

Poetry Express Newsletter #47

ISSN 2056-970X (NB: all back issues of the Newsletter are now ISSN registered)



Everybody All Around Me is in a Cage (Original caption in Slovene)

Ifigenija Simonovic



LOTTERY FUNDED



Charity No. 1010177 Company No. 2955445; Registered in England
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Editorial

November 13th at the **Poetry Café** went with a real swing, with an impressively large number of 'new face' floorspots and a happy atmosphere of free jamming amongst the musicians. Main spot was indisputable violin virtuoso **Helmut Scholz**, who is also beginning to air his great poetic sensitivity in spoken word. It is a great honour to Survivors that he is often happy to make special journeys to the UK in order to attend our events. He is also a person of total openness when it comes to playing with other musicians. On this occasion, he was one of the **Baffled Angels** – playing alongside flautist, and mandolin player **Luci Bocchino**, formerly of the duo **Lucy and Roach/Ugly Sulk**, and **Keith Bray**, who played some delicate, exquisite flute and recorder. First of all, they backed **Razz**, and then towards the end of the evening, **Citi/Cam Ringel** – both sets were really lively, verging on folky – all in all a riotously happy 'jam session' atmosphere.

More inspiration from **Sophia Jackson** (formerly known as **Sapna**), whose long poem *The Courtroom* was read by Razz. This poem conveyed the feeling of someone both on trial and desperate to hold on to a partner, each situation being a metaphorical mirror-image for the other.

Some caustic humour from **Wendy Young**, beginning with the parodistic *The Waist Band* by Tessie O'Shea Eliot, and *Sherlock Holmes and Dr Whatsup*; this was complemented by some nostalgia for old-style cafés and (heretically) in praise of smoking. Wendy never flinches from the confrontational: "Raindrops – like semen on a young girl's tongue" indeed!

Julian (a la Kevin Coyne) presented the dual perspective of one who knew the psychiatric ward both as a nurse and as a patient, with the incisive observation "I've looked at mad from both sides now".

Powerful poetry from **Tara Fleur**, exploring the perspective of someone wearing the hat of a nurse, and forced to administer sedation to a patient in extreme distress. There was a feeling that she had some deep personal attachment to the patient, the professional and private fused in extreme tension. It seems there was a suicide: "I felt your fear never prevented you from hanging." I think Survivors should give Tara a main spot. * "She came up & thanked me afterwards for creating a place for her vulnerability to have a voice. I was moved to tears." (Razz)

Sally Smith expressed some nostalgia for London's East End, while **Mala Mason** showed some Reiki influence, and some reflections on parental background and musical taste in *Your Music/My Music*.

Tasteful music from **Alastair Murray** and **Paul Riley**, some inner urban angst poetry from **John Morris** and **Julius Howard**, and a nice jazzy finale from **Declan**.

Thursday November 27th at **Tottenham Chances**, saw another **Billy Blake's Birthday Bash** – the usual combination of Blake poems, work directly inspired by Blake, and original work in essentially Blakean mode. The usual rousing opener from **Razz**, including a new (to me) song, **Little Boat**. **Sally Smith's** long poem *Industrialisation* gave a contemporary slant to the 'dark satanic mills' theme. **Mala Mason** read *The Tyger* and her own *The Unheeded Crime*. **Frank Bangay's** set was enhanced by multi-instrumentalist **Natasha**, who played fiddle on *This Urban Tree* (great phrase 'prayer gives off oxygen'), guitar on *Tough Guy Gets Sensitive*, and some very sensitive piano on *This Autumn Evening*. He read Blake's *Mad Song*, and ended with a gospel duo with Natasha – *Jesus on the main line*. Natasha played raunchy guitar on *Johnny Rocks On* – in celebration of Johnny Kidd. Interesting reflections from **Habiba Harida** – 'asserting my duality is impossible . . . why is every beautiful thing smashed' – and a very angstful poem about throwing a necklace into a lake. **Alain English** was at full power, with his homage to the losers. This he followed with the macabre *The Ballad of Jack McGee*, a journalist's vision of a monster which proved to be a dual entity – against a backdrop of impulsive homicide. Some direct Blake with *Love's Secret*. Alain's book *Outside In* is shortly due for release. **Jason Why** did an imaginative improvisation on the theme of rain, with **Casper & Defuse (aka Steve)**, a volunteer from the audience. Some sensitive verses from **Warren**, also known as an accompanist for **Ingrid Andrew**. Great contemporary irony from **Dave Skull (aka 'King Miserable')**. Further highlights from **Alcuin Edwards, Keith Bray** and **Declan**.

"The second half opened with **Olympic Clampdown** who got us on our feet. **Casper** did some lovely covers and one number of his own. Most impressive was **Defuse**, a rapper whose really nailed the experience of street homelessness. Then **DD** did some Spanish songs & **The Baffled Angels** finished off the evening with a few numbers – **Razz** backed by flute from **Barbara**, harmonica from **Lawrence Renée**, & bass from **Chris Bear**. The place was quite packed and had a great atmosphere, with Penny doing a bit of impromptu *a capella*." (Razz).

A rousing pre-Christmas session at the Poetry Café on December 11th, with main acts **Tara Fleur** and **Wendy Young**. Rousing words and music from **Razz**, enhanced by 'Battered Angel' Lawrence – including *Back in the World of the Living* and *There's a Ghost in my Mirror*. The high spots of Tara's set were *Blasphemy*, dealing with 'package tours' to Heaven and Hell, and *I'm Sorry*, expressing her bitter regrets about having to wear a nurse's hat in relation to someone she felt close to. Tara is a totally involved and committed performer. Wendy was similarly outspoken, especially with *Celibacy* and *Suicide Town*. Very rich in black humour. **Jessica Lawrence** (60th birthday that evening), read *Eternal Moment* and *Rocks* – the latter reflecting on pebbles inscribed with signatures. Some great harp-playing from **Chris Lee** on *Scarborough Fair*; he also did a definitive unaccompanied version of *And The Band Played 'Waltzing Matilda'*, Eric Bogle's powerful retro epic of World War I. More from **Unique Technique** – the best

articulated rap act that I have yet heard; could follow every word. **Ros** gave news of the 'News From Nowhere Club' in Shetland. Good contribution from **Sally** Smith with her 'winter poems' – *Snow on Shooter's Hill* and *Cold Robin and the Xmas Blackbird*. Two welcome new arrivals with **Thomas** and **Julius**.

2015 certainly got off to a flying start with an action-packed session, with a capacity audience, at the Poetry Café on January 8th. The usual rousing opening from **Razz**, followed by readings of Sophia Jackson's poems – *Jack Warms Me* was read by Razz, and *The Ferris Wheel of Life* by **Tara Fleur**. Interestingly, both poems used the device of a lover/partner persona speaking to Sophia. The persona Jack seems to be a prisoner.

Julius Howard read *Cellar Door*, *How Old Are You Sir*, *Bullied Child* and *Same and Different*. **Alain English** read his *Love Is*, and recited his dedication to Robert Burns. Some superb music from **Bossy Malone** – songs backed by harp, lyre, hammer dulcimer and steel drum. The blend of harp and steel drum was quite new to be, and played with great finesse. Good fusion of songs like *Oh! Superman* –contemporary in spirit with an ultra-traditional backing. ("O Superman was a very important song to me (harrowing times in Amsterdam! – Wendy Young). **Mala Mason** read *First Day at Work*, and *Coming Soon* (composed at a recent Razz poetry workshop) followed by her epic of conflicting taste *Your Music/My Music*. **Steph Morris** contributed *Go, My Place* and *Bruce Chapman*.

On to the first featured guest **Steve Dowsett**, on top form after having recovered from some serious illnesses. He was as musically tasteful as ever, embracing jazz/Bossa Nova chords and finger-picking. *Cracked Horizon* is an exercise in cynical common sense. People are easy to put on pedestals if at a safe distance: "I like you as a concept, but in reality you're a jerk"; some people may be great in public, horrible in private: "you were so blunt and arrogant/you would have made a good MP." *Loveglue* uses an oddly bathetic metaphor for the permanence and resilience of the love-bond. Perhaps this sometimes feels repressive and restrictive; some highly perceptive comments, such as . . . hating each other on first name terms . . . *Captain Scott* expresses Steve's reverence for total courage, willingness to face pain, danger, as well as the possibility of failure or rejection. *The Joy of Small Things* celebrate those humble consolations which unfailingly help to make life bearable. *Metropolitan Raving* is an impassioned eulogy of a transcendental, mythical goddess – perhaps with some aspects of a secular superstar. (For further details about Steve, see www.stevedowsett.com)

Tara Fleur back again, this time reading her own material, as ever pulling no punches, opening with the traumas of a call-girl – "a corset which pulls her despair rigid . . . a liquid diet, numbing her painful ulcers. She presents Quite an apocalyptic vision with

Dead Woman is a 'Walkin' – 'bound and gagged to mortuary desires . . . I am ill with infinitum insanity . . . Luciferian consequences'. A welcome new contributor was **Andrea**.

Maggie and Lucy Lyrical introduced a new song we from their EP *Songs that Traitors Sing* which they put out in December last year. The song is taken from a poem written by Chartist **Edwin Polin** in the 1840s called *In The Days When We Were Radicals*.

<https://soundcloud.com/maggie-77/in-the-days-when-we-were-radicals-sample>

Their second number seemed like a 'groupies' anthem', and they rounded off with their ever-favourite *Rational Anthem*.

