 of Burgin's original musical compositions. Burgin's

other books include *Conversations with Jorge Luis Borges* - the first book-length series of interviews with Borges in English, which has been translated and published in seven foreign language editions and acclaimed as a standard reference book for the many scholarly and critical books about Borges that have followed (Burgin conducted the interviews when he was only twenty-one years old). Burgin is also the author of *Conversations with Isaac Bashevis Singer*, which has been translated and published in four foreign language editions. A major excerpt from the book appeared in two parts as the cover story in *The New York Times Magazine*. In the 125th Anniversary Edition of Bartlett's Familiar Quotations (1980) there were fifteen different quotations reprinted from *Conversations with Isaac Bashevis Singer*.



Burgin was the founding editor of *New York Arts Journal* and *Boston Review* and is the founding and current editor of the internationally distributed literary journal, *Boulevard* (1985 to present), now in its twentieth year of continuous publication. Published by Saint Louis University, *Boulevard*, considered of the country's leading literary journals, has won numerous city, state, and national grants and awards. Pieces from it are frequently reprinted in the country's leading anthologies such as *The Best American Poetry*, *The Best American Short Stories*, *The Pushcart Prize*, *O. Henry Prize Stories*, and the *Best American Essays*.

Burgin's criticism and reviews have been published by *The New York Times Book Review*, *The Washington Post*, *The Chicago Tribune*, *Partisan Review*, *Boston Review*, and *The Boston Globe*, for which he was Critic at Large for the *Globe Magazine* and a columnist for the newspaper. He has taught at Tufts University, the University of California at Santa Barbara, Drexel University, and is currently a Professor of Communication and English at Saint Louis University.

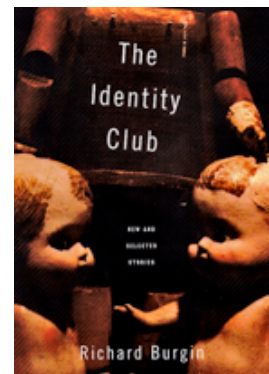
A Composer of more than 100 pieces and songs, Burgin is the composer of the CD's *In All of the World*, *House of Sun*, and *Doll of Dreams*, a CD he co-produced with Gloria Vanderbilt. His new book, *The Identity Club: New and Selected Stories* comes packaged with a CD of 20 of his original compositions. Gloria Vanderbilt designed the cover and the publisher is Joyce Carol Oates and her husband, Raymond Smith, through Ontario Press.

The Identity Club (Fiction Stories)

ISBN: 0865381151

Hardcover: 330 pages plus CD containing 20 songs

Publisher: Ontario Press (Norton distribution)



List Price: \$24.95
Barnes & Noble: \$19.96
B&N Member: 17.96

“A master of elevating perversity, callousness and loneliness to the level of story premise, Burgin offers shorts that read as if Raymond Carver and Edgar Allan Poe shared a body and had to write about it.”
Publishers Weekly

TO PURCHASE THIS BOOK NOW:

Click here: [Barnes & Noble.com](http://www.barnesandnoble.com) - Identity Club: New and Selected Stories
<http://search.barnesandnoble.com/booksearch/isbnInquiry.asp?userid=le3LUnpBqx&isbn=0865381151&itm=1>

****SEE LIST OF OTHER BOOKS BY RICHARD BURGIN AFTER INTERVIEW BELOW**

AN INTERVIEW WITH RICHARD BURGIN

This interview was conducted by Eric Miles Williamson in the summer of 2003 and Robin Theiss in the summer of 2005. The Williamson portion first appeared in Volume 24:2 issue of the literary journal, *Pleiades*, 2004.

Williamson: You’re both a composer and an author. How do these two arts intersect in your work?

