

HOBOKEN

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PROGRESS

LOCAL NEWS

HOBOKEN

Former resident's book remembers the 1980s as turbulent time in Mile Square

Fresh out of college in California, where he'd basically majored in backpacking, Will Nixon landed in Hoboken in the early 1980s for culture shock which provides the backdrop to many poems in his new book "Love in the City of Grudges" from FootHills Publishing.

At the time the city was undergoing wrenching changes, as run-down but cheap buildings went condo, newly arriving Yuppies antagonized neighborhood Italians, warehouses burned up in block-sized fires, President Reagan rode a helicopter into town for a campaign appearance, and Mayor Thomas Vezzetti rallied the discontented on the sidewalks with his bullhorn.

Vezzetti died in office in 1988.

Set amidst this colorful chaos, Nixon's poems describe a lonely young man's search for love, a good job, and a place in the world.

Nixon wrote for the *Hudson Reporter* newspaper back in the day, and saw many different parts of Hoboken that stayed in his mind and became the fodder for his new semi-autobiographical poetry book.

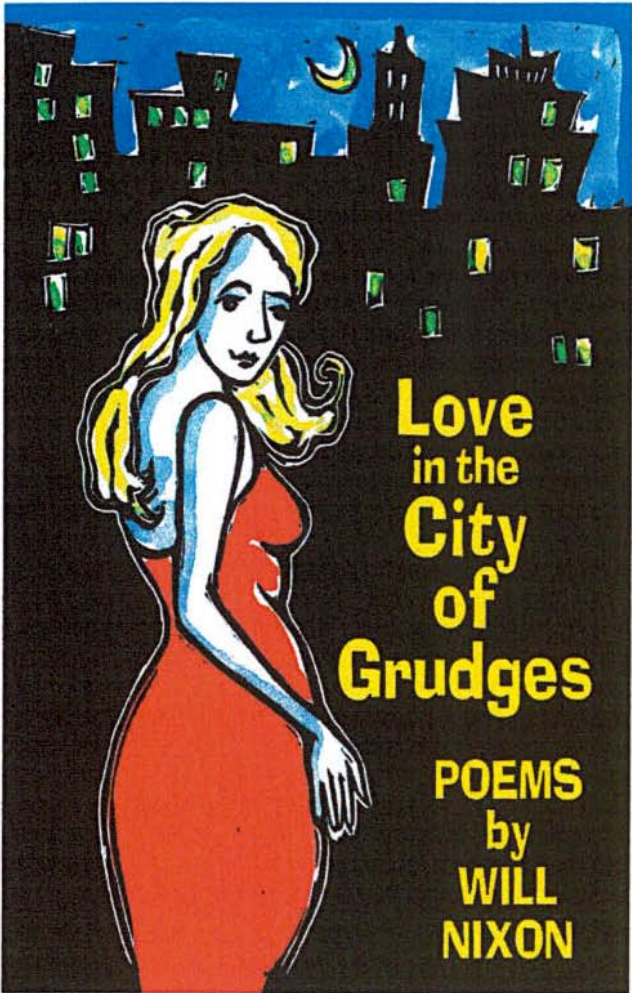
At the time, he lived above the Clam Broth House restaurant on Newark Street and witnessed the wave of arson plaguing the city.

He writes in his poem "Arson Done Right:" "Fresh from Maxwell's with guitars still ringing in my ears & somebody's beer on my sleeve, I saw it all from my [street] corner: the fire contained to the top floor of the welfare hotel like campfires along cornices."

Nixon's previous poetry book, "My Late Mother as a Ruffed Grouse," began with childhood experiences from suburban Connecticut and concluded with poems about the Catskills, where he moved into a log cabin in 1996, leaving urban life far behind.

He now lives in Woodstock, N.Y. Last year, Nixon published with Michael Perkins "Walking Woodstock: Journeys into the Wild Heart of America's Most Famous Small Town," a collection of essays that became the No. 1 paperback best-seller of 2009 at the town's independent bookstore.

"Will Nixon's narrative poems strike a rare balance between a child's sense of wonder and a skeptic's dry, knowing assessment of the world," says poet and performer Mikhail Horowitz. "We know at every wrenching turn and droll digression that we're in the presence of a born storyteller."



Love
in the
City
of
Grudges

POEMS
by
WILL
NIXON

PHOTO COURTESY OF WILL NIXON

Former Hoboken resident Will Nixon's new book of poetry "Love in the City of Grudges, captures imagery from Hoboken in the 1980s when it was a much different city than it is today.

Nixon's work has also been nominated for a Pushcart Prize and listed in "Best American Essays 2004."

"Love in the City of Grudges" is available at the Hoboken Historical Museum and online at FootHillsPublishing.com.

The author's website is willnixon.com