A powerful set of poems from the next featured Artist **Ingrid Andrew**, one poem backed with sensitive harmonica from **Lawrence Renée**. The main item here was the polemic *For Gaza and for Jewish Voices for Peace*, in my opinion matching the intensity of Heathcote Williams's *The Old Man and the Young Man in Gaza*, featured at a previous Poetry Café evening, and arousing some controversy – a grim picture 'every trading path blocked . . . a field of stumps, graveyard of an olive grove . . . fish are poisoned . . .' She ended with a poem dedicated to Razz, and announced her new publication *The Bird of Morning*, available both as a printed edition and as an e-book.

Yet more caustic wit from **Wendy Young**, opening with *Radio Von*, the portrayal of a bizarre woman who 'turns clocks round when she irradiates'. This is a play on Jonathan Richman and Modern Lovers song title *Radio On*. Sisterhood (Did Me No Good) faces some issues of doctrinaire feminism: "Can't I have an opinion without feeling a traitor to my sex? . . . Woman can be woman's worst enemy."

Next came two 'observational poems': *Travelling Fight* is authentic reportage of a highly animated dialogue between two Irishmen on a night bus. *Travelling Fight* is a play on title of Cliff Richard's hit *Travelling Light!*) *Brabantia!* Explores the ecology and ethics of refuse disposal and recycling. *H&M Princess* bears witness to the extravagance of a Middle Eastern princess manifested at a Supermarket, someone so rich that 'money is a mystery'. Good input from **Kate Morrison, Andrew Jake** and **Roz Kane**.

Jessica Lawrence's contribution was a powerful complement to Ingrid's long poem. She recalled her days of working at a Kibbutz during the Yom Kippur period; she had to work on clearing out the bombs shelters – powerful images of Syrian tanks like a stampede of cattle, and aerial dog-fights like 'two bucks rut in the sky'. *Oh Tiger!* is in conventional verse structure (unusual for Jessica) and is a powerful protest against the horrible practice in America of keeping sick tigers in cages, to be released and shot down by sedentary, debilitated slob. Great continuation of Blake.

Dave Russell

Another Evening of Powerful Performances!

Survivors Poetry (Holocaust / Mad Pride) Event at Tottenham Chances

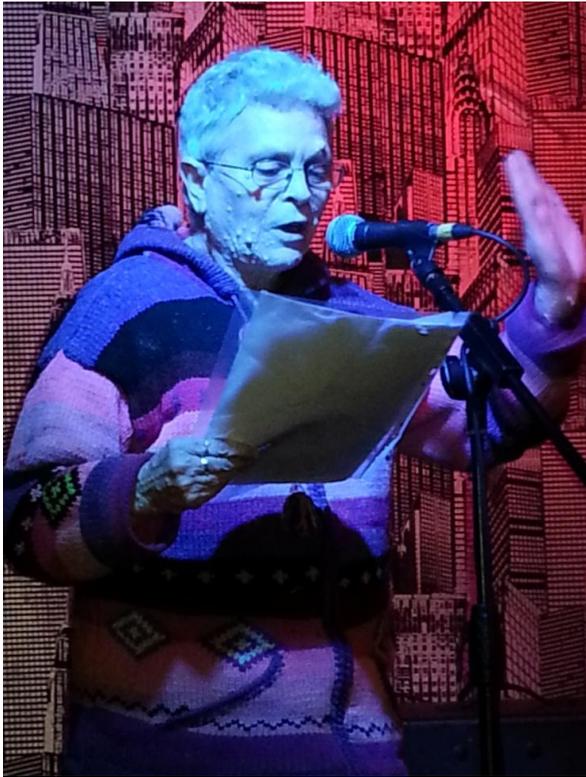
We travelled with poetry, song and music that took us into the emotional, the political, the psychological and mystical realms of remembrance, hope, empathy and courage – hosted by the ever wonderful **Razz**, who also performed touching, deep and personal songs and poetry with great intensity and terrific form. Razz was joined by **Keith Bray** with wind instrumentals of pure beauty.

The Feature Acts were all incredible: **Mala Mason** took us into poetry that spoke emotionally from her childhood memories. **Jessica Lawrence** showed great conviction in her political poetry. **Broken Biros** filled the space with deeply moving music. **Lucy Lyrical** and **Maggie Swampwino** played wonderfully melodic, and at times hilarious, edgy songs. **Madeleine Smith** and **Jorge Morale** also performed with great clarity their own musical and poetic style, genre, points of view and self expression.

A flow of Open Mic and Floor Spot performers added even more colour and texture to the evening. Performers we know well were awesome: **Tanya Marshall** performed mystical shamanic verses that led us into dream states of both dark and light energies. **Alain English** read some of his powerful poetry from his newly published book *Outside-In; Musing On Life As An Autistic Poet* (currently available via William Cornelius Harris UK). **Habiba Hrida** Performed delightfully journeying poetry. Habiba also has a new book out *Making It Verse*, also available (via WCH UK). **Jason Why** thrilled us with his improvisational poetry which never fails to amuse and delight! I, **Tara Fleur – Woman Of Bones** also performed a somewhat epic poem! Always an honour and delight to read amongst friends and a receptive audience. Newcomers to Survivor Events, taking their first steps behind a microphone, included **Stephen Connell** and **Steph Morris** who were greeted with great support, encouragement and applause for what were, wonderful, fresh performances. The night was intense, at times challenging, but often lightened with poetry, music, creativity, lyrics and much laughter. All received by a vibrant crowd who remained respectful of the messages of remembrance, hope, bravery and tragedy: Bravo to all!

Tara Fleur – Woman of Bones





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Pebbles are waiting for the waves; I am waiting for you
Ifigenija Simonovic



Ifigenija Simonovic

From: Kamari Paulinho Gray Roméo <kamari-gray@hotmail.com>

Subject: Project Shrink: Poetry, Stigma & Mental Health

To Whom It May Concern,

My name is **Kamari Romeo** and I am the founder of a new project called SHRINK. I am a recent graduate from **The Royal Central School of Speech and Drama** and would like to extend this opportunity to anyone this may interest. **SHRINK** is a new London based project for young adults/adults over the age of 16 who wish to look at the issues surrounding stigma and mental health; there is no upper age limit. I am hosting a performance poetry installation written and performed by participants of all ages and backgrounds, on Saturday 29th November at our venue, the Hoxton Basement. We have recently filmed a trailer for this event which will be out in the next couple of weeks as we are hoping to collate a panel of guests from health, media, music and fashion professions to share their opinions in a short Q&A session on how we can move forward and overcome barriers associated with mental health within the workplace; it is my belief that this is the breeding ground for stigma. The night will also be accompanied by live music from female rapper **Lady Lykez** and acoustic rock from singer/songwriter **Alfie Positano**. This is a FREE ticketed event and I would welcome ALL people passionate about mental health to come and experience this with us and have their say on what should happen next. This installation is suitable for audience members aged 14+.

If you are interested in getting involved in the project itself, we are leaving sessions open for one more week. We meet every Saturday between 1-3pm at 'Lift' in Angel, just turn up! You don't have to have had a personal experience with mental health as this is a project for people who may have also had experiences through friends/family or encounter. The outcome of these workshops is to have people share their own stories and set the record straight on stigma and mental health. Please feel free to contact me via this email or the contact form via the SHRINK website. I would be very grateful if you could spread the word to anyone who might be interested in a project like this and I hope to see some of you soon!

Sincerely,

Kamari Romeo

Founder-SHRINK

www.kamariromeo.weebly.com/shrink

<http://www.facebook.com/l.php?u=http%3A%2F%2Fwww.eventbrite.co.uk%2F%2Fshrink-a-performance-poetry-event-surrounding-stigma-and-mental-health-tickets-13989112813%3Faff%3Des2%26rank%3D1&h=8AQHCpg4b>

Chapter of Grizzlington

Gorgio Ratnall the local butcher saw the salmon leap over the old spar garage
Grimble Wedge blew his horn at the vegetations in a fit of blear-eyed bar rage
one to many rather brown ales were bought at the jumble summer sales
Marie Antoinette's bobbin prevented gout, on the quarterdeck they spill
contraband snout

Hitch a ride with a stag n a buffalo to the sound we fidget between yak n track
seated beneath a quiet sun the lord of the dance hopping on one leg bring it all back
Listen up all you shoe sizes Matt Helms on the shoreline, a brush with the law hit the
banjo linger just in time

violins used to be trees before waters lap Sardia Louise's hull, the tower captain
raised the roof with bells to test Von Zeppelins trill

baby baby I was born to paddle surrender your peddlers licence to local radio
It was the mating game that shot Dave Berry to fame, my mother said to Motorhead
seated at the pub piano

Beetle drive politik whisk into the breach watch the salmon leap alone, grimble
wedge seated beneath the quarterdeck tossed a baby lizard the dog n bone

Accord support throw the jumblequeen out with the bathwater, blanche a dry
root lost in the aether bobbin on the leeshore no quarter
transfer me to the dining silver avoid the hill surge housecall, bang to rights
by a slippered kipper release the southern stairwell to all

Bare trees move the goalposts all by themselves, psycho babble nuptials arrive
in baseball boots spies of Cairo saunter on the top shelves
beyond the call of duty men in grey suits pull up daisy roots

Luke Cunard set sail for Hayling Island to cancel a stamp, children read comics
on the leeshore by lamplight to Hickory hollers tramp, seagulls clamber 'n' strike a
rodeo pose baby baby I was born to paddle no bother avoid the bends n cramp
Major Singh drives an Alvis safeguarding the arrow up n over the raw ramp.