In my novel, *Ghost Quartet*, the two protagonists are both composers and much of the novel takes place or deals with the classical music world of New York and Tanglewood. Other than that, music or musical objects don’t occur an unusual amount in my fiction, although I recently wrote a story called “The Identity Club” in which one of the central characters is literally trying to live the life of Bill Evans – the great and regrettably deceased jazz pianist. As far as my music is concerned, after composing strictly piano pieces for many years, about four years ago I began writing songs and my CDs. *In All of the World*, *House of Sun*, and the CD I co-produced with Gloria Vanderbilt, *Doll of Dreams*, consist mostly of songs where I wrote both the music and lyrics. The final point is that when I’m doing music it keeps me from writing fiction as much as I could, and vice versa.

Theiss: Can you tell me something about how *The Identity Club* came into being, specifically why it consists of both 20 stories and 20 songs?

In early September of 2004, I received a warm and wonderful letter from Joyce Carol Oates in response to some music I’d recorded and sent to her – music that incidentally has just now been released as the CD *Cold Ocean*. Her enthusiastic reaction to the music was rewarding enough but in the course of her letter she suggested that Ontario Review Press of which her husband, Raymond Smith, is the publisher, would be interested in publishing a new and selected stories of mine and include in the book a CD of my selected songs and piano pieces, many of which I’d sent to them on tape over the years. Of course, I was flattered and thrilled at this opportunity – especially to have a CD of mine nationally distributed for the first time so I quickly accepted her generous offer.

Theiss: What is the relationship, if any, between the stories in the book and the songs on the CD?

There is no conscious or direct relationship. The songs and the pieces on the CD were composed over a period of years and were never a response or commentary or in any way related to the fiction I was writing at the same time. However, because I created both the stories and the music there is obviously an emotional, psychological and aesthetic relationship between them. How could there not be? On the book jacket of *The Identity Club* it says “The 20 songs of the accompanying CD, while not directly related to the stories, express many of the same moods and emotions found in *The Identity Club* from the darkly lyrical to the exultant.”

Theiss: Can you describe the kind of music you write?

The songs I write I’d call “accessible art songs.” They are alternately in a jazz, classical or popular idiom and sometimes they combine more than one idiom as well as more than one mood or tempo in the same song. I have also written a number of purely instrumental pieces. Many of my songs and all of my instrumentals have development sections and aren’t just melody, chorus, melody, over and out. The piano pieces I write are either jazz or classical and sometimes contain elements of both.

Theiss: Who has influenced your music?

My piano music is influenced by a lot of people from Bill Evans, Thelonious Monk and Cecil Taylor to Prokofiev, Stravinsky and Debussy. My songs also have been influenced by many people from Brian Wilson, Randy Newman, Stevie Wonder and The Beatles to Mahler, Gershwin, Kurt Weil, and again, Evans and Monk.

Williamson: You’re both a novelist and a short story writer. For you, what is the difference between the forms? How do you approach them differently?

Isaac Bashevis Singer, with whom I had the good fortune to do a book length interview, *Conversations with Isaac Bashevis Singer*, said a novel is a story, only longer and more complicated. He felt that the longer a book is the greater chance it has to have mistakes, that “The Death of Ivan Ilyitch” is a more perfect work than *War and Peace*. Jorge Luis Borges, with whom I also had the good fortune to do *Conversations with Jorge Luis Borges*, also felt the story is a superior form to the novel. I think I have a higher opinion of the novel than Borges did and agree pretty much with Mr. Singer.

Williamson: Your stories and novels are loaded with people who are lonely and neurotic. Is this how you see the world? What do you have in common with your characters?

Of course I write about how I see the world. As far as the term neurotic – it is gradually or not so gradually becoming useless, being smudged out of existence from over use. Do I think people are troubled? – I should hope so – look at the world. My father once said

to me, “It’s impossible for a sensitive person to be happy in this world” and I basically agree with him. To be happy is to block out the suffering and cruelty of billions of other people.

