

YARI OSTOVANY

Fragments of Poetry and Silence (for Lorca), 2013
Oil on canvas, 48 x 48 in



COURTESY: THE ARTIST

TOI DERRICOTTE

Thoughts on the Death of Philip Levine

i.

Lucille told me,
when you lose the flesh
you gain more power. I wonder if she meant
that, when a poet dies, he gives his voice
away, so that all the poets in the world
find a source
unplugged, dug through?

ii.

What would he feel
when he'd finish
one of his great poems,
one that seemed as if,
in the bright house of it,
every stick of furniture
shined in the sun?
I wonder if he'd take a moment
to feel proud, or rush on
to his next appointment, or would he
suffer, as his teacher
Berryman told Merwin,
never knowing if it is good?

Toi Derricotte's most recent poetry book is *The Undertaker's Daughter*. She has published five poetry collections and a literary memoir, *The Black Notebooks*, winner of the Anisfield-Wolf Book Award. Her honors include the 2012 Paterson Poetry Prize for Sustained Literary Achievement and the 2012 PEN/Voelcker Award for Poetry. Derricotte's poems have appeared in *The New Yorker*, *American Poetry Review*, and the *Paris Review*. With Cornelius Easy, she co-founded Cave Canem. She is a Chancellor of the Academy of American Poets.