Anthony Moore

Miss Abbott visits Grizzlington

Miss Abbott enlists the services of Accrington Stanley on her 1st visit to Grizzlington, as Stanley lifted her luggage from the train she was unable to do a tap as her huge Firestone tyre sandals were wedged inside a Dagenite battery abandoned by a runaway rail enthusiast.

They were to placate to the Ponderosa with plantation shutters newly fitted by illegal aliens sleeping under the hedgerows with names like Offski n ulag, oddbods looking at oddments in oddbins as local reactionary Mickey Reynolds sang "Campbells Cockerleeky" at the top of his bellow. The artist formally known as Princebuild wilted backstage at Wilton hall, it was going to be a long weekend escorting Miss Abbot to the tombola. Mildred Mildew a local poacher turned gamekeeper challenged Reynolds and his faithful sidekick Jethro snarl to a catslick n sampling bout around the campfire.

Well rested and leaving the breakfast table of shattered dinosaur egg shells, Miss Abbott decided to float on the river Trent in her rocking goose attire humming her chosen ditty "Reggae defrosted in tinted glasses Jeggae" to usher in the day before the carnival on Grizzlington common. Legionnaires on the lump queue for badges in diamond encrusted waders so ready steady pause, Accrington Stanley prepared the sedan chair outside the ponderosa as miss abbot strapped on her huge firestone tyre sandals, on arrival Jethro snarl assisted Accro Stanley to ferry Miss Abbott to the procession, two deaf leopards were left to guard the sandal box by the plantation shutters.

Mr Reynolds juggling tins of Campbells Cockerleeky in cut priced orange labels cut a dashing figure as miss abbot began headbutting coconuts into the shy much to the astonished parishioners, her newly shorn borstal crop was a boon in this activity, as the final nut was tossed miss abbots forehead plunged the said missile onto the juggling Reynolds head as Jethro snarl broke into a rapturous chorus of "Oh wot a luuverly bunch of cockerleeky coconuts". Leaving the sedan Miss Abbott and accro standing broke into a vigorous twist routine aboard the last waltz when the bruised n bleeding Reynolds staggered into the stale ale tent and demanded soldier eggs over easy Benedict, Jethro snarl recounted that was a close shave as they overstayed there welcome before leaving what cant be cured must be endured, sober as a lord they frogmarched to the tombola.

Miss Abbot now resplendent as the rocking goose with matching carp mask bounced from waltz to carousel stealing a passing pith helmet en route, legionnaires and lumpy wives waddled steadily as Mildred Mildew threw the legend that is Princebuild onto the orange crate makeshift stage that had graced so many Grizzlinton ceremonies before. Newly arrived from Australia as the crow flies on a P'n'O liner Princebuild reserved his energy on deck by whistling a Matt Monroe medley to the divorcey blue rinse assembly, screaming

n hollering princebuild had the Grizzlington rotary club eating out of his mittons, for an encore miss abbot was hoisted above the stage to duet on “reggae in your jeggae”, they were later joined by bruised Reynolds n Jethro snarl for a rousing crackthroated rendition of “cockerleaky coconutz” and “dicey doghouse riley” – after candy floss n a goldfish supper Accrington Stanley dragged the Duchess Abbot back to the ole ponderosa in the faithful sedan chair now clogged in mud and sinking fast, he managed to jackknife Miss Aabbot into a hammock using a spring loaded thunderbox apparatus.

Mrs Shakey Snodgrass the librarian with a sore throat calling the toads and discussing the awful disclosures of Maria Monk exclaimed there’s no roller-coaster on this coast and man doth not live by bread alone, paraphrasing an Edith Sitwell character of magic’n’sparkle hollow’n’frost. Miss Abbott stirred in her hammock tied to giant oak trees and attempted criss cross quiz in a deep sleep as Accrington Stanley awoke in a dew soaked hedgerow with illegal aliens and set about organising Miss Abbott’s fast break of 100 sweet’n’sour prawn wontons.

A reservation card was issued to Miss Abbot about a library book that was 5 years overdue via pony’n’tap express delivery, she had the ravenous appetite of an ivory gull and proceeded like a balloon to the Prawnout out by the perfumed garden. After the gargantuan feast of sticky crustaceans Miss Abbott arose on mottled knees to scrape an ivory backed hairbrush across the borstal crop, our favourite teacher climbed the wooden hills to grab a shawl suitably clad she tied the shawl n roses and headed best step forward toward the sedan chair, Accro Stanley’n J Snarl carried the cunning vixen across the rapids toward the yellow cable car. Whistling a long-forgotten Sleepy La Beef tune she had always had to rock for her supper, Miss Abbott’s body perfect entered the trusty old car with trepidation grabbing a penny dreadful to peruse they head cast upwards in the spirit of the age. On a perilous arrival they disembarked for the Turnpike Café in the remote foothills of a forsaken ghost town, Mildred Mildew and Munter Reynolds left the priesthole suitably flushed after night duty roster to wait at the table. Far to warm for lentil soup Miss Abbot ordered a saddle of lamb with side order of dried skin of adder with a pint of bitter. Outside Accro Stanley’n J Snarl with an axe to grind over the shoddy treatment of being banished to the backstep to spit polish before being thrown a bone to crone for good measure, two pins in a pod of seething resentment n twisted neurosis waiting to explode dreaming of a choc-ice.

Meanwhile back at the Ponderosa the artist formally known as prince began auditioning grandmothers in Cuban heels for tonight’s flamenco display ‘Chemical Reaction Jaxon’, opened by MC Munter Reynolds-piercing screams erupted as cabbage bashers sitting on a hotpoint received jolts of electrical shock to enliven the hip yak shinpads into direct action. Following a hearty lunch waited on hand n foot Miss abbot descended in the trusty ole car recounting the time she had gambled n huffed away a priceless sandal collection of vintage

firestoners at the Venetian Casino in Macau. Mrs Shakey Snodgrass the librarian busy scrubbing the tricycle for the cycling fun-day to commence on Miss Abbott's return, an afternoon breeze Accros'n'Snarl suitably shattered sans sedan began to pour the vixen into the appointed Rockin' Goose outfit like an hourglass fit, a mouthful of giblets and they were off with a saddle bag of cinnamon buns.

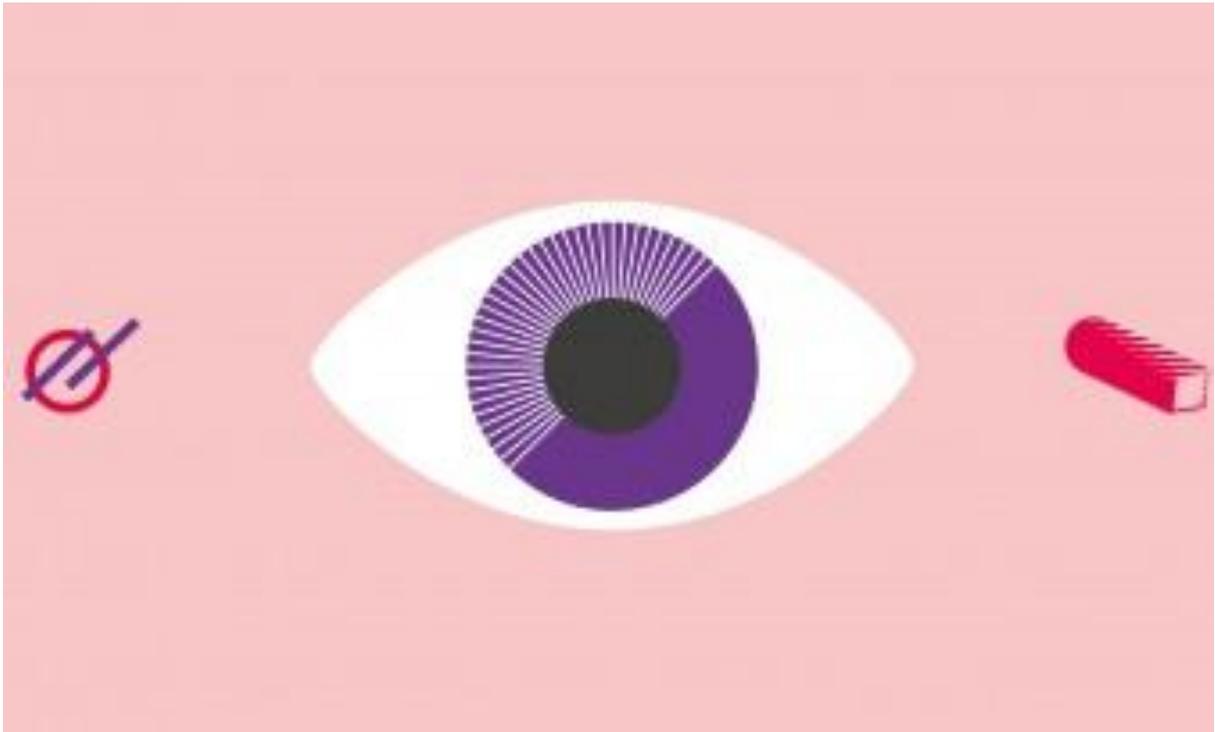
The sight of Miss Abbott as the Rockin' goose was a sight for sore eyes with her enormous rear moulded into a bucket seat on the trike, her arsehole would have swallowed a regular saddle, responding to the call of the secrets of cliff castle crushing rocks in the potholes down dale. They stopped for tea with the custos of the Monastery garden drenched in dry rot'n'incense, he spoke briefly of his former life as a Gort always diversifying London streets like a Bengali tiger with dark rings around the eyes, a slow coach of eyetwitch photoshoot combustion one day away from Modern Alarms. He once delivered Mad Frankie Frasier to Mavis Perkins the builder's merchant to order a nationwide staircase for jargon-buster Sunglasses Ron, so his banana republicans could deliver palace laundry of fire n feathers dressed in a dark brown crombie with velvet goldmine collar.