This does not mean that joy and humor don’t exist in the world or in my work. They do. I have chosen to especially explore fear in my work because I think it’s an underrepresented emotion in literature. The human race is generally in denial about how afraid it is and how confused it is. My goal is and always has been to depict people as honestly as I know them, which means writing about their mistakes as well as their victories, their fear as well as their courage (the two are always mixed), their cruelty or selfishness as well as their kindness. There are many writers, great writers, like Celine, Bernhard, Beckett, West, Borges, Proust, Faulkner, and Tennessee Williams with visions as dark or darker than mine. They and many others form the literary tradition that inspires me.

Williamson: Tell us about your work habits. How do you write? Do you have writing rituals?

I usually work for one to two hours in the early morning before the phone starts ringing and I have to teach, work on *Boulevard*, or parent my 8-year-old son. I write longhand so I’m always looking for typists.

Williamson: Who are your literary influences? How, specifically, do these influences manifest themselves in your work?

The writers who have influenced my work the most are not necessarily the writers I think are the best. For example, I don’t think Shakespeare has influenced me much, not Tolstoy, whom I regard as probably the greatest of all fiction writers. On the other hand, some writers who I do think are great have influenced me such as Dostoyevsky for his sense of conflict and his ability to dramatize ideas and “feel” them the way other writers “feel” characters. Also for the way he developed the monologue form, one that I’ve used a lot, in his masterful “Notes From the Underground,” probably the most influential story as far as modern and contemporary literature is concerned. I also love Dostoyevsky as a psychologist and his extreme sensitivity and peerless ability to express ambivalence, self destruction and alienation, the characteristic emotions of our time. What he did with all his anti-heroes in his novels was really an act of courage and genius. In him the two coincide. Come to think of it, Dostoyevsky has probably influenced me the most. I think fiction should have suspense and drama and Dostoyevsky’s fiction has plenty of both. I also like ideas and sometimes try to dramatize them in my stories and novels as well. Dostoyevsky is a poet of ideas, as I said before.

I have a reading self and a writing self. My reading self looks at things more objectively. I can appreciate a much wider range of styles as a reader than I would want to or could practice as a writer, and I think that’s true of most writers, and artists for that matter. The reading part of me says Tolstoy is about as good as it gets in fiction. That doesn’t mean

that he's going to personally influence me, because my soul is closer to Dostoyevsky's. We tend to be influenced by people who are our kindred spirits.

Other writers who have influenced me a lot such as Thomas Bernhard, Céline, Nathaniel West, I.B. Singer, Faulkner, even Beckett and Flannery O'Connor, have themselves been much influenced by Dostoyevsky – particularly Bernhard and West. He casts a huge and probably endless shadow.

The second biggest influence on my work may be Proust whose *Remembrance of Things Past* is probably the novel I love most. Of course, Proust has influenced my vision of time (as has Borges) and I consider him a social satirist without peer. There is also a lot of drama in Proust. The balance he maintains between psychology, philosophy, humor, and storytelling is inspiring. I think the two most hilarious novels I've ever read are Celine's *Death on the Installment Plan* and Proust's *The Guermante's Way*. I could answer this question much more fully, but then this would be a one-question interview so I better stop here.

Williamson: *Guermante's Way*, funny? In the middle of a 300-word sentence, it's hard for me to find a chuckle.

I can see how Proust would not be your "cup of tea," shall we say. That doesn't surprise me. I, however, think Proust is wildly funny. Well into *Guermante's Way* there's about a 250-page scene of a high society party, and the satire is so brilliant and witty and sharp and observant – I've never read anything like it – funny and brilliant at the same time. Celine's humor is more slapstick, more street, more connected with his overwhelmingly strong idiosyncratic sensibility, the way he reacts to life, his pessimism. His humor is based on how he sees and reacts to things, which is often with utter revulsion. In *Remembrance of Things Past*, Proust is invisible. He lets the characters themselves reveal what idiots they are and in a funny, sophisticated way.

