

## Golden Plates Ode

*Timothy Liu*

Were they fake news? Etched  
on tin? Did the boy prophet  
really find them sequestered

under a rock where the pageant  
is held? We only had to wait  
less than two thousand years

for the show to go on!, right  
smack dab in the heart  
of the Burnt-Out District

where a treasure-digging teen  
unearthed a record no one  
could decipher without the aid

of jewels in a breast plate  
(such spectacles!) all taken  
up to Heaven when the job

was done. How this became  
the cornerstone of my faith  
is anyone's guess now taking

root. Why the redundancy  
of Three Witnesses followed  
by Eight, plates which had

“the appearance of gold”  
which “we did handle with  
our hands; and we also saw

the engravings thereon, all  
of which had the appearance  
of ancient work, and a curious

workmanship.” Divinity  
embalmed in hearsay, this  
was the start of many questions

I asked the Institute Director  
at UCLA, our building housed  
next to the Tri-Delt Trinity

out there still on sorority row.

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TIMOTHY LIU’s {timothyliu65@gmail.com} latest book of poems is *Down Low and Lowdown: Timothy Liu’s Bedside Bottom-Feeder Blues*. His previous books have received a 2004 Book of the Year by Publishers Weekly; a 1998 Open Margins Award by PEN America; and the 1992 Norma Farber First Book Award from the Poetry Society of America. New work is forthcoming in *Poetry*, *Fence*, and *Michigan Quarterly Review*. A reader of occult esoterica, Liu teaches at Vassar College and SUNY New Paltz.