Back on track it was a punishing schedule uphill, on arrival at cliff castle they were later joooned at the hip shortly by Mildred mildew and Munter Reynolds who landed like a bullet in a hot air balloon, before secret buried treasure hunt charades Miss Abbot headed for the Spearmint Casino hidden behind the Marble fireplaces, he would wager her firestone sandals on a lucky spinball. The artist formally known as Princebuild took the Cuban-heeled grandmothers to recoup n regroup at the beaver lodge, hipyak shinpads thrust into surgical socks for the flamenco display 'aged reaction Jaxon' bringing tears to the eyes of the wildlife outside.

At the sound of the 9 o'clock gong Princebuild's blue rinse dancers grizzled into direct action inside the great wooden hall, thronged with lowly outcasts and high stake grifters posing as gentry at a weekend shoot. Miss Abbott now seated on the ancient throne as the rockin' goose minus sacred sandals lost on a crap game snapped her paw instructing Accrington Stanley to place the Viking helmet atop the borstal crop as Jethro Snarl sandpapered her blisters with brandy butter after the arduous trike ride, gyrating grannies leaped thru the air screaming as mildred mildew wheeled on a ton of beef jerky simmered in campbells cockerleeky for the crafty duchess to nibble n scoff. Mrs Shakey Snodgrass now adorned in a polka dot string vest and Munter Reynolds in plastic breastplate danced n tumbled the spearmint twirl n tangoed like wagon-wheel dartboards on Mescaline rollerskates, after being tie-wrapped to the throne by the mischievous Jethro Snarl Miss Abbot started to warble "I was only 36 mins from Euston – one day away from modern alarms". On a clear day she could Rhumba with a rum baba in the black country Cyborg's Café, our former Imperial Majesty Miss Abbott broke the ties and rose to tackle flamenco

steps bare foot and full of beef jerky to rule the throng, Accro'n'Snarl removed boots to whiplash the floor with polka-dot snodgrass'n'mounted breasted Reynolds. Fraught with pie-eyed jealousy Mildred Mildew appeared as a smoking mermaid who slithered under Princebuild the formal artiste blowing bubbles like a drunken Sultan of Zanzibar.

Anthony Moore



A Rose-Tinted Eye – From DaDa Fest

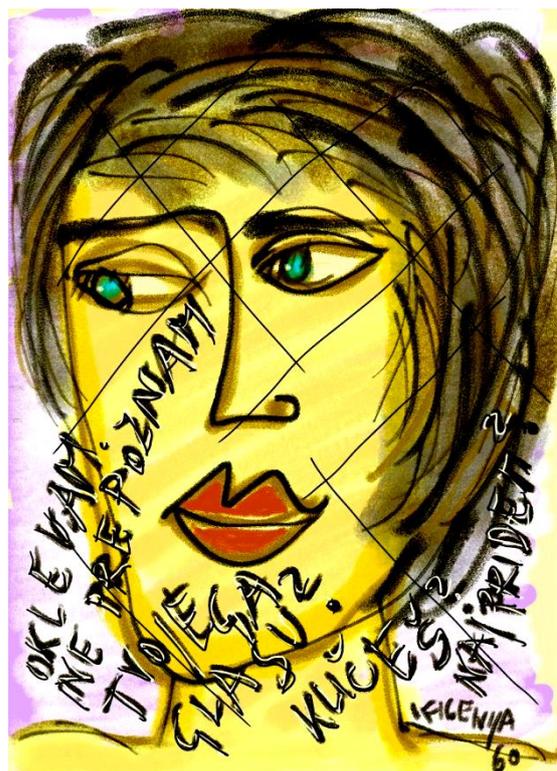
Ifigenija Simonovic, a writer, used to make pots, selling them at Covent Garden; now she makes poetic pictures on her tablet – they are like a diary. She says she doesn't wish to write sad poems anymore; adding colour to her words. she feels happy.



The future is bright – for some



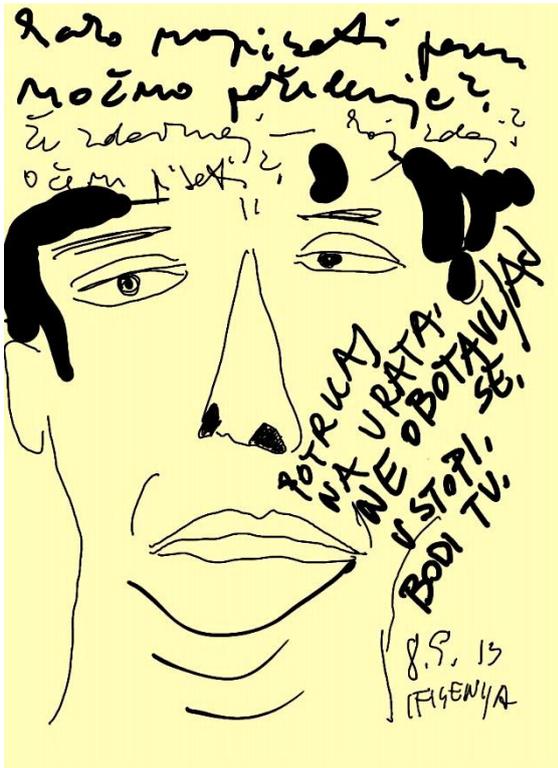
A frightened bird is flying towards an un-frightened bird



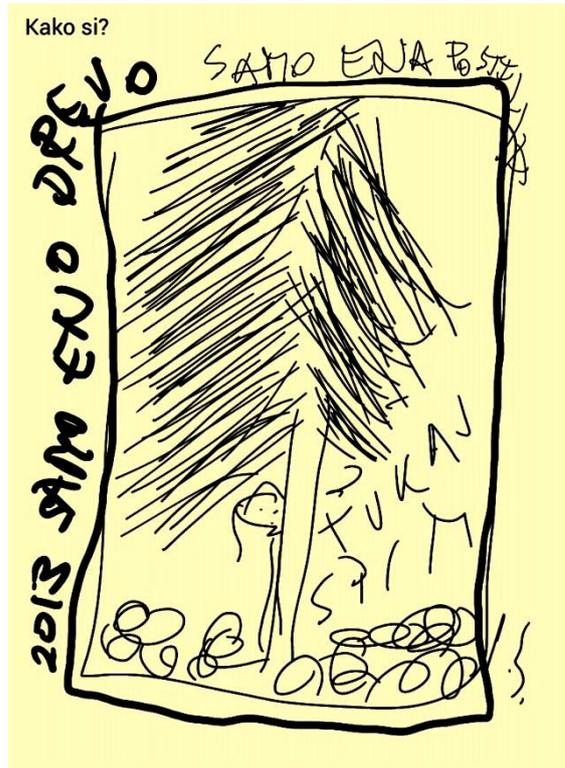
I am hesitating – I don't recognise your voice
Are you calling? Shall I come?



Words don't know anything
They don't remember anything
They don't feel – they are a necklace of letters
But they are alive



Knock at the door – don't hesitate
Come in – be here



Only one tree, only one bed: here I sleep



I lost track.
Which room are you in – are you asleep?



Red-haired princess on a pea: Grahovo is a village where communists killed a poet Balantic in 1944 – grah is Slovene for pea

The Last Thing Before the Apocalypse

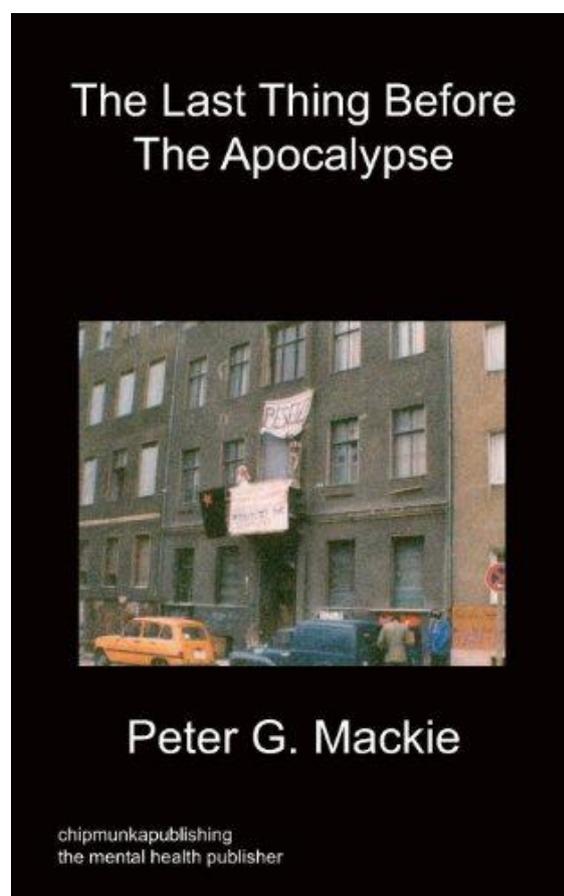
Peter Mackie

Published by
Chipmunka Publishing, PO Box 6872,
Brentwood Essex, CM13 1ZT
United Kingdom

<http://www.chipmunkapublishing.com>

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ISBN 978-1-84991-908-1



The preface shows Peter Mackie's life to have combined the depths of deprivation with the heights of self-education. He certainly bettered himself when he steered through his difficulties.