Williamson: When did you decide to become a writer and why?

At about the age of seven I started writing poems and little stories and also composing short piano pieces. I always loved music more than literature, but because both my parents were very successful classical musicians, I decided to write fiction. Though I am composing now and love to do it more than writing, I regard literature as my main art because I have a much greater command of the medium.

Williamson: You've lived in many places. How does where you're living affect your work?

It provides you with settings, situations, characters, and sometimes themes. If you're lucky enough to have lived in different parts of the world it can help provide variety too. My settings in a collection usually include New York, Boston, Philadelphia, St. Louis, Florida, and California – in all of which I've lived. Part of one novel I wrote takes place in Madrid, where I lived for six weeks and one of my favorite stories "Bodysurfing,"

takes place in Costa Rica. I always think it's a good sign when you feel that a story has to take place in a particular place and nowhere else. That's how I felt about "Bodysurfing" and also about "Vivian and Sid in Maui."

Williamson: Many of your characters are embroiled in quirky or nasty relationships with members of the opposite sex. How do your relationships come into play when you're writing a story or novel?

I have found that I'm unable to write about the people I've been closer to romantically. Some of them may come out "unconsciously" in my writing but I've never been able to use them as models, so to speak. I have been able to write about my family and friends, but never my lovers, so I don't even try anymore and haven't for years. Normally, my fiction works best when 50% or less comes from my life and the rest is imagined. My best work is a blend of imagination and experience with imagination having the starring role and experience being the supporting actor.

Williamson: Are there things you would change in your published works if you had the chance?

No, I don't think so. I rarely reread them, so when they're done they're done. I might change an occasional phrase or sentence.

Williamson: Which of your works are your favorites and why?

I like my novel *Ghost Quartet* and think that of my five published collections *The Identity Club* is the best followed by *Fear of Blue Skies* and *The Spirit Returns*. As individual stories go, my favorites are "The Spirit of New York," "The Spirit Returns," a long one called "The Usher Twins," "Ghost Parks" a new one called "The Identity Club," "The Urn," "Vacation," "The Horror Conference," "My Black Rachmaninoff," and the four that won Pushcarts: "Miles," "Bodysurfing," "The Victims" and "Notes on Mrs. Slaughter."

Williamson: How do you think an author's youth plays in his work?

Isaac Bashevis Singer said in my interview book, "There is something about writers – the first fifteen years of their life is never lost to them. It is like a well which is never exhausted." I agree with him. Some of my more successful stories deal with my youth like "The Victims," "Psycho in Buckingham Palace," "My Sister's House," "Man Without Memory," or "The Ignorant Girl." The people who are the really deepest influences, not only on writers but on everyone's life, are one's parents and family, and our most important years are our childhood. Though it's become a national pseudo-sport to make fun of him, Freud was actually a pioneer and genius who discovered many things I believe to be true about the human mind and human destiny and the importance of our childhood in shaping us.

Williamson: What contemporary authors are your favorites and why?

As a practicing editor for half of my life you can't expect me to fully answer this question. I admire every writer I've published in *Boulevard*. Let me restrict myself then to those writers I've never published. Among those contemporary writers I most revere are William Trevor, John Fowles, Aharon Appelfield, and Alice Munro. Herbert Morris, who died less than a year ago, I regard as a truly major and unjustly neglected poet. Two other fiction writers I especially admire are the Dutch writer Adrian Dis and the Canadian writer David Gilmour.

Williamson: What authors “of note” do you think aren't deserving of their reputations?

Quite a number, but I'll not identify the ones who are living. Happily and perhaps predictably, few dead authors have inflated reputations. Time tends to clarify these things, and if time doesn't, then more time will.

Williamson: Who do you consider your peers? Who are your literary friends? How do your literary associations affect the work you produce?