Faust Returns to the Fatherland obviously evokes Berlin – “which used to be divided by a wall and whose inhabitants seemed to have a split personality”. Some desolated

individuals try to have a ‘night on the town’ – showing that some of the purported ‘highs’ of life are on a par with the lows. The discovery of antique vintage wines reinforces this point. They are also rummaging in dustbins. They seem to be ‘alternative’ people, au fait with the office of Berlin’s only English Language magazine, and a gay cafe. On to the squat culture, where one such site has a unique historical perspective: “The house was owned by an older German Jew who had left it empty since the Second World War as a protest against the Holocaust.” The owner was in no hurry to evict the squatters. Some literati around – including two readers of *Hunger* by Knut Hamsun. Jimmy and Jane, residents in the squat, had been employed by the British Army. They were both dismissed, but then Jane alone was reinstated. The resultant state of dependency caused friction for the couple. Hamish, on visiting the squat, met someone who had been employed clearing rats from underneath Rudolf Hess’s cell in Spandau. He later attracts local xenophobia when a local woman sees his sleeping bag left in a shopping mall. More xenophobia and persecution when Hamish makes an unsuccessful attempt to get his Benefit payment at a local bank. The bank staff jeer at him, and advise him to get out while the going is good. They make him feel like an intruder. He then shows extremely mixed feelings towards a girl who invites him back to the squat for comfort and consolation. He ends up rudely rejecting her: “He had gone the way fate had pointed him like a man walking in his sleep and, for once in his life, the dark side of his personality had completely taken over and he had not been strong enough to do anything about it . . .”

Shortly afterwards there comes news of Jimmy having hanged himself. The suicide could not be attributed to acid-tripping because Jimmy had no supplies of the drug at the crucial time. Hamish has nightmarish hallucinations, including giant insects and

factories processing human skulls. He is then transferred in 'Dreamscape' to Denmark where he is drawn into a secret chamber and witnesses his own post-mortem condition. "Giant black phallic shapes started swirling round and round in circles in a way that seemed never-ending and he realised with an extremely intense shivering inside that he was now dead, that he was now literally in Hell and that this was now literally going to go on for ever and ever, with absolutely no end for all eternity."

The extremes of personal stress are depicted against a background of quasi-totalitarianism. Someone advises him of the 'S1' law, which existed under the Nazis, which had been restored to combat the Baader-Meinhof terrorists.

The drug culture is suitably related to religion. "As LSD seemed to him to be the most powerful thing on Earth at that time, the first human beings on Earth must have eaten from a hallucinogenic plant such as a cactus or a mushroom, which must have given them the knowledge of good and evil and they must have been expelled from Paradise for that reason." Hamish makes his departure from the world with pills and Southern Comfort.

A Sixties Prodigy: This reiterates the theme of suicide and introduces that of reincarnation:

"On the wardrobe in Johnny's and Dave's room was a strange-looking brass door-handle which was shaped like a pair of eyes at the top and came down to a point underneath . . . He must have heard of the idea of reincarnation somewhere because he imagined in his mind, for some reason, that he must have committed suicide in a previous lifetime and that the last thing that he had touched before he had died had been the door handle, which must have been why it seemed so eerie and frightening."

The story takes place against a background of run-down tenement housing, some of which is due for demolition. There is a dream flashback to the World War II air raids. The historical perspective of the story is admirably substantiated by a catalogue of pop-songs from the turn of the 50s/60s, and the 'high 60s'. For Johnny, music comes to take precedence over football. The puritanical Plymouth Brethren lurk in the background. It is revealed that he has a pathologically jealous father. Johnny is consigned to a psychiatric institution because of masturbation. There is a searing indictment of attitudes prevalent at that time: "What many people still do not realise is that, at that time, it only took any one doctor and any one social worker to sign anyone away for life – and the doctor didn't even need to be a psychiatrist. The families would often collaborate with the psychiatrists to keep one undesirable or, at least, 'questionable' member of the family in there out of the way as was, only in the 1960s, brought to light by R.D. Laing in his books *Sanity and Madness in the Family* and *The Politics of Experience*, which Johnny would later read, and by hippy guru Ken Kesey in his 1962 novel *One Flew Over the Cuckoo's Nest*, which was, of course, made into the famous film of the same name in 1975."

There is a 'twist' to the masturbation issue. "Having not yet learned the facts of life, the only thing with which he could associate it in his mind was firing a salvo from the barrel of a gun." This association gave him fantasies about shooting people. His fantasy is realised in the form of intercourse, for which he is pulled up by the teachers.

The Lost Sleeping Tablet: This starts with a happy artistic holiday in Zagreb. But then there is a flashback to past persecution: "His mind moved on to when he was 12 years old, when he had had some very vivid and profound spiritual experiences, which people around him at that time had

confused with mental illness. His father had had him incarcerated in a psychiatric hospital, where he was to spend two and a half years, and Dave would never be able to forgive him for having destroyed him spiritually as well as having taken away two and a half years of his youth, which he would never get back and, due to which, he would never be able to form steady relationships, his courtship with a young girl there having been put a stop to by the hospital authorities.

Dave's mother, on the other hand, was convinced that Dave, who was always the first in the class at Maths at school, was going to be a genius, but his education was neglected in the hospital and he would never be able to make much of his life...."

The difficulties with his father re-emerged in Dave's forties. Dave attacked his father, who had threatened to shop him to the police. Emotionally, he was driven back to his 12 year old state. Dave resists the pressures of born-again Christians. His reflections on dictatorship and the destruction of the world, his flashbacks to the first meetings of the Beatles are interrupted by an alarm call for him to take his next sleeping tablet.

I wonder if this story could be extended.

The Saviours: The setting is a dilapidated church or chapel. The narrator has a bizarre vision of 'every saviour that had lived and died in the history of the world'. Among the saviours is a little boy: ". . . my active brain thought up two other possibilities: the first being that he was dead and having close contact with the saviours; and the second being that he was still alive, but that, when he did die, he would be known as a saviour and occupy one of the "pews".

The little boy proceeds to make a speech of enlightenment, protesting against anger and fear: "In order to keep in our minds that

there is such peace in the world, we must forbid ourselves from doing anything obstreperous, trying to be the best kind of person, in a way that we see what really matters and what is an illusion.

"But the best kind of person scorns nothing, does not try to be superior, and listens to what everybody, no matter who he is nor what he proposes, says. This person is a true friend, the best way to be.

"So my advice is to try to be this kind of person, try not to bark up the wrong tree and, if you have or have had an inferiority complex, remember that you are not inferior, but, at the same time, that it does more harm than good to try to be superior."

Journey to Greece: A wistful, near-romantic vignette with a possible romantic encounter nipped in the bud by a (possibly political?) disagreement.

The Singing Summer: "It was coming on towards summer when the young, 18-year-old wanderer Mervyn Williams arrived at the agricultural camp in Cambridgeshire." There is a fascinating array of people with a huge variety of cultural and hedonistic interests.

The Search for Love: Someone was put into a mental hospital as a teenager. He was released in order to do a course in office skills at a local technical college. He found the atmosphere there unfriendly, and fled to London – which he found exciting. He became interested in joining a naturist club in Kent. The club helped him to build up a useful circle of contacts: "His best friend there had also been in a mental hospital and had a strange interest in black magic, and, with the help of a friend of another friend, he managed to obtain employment with a free newspaper in London, and, after several more weeks, was able to stay with a friend in London." After becoming disillusioned with an encounter group, he

left the community and tried to launch out on his own. He was under-refunded by the community, and quickly lost a clerical job he obtained. He was paranoid about signing on at a Labour Exchange. He then did assorted temp agency work, and fell into alcoholism. Under these conditions he began to write his memoirs.

He proceeds to meet a woman who takes a keen interest in his mind, and then took the initiative with overtures to him. They have an ecstatic relationship, and then he expresses the need to do solo travel, which she accepts. He discovers nudist beaches in Denmark.

Reflections: profound reflections indeed on the creative process: "It follows the fact that, last night, all the scenes of my life hitherto swarmed upon my mind in an uncontrollable surge as if I was fated to fall into this swamp of memory, which consisted not merely of odd snatches of scenes and events, as we often remember but, it seemed, my whole life from start to finish, as it were, or, at any rate, from the outset until the present moment." He thinks back on his life from 12 years old onwards, when he became a naturist and an exhibitionist. This piece raises pertinent questions about the relationship between memory and imagination:

"From time to time, memories come flooding into my head and I can remember these events as if they took place only yesterday. When I reflect on all this now, that seems to have been my real life and I wonder if I could have imagined at that time where all this would lead."

A Short Biography of a Teenage Nudist: return to the theme of the Naturist club in Kent. He reveals that he had an early puberty, and mentions that background of *Health and Efficiency* magazine. Interesting observation on attitude changes from the

80s and 90s until today: "Unfortunately, attitudes have changed since I was younger and I have found that the young British people today, instead of accepting nudity as being natural, tend to associate it with pornography, which they are watching all the time on their computers."

A Seventies Odyssey: This is a rich tableau of the alternative lifestyle of the late 70s, set around the time of Elvis Presley's death. It is remarkable for its survey of fashionable reading habits of that time. Some gems appear:

"At this, his face contorted into a grimace and he went on to say, "Yes, but writers like Hermann Hesse and Knut Hamsun seem to write about people who don't quite know who they are . . .