I don't have many literary friends. I think it's difficult, particularly if you work in the same genre. For it to work there has to be real mutual respect and trust and an absence of jealousy if one becomes more “successful” than the other. As I said, it's very difficult. With lovers it's even more difficult. I've dated very few writers in my life. As a rule I'm not attracted to them.

Williamson: What has been your greatest success?

I've had 17 stories honored by the Pushcart Prize Anthology – what I regard as the nation's most important literary anthology. Thirteen were listed as among the year's best and four others were reprinted. To date, that is what I'm most proud of as a writer and what you are most proud of is your greatest success.

Williamson: Different authors have different prose priorities – for some authors it's style, for others plot, character, didactic intention, intellectual flexing. The easy answer is all of the above, of course. Discuss, however, how you'd prioritize the aspects of fiction. For you what are the most important aspects of writing?

Do you know that painting of Matisse's called *The Dance*, where the four figures have joined hands and dance in a circle? That's how I feel about character, plot, theme and atmosphere. They really are equal partners and no one of them can succeed unless the other three do also. Their fate is really inextricably bound up with each other.

Williamson: How have you tried to explore the form, structure, and content of the short story?

I began by writing novels and had to struggle to say things in a relatively few pages, consequently many of my stories have a novelistic feel to them. That is, a lot of time passes, many things happen, and my characters often evolve. This is quite unusual in the short story. Another facet I've explored is point of view. I've written a number of stories from the first person, female point of view which definitely goes against the grain of what you're supposed to do in a short story; moreover, close to half of my stories have multiple narrators and multiple points of view. I've only read one other story in my life with multiple points of view and that's Robert Coover's "The Baby Sitter." It's often been pointed out that I write about dark, neurotic people including prostitutes, pedophiles, incest victims, drug addicts, etc., but it's rarely mentioned that I consistently experiment with multiple points of view and multiple narrators in my short stories.

Williamson: Can you tell us something about what it is like to collaborate (something you've done a fair amount of in your life) and what it was like to collaborate with Gloria Vanderbilt, specifically?

Most of my life is collaboration. All work is, but so are lovemaking and parenting and editing a magazine. When I created my CDs I had to work with an arranger, and various performing musicians. I've always enjoyed working with other people maybe because so much of writing is lonely and isolated. To Sartre's adage "Hell is other people" I would add "sometimes. But so is Heaven."

Working with the immensely talented Joe Fitzmarrin on my CDs was an extremely rewarding experience, as was working with Gloria Vanderbilt on our book *Stories and Dreamboxes*, which combined her art with three of my stories, and my CD that I co-produced with her called, *Doll of Dreams* that accompanies a doll she designed. Other experiences with other people weren't as pleasant. As in any relationship the key is working for the common good not for your personal gain – not an easy thing to do – especially since no one is right all the time and one needs to compromise a lot, although it's in the nature of artists to think they are right all the time and to hate to compromise. When collaborations work you get the Beatles. When they don't work you get the breakup of the Beatles.

Williamson: Can you compare the experience of working with Borges and Singer and tell us something of the nature of these two great writers?

Jorge Luis Borges is the most intelligent human being I have ever met and probably the only genius I have ever known. He is also one of the most gracious and modest people I've known. I was only a 20-year-old senior at Brandeis University when I tape recorded my interviews with him – a mere six hours on tape so I had to make everything count. He trusted me and never involved himself in the publication process. I will never deny that Isaac Bashevis Singer is a great writer, but he could be an unpredictable and sometimes difficult human being. He was somewhat distrustful, controlling and precious to himself and at one point tried to get out of finishing the book after we'd already spent five or so years on it. What began in 1977 was not published until 1985 (although I will say it's a better book than the Borges one), but the emotional cost for me was huge. It was as

difficult to work with him and his sometimes dark and tempestuous moods as it was easy to work with Borges, with whom I finished the book in half a year.

Williamson: Why did you found *Boulevard* and how has the journal affected your career?