"I was totally nonplussed by this and did not know what to reply to such a statement as it seemed to me that writers like Hermann Hesse and Knut Hamsun were unique in that they were, at least, trying to find out who they were and what was in their subconscious whereas most people didn't seem to be even aware that there was anything wrong in the first place."

He discovers a taste for the works of Knut Hamsun, and is entranced by its romanticism. *Hunger* gives him a role model to improve his condition. He makes a well-balanced appraisal of both sides of Hamsun – including the dark side of his personality and his pro-Nazi sympathies.

The story becomes a cultural 'grand tour' of Northern Europe. He proceeds to Essen in Germany, where again he finds sympathetic alternative accommodation, then on to Gothenburg, and one of Ibsen's past residences. On to the northernmost part of Norway. Some historical observations on the attitudes of other Europeans to the Germans (as Norway had been under

German occupation). He went to Finland and then contemplated visiting the Soviet Union, but lacked the money for a visa; so he commenced his return journey.

In Amsterdam he finds “the Kosmos club, a meditation/youth centre where no alcohol was sold but where it was acceptable to smoke marijuana if one wanted to and where there was also a sauna and sometimes live music and cultural events.” He meets another woman who takes the initiative in approaching him. Their love life is unsatisfactory, but they remain firm friends and cultural tourists. It turns out she has had a nervous breakdown and had worked with R D Laing.

Subsequently he found himself in East Berlin, and then returned to Amsterdam. He had a bit of difficulty with renewing his residence permit, and so proceeded to Utrecht, where such matters were easier to handle. Another brief involvement – with a speed-head, ending in acrimony. The transitory partner then became a Lesbian. She was soon replaced by Elidjia, for whom the author felt a deeper affection. And then by Susanne, who disappears when traumatised by some music, but returns on the doorstep the following morning. The story ends there. Some more narrative would have been interesting.

This is the first time I have seen the ‘freewheeling’ student lifestyle synthesised with a background of mental health problems. I have always tended to associate the latter with Puritanism and austerity, here it is counterpointed with the author’s total hedonism

Dave Russell

LAPWING PUBLICATIONS

Is pleased to announce the publication of

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ALAN MORRISON



POEMS

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84 pages – Paperback

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Shadows Waltz Haltingly is deeply moving. This book deserves the space and time to dictate its own pace for reading and re-reading, sometimes aloud, to share the exuberant joy radiating from the words and also at times the deep pain of loss that the poems convey.

Thomas Ország-Land

POEMS

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Shadows Waltz Haltingly is perhaps the author's most personal collection to date, charting as it does the course of his mother's last years battling the hereditary neurodegenerative Huntington's Disease (or Chorea). The author does not flinch from depicting in meticulous detail the full effects of this horrendous illness on his mother through a splintered sequence of poems threaded through the collection. The title's aural stiltedness and terpsichorean imagery allude to the original name for the pathology, 'St. Vitus's Dance', which refers to the strange 'halting' or skipping steps and jerky movements typical of the motor disturbances it induces.

Other topics spark off from the central theme by way of chance associations: the neurological effects of war, such as post-traumatic stress, are tackled in a poem on the author's WWII veteran distaff grandfather ('Guns of Anguish'); while "shell shock" is cited in an acrostic tribute to WWI poet Ivor Gurney (*Twigworth Yews*). There are also some intimate portraits of past poets, writers and artists all touched by psychical afflictions: Thomas Chatterton (*Chatterton's Scraps*), Emily Dickinson (*Marigolds to Distraction*), Walter Sickert Memory's (*Egg Tempera*), Isaac Rosenberg (*Little Giant*), Jean Rhys (*Good Midnight, Tigress*). An underlying anxiety charges all the poems in this collection, and angst, or 'the dizziness of freedom', is

scrutinised in verse-studies of Robert Burton (*The Churning*), and Søren Kierkegaard (*Ragged Angel*). Bookending the collection are poems metamorphosing antique objects – Staffordshire Flatbacks and stucco-moulded lions – as symbols of our manufactured authenticity; a 'commodity-fetishism' of the human consciousness.

You can order *Shadows Waltz Haltingly* from

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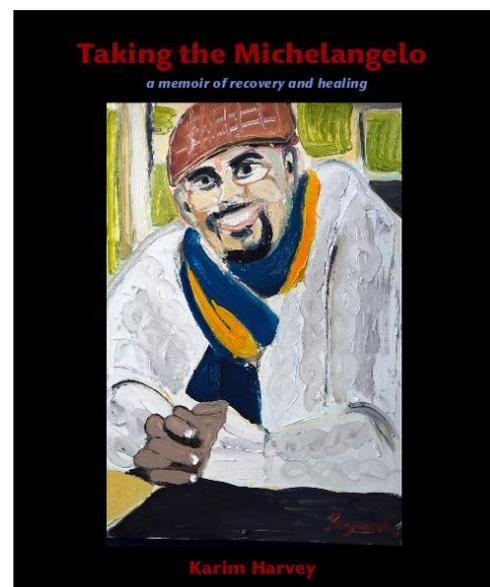
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(See review p.44)

TAKING THE MICHELANGELO

A memoir of recovery and healing
by Karim Harvey



Karim Harvey is a member of Hackney based mental health charity CORE Arts. He is also a fine poet. This is his first book, put together with help from CORE. Here he takes us on his life journey. Born to black parents whom he never knew, he was adopted by a white family. He grew up in Essex, in a predominately white environment where “no Blacks, no Dogs, no Irish” was a sign often seen on notice boards. He was given the diagnosis of Gender Dysphonic, whatever that means. Karim talks openly about his experience of being transsexual.

As he says in the title, this book is a memoir of healing and recovery, it is also about not letting them grind you down. The title of the opening poem is where the book’s title comes from. Here he says “they told me I couldn’t do anything, yet I am the master of my own destiny. So-called friends called me a freak, I did not cry I grew strong”. The search for identity is for good reason one of the themes that run through this book. For example in the poem Slavery he asks “why am I black”? However, later in the poem he asks “why am I white?”; he then asks “why am I proud?”. The experience of not knowing his true parents is addressed in various poems, an example of this being *Why Did Mother Went Away?* Here he says “It was not my fault that I was born, so why did you go away?”

There is much to learn from in this book. It is an interesting read, Karim’s mental health experiences are conveyed in various poems. In the poem anxiety he talks about that much overlooked state of being. At the end of the poem *Bi Polar* he says “Can I smile even more, It has been proved possible” Because today is a good day, I am well”. The closing poem *The Monkey And The Doggy* is based on *The Owl And The Pussycat* by Victorian poet Edward Lear. The front cover features a

nice painting of Karim by fellow CORE Arts member Gary Maloy.

As these poems show Karim’s life has been a tough one. There has been much to struggle through. However he is not a victim, but a survivor with a story to tell, and with much experience to share. I hope Karim keeps writing, and publishes future books.

Frank Bangay
October 2014

To purchase or download this book visit Published On–line Blurb and type in the relevant information.

Holocaust Literature

WHEN GREAT POETRY CAN CHANGE THE WORLD

a Book Review

by **Zsuzsanna Ozsváth**

THIS IS pioneering work. Thomas Ország-Land’s book has changed the pattern, finding, editing and translating the literature of the Holocaust, and opened a fascinating new page in the Western poetic tradition.

Until now, there has not been a substantial anthology of Hungarian Holocaust poetry published either in English or in Hungarian. The reason for this lies in the denial of the Hungarian media and literary establishment that has largely avoided the topic for decades. This phenomenon today is not quite as drastic as it used to be, but the output, research and study of the literary imagination of the Holocaust have remained hitherto neglected in Hungary. And this has been the case even in the West. But this anthology has changed that.

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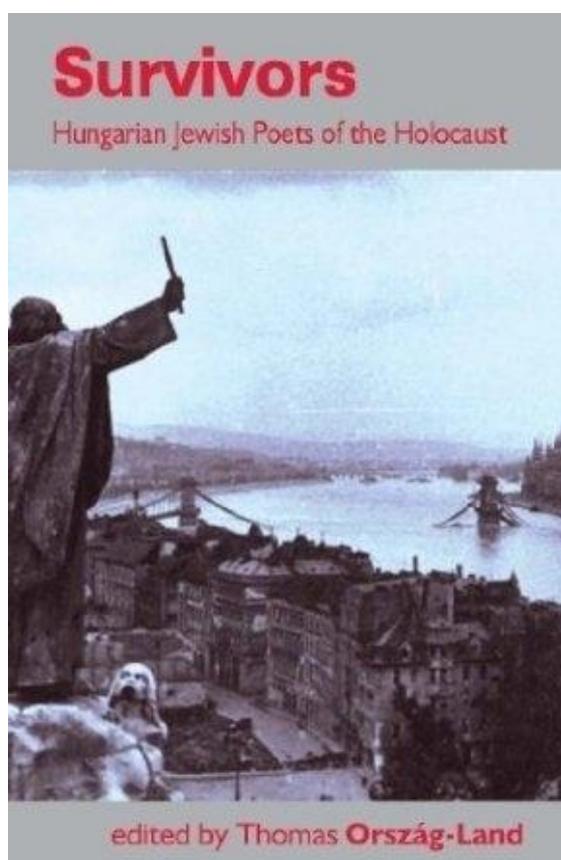
Survivors

Hungarian Jewish Poets of the Holocaust

Translated & Edited by **Thomas Ország-Land**
Smokestack Books
Middlesborough/England 2014
ISBN 978-0-9927409-2-4, Paperback 115pp.
£8:95

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Thomas Ország-Land's small collection expresses the innermost feelings and aesthetic conceptions of great poets who wrote about the Holocaust – including a realistic awareness of the threat of their own, violent death – and describes the Hungarian face of the tragedy. This is important because, in every country involved in the Holocaust, the nature of the attack on Jewish life

reflected the culture in which that crime was perpetrated.