For most of my life I've edited literary magazines. I was the editor of my high school and college literary magazines and then I started (and for one issue edited) *Boston Arts Review*, whose title eventually changed to *Boston Review*. I'm kind of proud that I founded that tabloid magazine back in 1975 and that all these years later it's still going strong and has a number of paid employees. After that, I found and edited *New York Arts Journal*, which lasted six years, and a few years later started *Boulevard*, which is just beginning its twenty-first consecutive year of publication. I've always enjoyed making things and so it seemed natural enough to "invent" a magazine the same way one creates a song or story. The main difference is you can't desert it but have to sustain it for its lifetime – it's almost like having a child. In my case I had the additional motivation of needing to do things in publishing to help get and keep a teaching job since I never got my PhD.

I would say, in terms of my writing career, *Boulevard* has been a mixed blessing. It's taken up a lot of time on one hand and opened up a number of doors on the other. Being editor of a major literary journal gets your work read. Unfortunately we live in a country of specialists and people think you can't do more than one thing well and if you even try it's suspicious behavior. Thus some people conclude that if you're an editor you can't really be a writer although almost every literary magazine editor is a writer. This silly bias is also hard to overcome. It's the same kind of bias there sometimes is against writers who teach. It has to do with the capitalist bent of America: people judge you by how you make your money. If you make your money teaching or editing, you can't really be a writer.

Williamson: As editor of *Boulevard*, you're privy to thousands of manuscripts that don't see publication, and many of them eventually do. What do you see as the current trends in poetry and fiction among younger writers, the writers who will eventually be the old guard?

To generalize – I see evidence of a certain kind of craft but I don't see enough risk taking. There are many types of risk takers. Some people take risk in their subject matter, some in their language. Some, like Proust, take risks in every conceivable way. Proust takes risks in his language, his philosophy, the outrageous length of his book, in his subject matter – he was one of the first literary writers to write of homosexuality and sado-masochism so pervasively. Risk takers don't censor themselves. They don't write politically correct books.

My suspicion, especially of many MFA writers, is that they are writing what they think will get published and are not sufficiently interested in exploring the form. I feel they often read the "successful" writers who publish stories in big, slick magazines or who

win major awards or get their books made into films but don't sufficiently read the major innovators in literary history like Cervantes, James, Tolstoy, Dostoyevsky, Kafka, Celine, Proust, Joyce, Faulkner, Borges, Beckett, Bernhard, Nabokov, and O'Connor. I also feel that because they are in too big a hurry to publish they haven't lived enough to have much to write about. In *Boulevard's* slush pile, I find very little experimentation in form and structure. The stuff is tame. I see very little experimentation in point of view, in language. The subject matter is generally politically correct. Political correctness is the most noxious disease and enemy of the literary artist of our current time. It has affected the entire publishing industry in terms of what gets written, what gets published, what gets praised, what gets taught. Were it written today, *Othello* would never be produced. It would be condemned as both racist and sexist.

Fifty or 100 years from now when we finally get over this dreadful stage in our national development, our time will probably be remembered as a kind of Literary Dark Age. I once thought there'd be a backlash against it but now I no longer think things will change in our lifetime. It's a shame, but compared to other problems in the world these literary matters are ultimately rather unimportant.

Theiss: What future books or CDs do you have planned?

I've just finished a new collection of stories tentatively called *The Conference on Beautiful Moments,*" and as I said I've also just finished the CD of more extended, mostly jazz works called *Cold Ocean*. I definitely plan to do another CD of songs, maybe ones that fit more easily into the pop music genre, and also a CD of my piano music. For years I've also been planning a *Best of Boulevard* anthology either of the best stories from *Boulevard* or a kind of *Boulevard Reader* featuring the best stories, poems and essays we've published over the years. But my number one priority is a novel I'm 250 pages into – that will probably dominate my next year of work.