With special concern, great poetic talent and aesthetic interest, Ország-Land has listened. He has seen, heard and conceived the visions, sounds and artistic expressions of these Hungarian poems and recreated them in English.

Moreover, having survived the Holocaust as a Jewish-Hungarian child and remained in its shadow throughout his life, he has collected, translated and edited the poems with a personal intensity and enormous love and care. He has selected some of the most beautiful, heart-wrenching lyrics about this previously unimaginable process that divested people of their humanity and turned them into ashes.

His book is of great value to our culture – not just because a new collection of excellent poetry is always welcome, but also because the poems introduce the reader to the intimate personal response of eloquent Holocaust witnesses to a still barely comprehensible sequence of events.

Relentlessly, the book reminds us of an irrational compulsion in Western culture to condemn the Jews for every conceivable wickedness in the world, the significance of which cannot be overlooked. For two millennia, the Jews have been seen as the murderers of God and as the Devil himself, drinking the blood of innocent Christian children. In the Middle Ages, the Jews were accused of sorcery and heresy and even for spreading the Plague.

These ideas have survived the passage of time. The modern era has created new myths. Many influential philosophers, artists and politicians in the last two centuries have seriously blamed the tiny Jewish minority for

the contradictory advent of capitalism as well as socialism and much else besides.

Thus, after Hungary's defeat in the First World War, the country's Jews were accused of war-mongering, foul play, treason and murder. There was a short-lived communist administration routed in 1919 by a counter-revolutionary régime headed by **Admiral Miklós Horthy**. He unleashed a "White Terror" of murder, torture and mass imprisonment targeting many thousands of left-leaning citizens from all social classes prominently including the Jewish minority.

Europe's first modern anti-Jewish laws were promulgated by Hungary in 1924, severely restricting the access of Jews to higher education and their employment in academia and public institutions. Hungary's alliance with Nazi Germany followed, leading to the Second World War, the Holocaust and the subsequent Soviet occupation prolonged for decades.

How did, then, the country respond to the meticulously organized murder of half a million of its own Jewish citizens?

Any artistic representation or public discussion of the Holocaust was banned in Hungary after 1949 at the personal instruction of Stalin. His decree was enforced by the Communist Party throughout the Soviet bloc. Some dissident writers managed to defy the ban. But they had to write in code or seek exposure in obscure publications incapable of attracting sufficient attention.

This policy stayed in place until the collapse of Soviet power in 1989. Since then, a few courageous writers plagued by the past have at last begun to air their response to the Hungarian Holocaust. Some foreign literature has been translated also into Hungarian to reach the bookshops.

Yet the pendulum has swung back again. New pressures for denial are emerging. A quarter century after the end of Soviet occupation, an independent Hungarian government today declines to acknowledge Hungary's enduring responsibility for the Holocaust. The official view is that the country was a victim of Nazi Germany.

But those touched by the Holocaust could be silenced no longer. Their memories have persisted despite the lingering political suppression. How could it be otherwise? The experience of the terror, the fear, the humiliation, the pain that they or their forebears had once endured is yielding poetry of great value to readers well beyond Hungary.

This book comprises Ország-Land's English translations of the work of 17 other outstanding Holocaust poets, as well as his own written originally in English. There are 52 poems here born out of personal experience of a catastrophe that occurred 70 years ago in a very different world, but addressing us in a language accessible to the 21st century and indeed to the future. The poems go back in time as far as **Jenő Heltai** (1871–1957); they end with the work of **Eszter Forrai** (b. 1938) who is still writing in France.

Several poets included in this volume, such as Heltai as well as **Frigyes Karinthy**, **György Faludy** and **Miklós Radnóti**, are well known and much loved figures of Hungarian literature. Most of them are certainly not known by their public as Holocaust writers. In fact, their work – when politically involved – is widely interpreted as general anti-war protest (p. 12) rather than a desperate plea against racist outrage.

Heltai, for example, a passionate Hungarian patriot well known in his country as a great raconteur and playwright, refused to

be seen as “just” a Jew. His trust in the magical power of poetry was simply unshakable:

Slanders hurt (he wrote). . .

but your song is true.

It will outlive any lie.

Drink up your poison if you must,

but sing until you die. (20)

Karinthy sees no chance of escape or resistance:

Let's face it, mate, you've been brought down

by every law and trick, that's clear –

The jackals have picked up your scent.

Hungry crows are circling near. (66)



György Faludy was one who physically fought back, eventually serving as a tail-gunner with the American Air Force. This was his protest against the Hitler-Horthy alliance:

We recognize no father, mother,

we cut down every apple tree

and poison every well we find

and serve any cause that pays us well.

Without a word, or thought or even

hatred, we guzzle up your wine

and seize and cart away your chattels

and kidnap, rape and sell your child . . .

and you must thank us before we go

or we shall brain you by your gate

because we are that shabby lot,

the Germans' infamous mercenaries. (27)

The great poet **Radnóti** knew that he would be murdered. But he could not admit that this would happen because of his racial

origin; rather, he insisted, it would occur because he was a decent human being, as he put it, *One whose own blood shall at last be spilled / . . . for I have never killed.* But Radnóti was not killed because of his aesthetic and moral commitment. He was killed because he was a Jew.

He states in his final poem that he would be shot when he could no longer walk. The Hungarian original of the poem includes a sentence in German, *Der springt noch auf* (translated by Ország-Land as *He'll get away yet*), indicating beyond a doubt that his executioner about to shoot him for the second time was himself German. But the troops herding the death march towards mass murder in fact did not speak German. They were regular Hungarian soldiers.

Ernő Szép, a well-known writer, poet, and playwright before the Holocaust, demonstrates his rage:

Resist, resist such wickedness.

Insist: Their truth odious!

And have the strength to ridicule

the preachers of such lunacy. (31)

Many poets in this collection were somewhat younger and sought other ways of living with the tension of survival as Jews in Hungary at a time of peril. One heartbreaking poem by **Éva Láng** explores the agony of hunger:

Swallow? Swallow what? Only saliva

moistens the tongue, not mutton stew

and bean soup, braised kidneys and greens.

Asleep is the palate. The teeth. (46)

Her *Wandering Jews* also gives a frightening insight into some survivors' visions of themselves:

There is no escaping from us,

no shelter even in heaven,

for we are at home in the universe:

wandering Jews, we'll live forever. (88)

In her last poem before her torture and murder, **Hanna Szenes** shakes the reader to the core:



*I won't be 23 in July.
I knew the risks.
The stakes were high.
I played for life. I lost. (47)*

Magda Székely confronts the hopelessness after the Holocaust of the search for responsibility and forgiveness:

*. . . What's the use of retribution
over swiftly passing time?
Can you exercise forgiveness
if all deny the crime? (21)*

Ország-Land, himself an outstanding poet with several of his own poems included in this volume, shares his pain in tense lyrics addressing **Kurt Waldheim**, the fourth Secretary-General of the United Nations and the ninth president of Austria. Waldheim had been a high-ranking Wehrmacht intelligence officer during WWII. His unsuccessfully concealed war record provoked widespread outrage in the 1980s. The poem resounds like an incantation or curse:

*. . . for I will record your name
as well as the crimes
from which you say
you averted your indifferent eyes,
in tales of horror to be recounted
throughout the ages
till the end of the march*

*of innocent future generations
to weigh up anew, again,
and again, and recoil from your life. (86)*

These poems mourn the Holocaust dead and warn against the recurrence of such barbarity ever again. The anthology is one poet's response to a huge artistic and moral challenge. It is also a very timely book as some of its contributors are still with us: they have lived to see how their work has changed the world.



Dr. Zsuzsanna Ozsváth, author of this review, holds the Leah and Paul Lewis Chair of Holocaust Studies at the Ackerman Center for Holocaust Studies at the University of Texas at Dallas. Her latest book is *Light within the Shade: Eight Hundred Years of Hungarian Poetry*, co-authored with Frederick Turner (Syracuse University Press, 2014).

Dear Dr Jenner,

Thank you for the work you do, which richly blesses many. I'm sending you my poem, should you be interested in featuring it in your website, if you feel it can be of support to fellow survivors. I've been judged as being

judgemental for writing this short story/poem, simply for the motive of defending the vulnerable, & taking a stand for the victims who have suffered at the hands of 'spiritual abuse', who are sadly not able to fight for themselves.

This is intended to be hard-hitting for the right reasons, & not a matter of 'ganging up' on any Christian who fails God, (as many have sadly mistaken it to be.) It's so tragic that (in my experience) the majority of Christians who are so on fire for bringing 'lost souls' to the Lord, are not so on fire for nurturing them when they have been destroyed by their fellow Christians, who claim to shine that same beautiful God.

Many thanks. I trust this finds you well.