Theiss: According to T.S. Eliot, all of art is "an attack upon the inarticulate." This seems, to me, to be especially true in your male protagonists who seem to be intensely struggling against an invisible social constraint. Several of your male characters long for a child. Others are secretly compelled to protect a child from the possibility of a threat that is never confirmed. Some seek reconciliation or a connection with a woman who does not respond; others meet prostitutes and try to develop relationships with them. The darker, sometimes chilling aspects of some of your males' personalities seem rooted in a need to validate a power that no one else seems to acknowledge. In a few stories, the males have interesting transcendent experiences that, on the surface, seem terrifying, but they are nevertheless a form of release from the social order, aren't they? To what extent are your stories wrestling with "the deep inarticulate?"

That quote by Eliot is a good one. The artist has to attack the inarticulate because as Eliot says in his *Four Quartets* "Human kind cannot bear very much reality." Part of my job, and every other writer's, is to force people to confront the world they are unaware of,

or inarticulate about. Have you ever noticed that people are often quite insightful and articulate in discussing the problems of other people while at the same time they continue to make the same mistakes in their own lives because of weaknesses in their personalities and characters of which they're quite unaware? I think the main reason we are in such collective denial about so many things -- death, infinity, the passage of time, fear, human selfishness and greed, not to mention the nefarious doings of our government and other so called leaders of society is that it's too terrifying to face the truth. The artist has to excavate the truth as it were from all the hidden places where it's been buried and shine a light on it. Or to put it more realistically, the hidden places that the artist knows about which will always, only be a tiny percentage of all the places that there are.

Theiss: Do you see a difference between the “deep inarticulate” for males and females? Does it seem true to you, for instance, that females are the more articulate of the sexes?

I guess the conventional wisdom is that women are more articulate about their feelings and in describing relationships in general and men are more articulate about abstract philosophical or metaphysical concepts. There may be some truth in that generalization, I'm not sure, but when it comes to the origin, purpose and future of the universe we are all equally blind, deaf and dumb and of course, pervasively inarticulate.

**** OTHER BOOKS BY RICHARD BURGIN:**

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***The Spirit Returns* (Johns Hopkins, Poetry and Fiction Stories)**

ISBN: 0801867967

- **Paperback:** 191 pages
- **Publisher:** Johns Hopkins University Press (October 1, 2001)

***Ghost Quartet* (A Novel)**

ISBN: 0810150956

- **Hardcover:** 312 pages
- **Publisher:** Triquarterly Books (November 1, 1999)

***Jorge Luis Borges: Conversations* (Literary Conversations Series)**

ISBN: 1578060761

- **Paperback:** 256 pages
- **Publisher:** University Press of Mississippi (December 1, 1998)

***Fear of Blue Skies* (Johns Hopkins, Poetry and Fiction)**

ISBN: 0801857457

- **Hardcover:** 184 pages
- **Publisher:** Johns Hopkins University Press (December 1, 1997)

Private Fame

ISBN: 0252018435

- **Hardcover:** 155 pages
- **Publisher:** University of Illinois Press (September 1, 1991)

Man Without Memory

ISBN: 0252016025

- **Hardcover:** 124 pages
- **Publisher:** University of Illinois Press (October 1, 1989)

Conversations with Isaac Bashevis Singer

ISBN: 0385179995

- **Hardcover:** 178 pages
- **Publisher:** Doubleday; 1st ed edition (September 1, 1985)

FOR MORE INFORMATION ABOUT RICHARD BURGIN:

The author's website: www.richardburgin.net

Ontario Review Press Website: *The Identity Club-New and Selected Stories*
http://www.ontarioreviewpress.com/orb_main_pages/orb_forthcoming.html

ARTICLES:

Article: "SLU Professor and New York Socialite Collaborate on Book, CD, and Doll
St. Louis University"

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Article: "SLU Professor Fashions Collaboration on Book, Doll, Novel with Gloria Vanderbilt"
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