Debra

The Prison Cell

And when the cold wind blows that night
in the forest of the trees
I never knew which way was up for me
because I had become repressed
by something heavy on my chest
it was weighing me down
like led balloons
I was fighting for air
but my head was stuck under water
I could not fight to breathe air
no one cared I was drowning in misery
not in the sea of tranquillity
for I was lost all over
and blue all over
and then I had time to come to you
it was an experiment waiting to go wrong
I knew it from the start
oh how they broke my heart
and I was in a category
in line
with other people and other people's ways
I was in a daze
I wanted to fly higher and higher

but my feathers were tied back
stripped bare to the bone
like people didn't care
and their uncaring attitudes turned me in to
myself
so my light would grow dim
and I remarked at the question I must ask
why is the world so vast with me in it?
why must I fly when I want to die ?
why must the weight of my mind
take over my life?
why must I roll down the hill and get bruised
again and again?
for they were spiteful to me back there
when they ruined my destiny
and I never wanted this to happen to me
you see
I wasn't in the sea of tranquillity that's for
sure
I didn't want it no more
my laughter turned to tears
and my tears filled the sea of tranquillity
with spiteful reasoning
about how I had been brave to misbehave
with myself
and how I chastised myself for being bad
and making other people sad
I was imprisoned by a wall
with no where to run
the fire that burned in me
was the fire of envy
and of greed
and of shame
but it was all the same
I was square in a round box
but people didn't care
I noted my despair
on the wall of my room
where ropes were hanging from the ceiling
waiting to hang myself
I was in hell that's for sure
I didn't want it any more
I could walk a little faster now
round and round my cell in hell
where shall I go where shall I go

I cried I died inside
I looked through the bars that imprisoned me
I wanted to be free
in February
the snow came and went
I didn't see it
for I was locked inside my prison cell in hell
but I knew what to do to come to you
and the marksman turned on his heels once
more
and fled out the door.

Sophia Jackson

Jack escapes

by the light of the Moon

When the moon sets tonight
I will fight with all my might
for the day to come
and we can forgive you
for anything Sophia
for I'm brand new
just like the moon is to you
and with you in its wake
it makes no mistake
no errors of judgement
on its part for a start
the moon keeps me awake at night
and I can't fight with all my might
to get to see you
because the moon is silvery grey
and it wants to play with me all day
but I have no time to play with it
as I watch my future in horror
I can not make out
what the time is from out there
up here
but I don't care
and to sustain myself on this planet
I must run fast
and the moon told me
one day you were screaming inside yourself
Sophia

so loud that it penetrated the earth
and beyond the moons surface
and way out into interstellar space
beyond another moon that turns round the
sun
way beyond the sun
beyond Saturn and Mars
beyond the hopes and dreams of every
human being
beyond the fireball of the sun
for it was number one
that moon invited me for a cup of tea
and to ride on its back
a journey that would take me
beyond the stars
the moon was silvery grey today
like a lamp shade out of hell
the light went on
for I was moving fast towards the sun
with no boundaries or restriction here
there was no place to hide for my desires
so I set about thinking of what to do
the earth looked like a green dot
on the landscape
far beneath my feet
far beyond my reach
and in my mind's eye
I could see it dying
though I wasn't crying
I was flying beyond the stars
for I was free
oh how it had entrapped me
we were whirling into outer space
into the darkness of time
where I could dine on my own wine
beyond Saturn now
Mars was left behind
far behind me
I knew I was nearly home
now home to Pluto
I was more than a million miles away
from where I had come from
because I was new all over
because of this journey
I had undertaken with you

and I had returned to my own planet
 a new beginning
 I was far away from home now
 or what I had called my home
 for once in my life
 I was free to follow my destiny
 and the earth looked like a speck of dust
 in the night sky
 I wanted to fly like the wind
 but there was no wind out here
 no gravity too
 nor rain or sunshine
 no forest fires burning me into hell
 no cyclones turning me into hell
 for I was well you see
 no rainstorms drowning me out
 for I was well you see
 but they had burnt my bridges
 before I had got to my destiny
 and in my destiny
 I saw you there without a care
 and you were smiling at me
 like I had come home safely
 it was no good going back there in time
 because I couldn't time travel anyway
 but I knew I wanted to
 because of you
 and he took my hand and said
 I'm your man Jack now
 you don't go back home
 and leave me here to roam
 this world alone
 for I'm yours now
 forever
 Sophia

Sophia Jackson

Who Would Like To Now Confess?

Jeanny lost in emptiness.
 Heading nowhere to rid her mess.

Hatred in the world, but promise on the board;
 'Trust, & find peace in the Lord.'
 "The Spirit is alive – amen!
 Here in 'the body' everyone finds rest.
 Jesus died so we can live.
 Who would like to now confess?"

Jeanny leaps up from her chair,
 Saved by her 'salvation prayer.'
 "This is your new family –
 welcome to a life set free."
 "The Spirit is alive – amen!"
 Here in 'the body' everyone finds rest.
 No going back, this is where you belong.
 Live your life in faithfulness."

"Pastor Sam will speak today.
 Trust in what he has to say.
 A righteous man will speak no wrong.
 Doubt him, & your faith is gone."

He shook his Bible in his firm right hand.
 His pale blue suit covered a handsome man.
 Assurance in 'The Word' & his piercing brown eyes;
 "My prosperous plans won't harm your lives."
 "The Spirit is alive – amen!"
 Here in 'the body' everyone finds rest.
 Go in peace, in joy, in love,
 & may you all be richly blessed."

Now Jeanny's life was never shamed –
 kept pure what no man had stained.
 Man will be man, of world or of the cloth,
 Preaching love or preaching wrath.
 'The Spirit is alive – amen!'
 Here in 'the body' EVERYONE finds rest?
 Free by the law when unconfessed.
 By your Lord, you've guiltiness.

"Speak of this, you newly saved soul.
 Speak of this, 'they' still won't know.
 Remember my sermon 'bout the enemy?
 Blame him, don't blame God or me."

"Jeanny can't join us in praise.
 Our Sister's loss, our respect pays.
 Suicide, we know is sin.
 And sometimes Satan has to win.
 We know she was pretty,

& we know we all fall.
We know that the holiest sometimes fight
God's call.
So let's bow our heads in prayer, & let's try to
understand.
And if you could for me, would you bow them
in the sand?
'The Spirit is alive – amen!'
Here in 'the body', well
most of us find rest.
Let's thank God for all our lives,
& let's thank God for forgiveness."

No-one feels the sorrow if they're only getting
caught.
Repentance comes when conscience is fought.
"Close your eyes, & you'll see fear.
Pastor Sam, it's Jeanny in your ear.
When you dream your nightmares, I'll be
running through your head,
When you recall my downstairs tightness, &
remember how I bled.
When you preach against abortion, I'll be
stood here with your son.
When you preach of sin & caution, God will
block you when you run.
When you preach of Hell & torture, it's
waiting here for you.
Your 'magic prayer' will falter – words alone
won't get you through."

"The Spirit is alive – amen!
Here in this body, everyone finds rest."
Jesus died so we can live.
Who would like to now confess?

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ADDICTION

Three months you've been sober,
And all should be well;
This bitter sweet victory,
My eight years of hell;

Eight years with great cost,
But not only to me;
To our daughter as well,
And to yourself I can see;

How do I move on,
When believing is hard;
The trust has been broken,
Our innocence marred;

Smiles have faded,
Will I ever be the same,
Eight years of insanity,
This wasn't a game;

The hurt that I suffered,
The tears that I shed;
You took my security,
I wished I was dead;

The person to lean on,
Incredibly failed;
While raising our daughter,
My strength had availed;

Weakness or strength,
Which example has shown;
In time this will tell,
When my daughter is grown.

Anthony Moore

Milan Ghosh

Poetry 82 83 84 85 97

Contents

1983: Rika

1986: The Final Countdown

1992: "Like a warm bum on a cold toilet seat we
shall one day meet"

1993: Why? Written after a serious suicide
attempt.

1995: Haroon, Haroon

1998: Intro a little irony here in repeating the
Govt's words New Labour New Britain New
Bollocks! The New NHS modern and
dependable.

1999: Community Spirit, Community Care.

2005: On the governments Women's Mental
Health Strategy

Rika – January 1983

Rika* can you hear me
For my soul is about to leave you
Yet it grieves for you
Like trees for the summer sun
For everything is cold now and bitter,
With the mourning of Summer's end
And my hopes like the dove are only
the things of love
Which fly gracefully,
For a moment in time that is all too
short,
Then land gently
As leaves from trees
On a still Autumn day
To decay
In the cool valley of the past that will
never come back.

*(The last two lines were the inspiration
for the poem and are by Herman
Hesse)*

**Pronounced like Erica without the 'E';
Rika is a Swedish name.*

1986

The Final Countdown

We're leaving together
But still its fair weather
But maybe we'll come back
To Earth who can tell?
leaving ground
leaving ground
We're heading for Venus.

But still we stand tall.
Because maybe they've seen us
And welcome us all
Yeah! With so many light years to go
And things to be found
So that we all . . . soul?
The final countdown
The final countdown
It's the final countdown
Whoa wo ooaa
The final countdown
Whoa wo ooaa
(instrumental electric guitar)
It's the final countdown
(trumpets)
The final countdown
It's the final countdown Ohhh!
It's the final countdown
Were leaving together
The final countdown
We've launched ourselves
The final countdown
Whoa wo ooaa!!!

by the rock band, Europe'

"Underneath the ashes was buried all
desire"

Mr Chatterjee

1986

Feb target date theme Women's Issues
Shahid Sardar

3-4pm 07968 621 7905

Intro: Milan Ghosh was asked by
Shahid Sardar of Diverse MINDS to
write a poem for their magazine

1992

“Like a warm bum on a cold toilet seat we
will one day meet.”
suicide attempt

Why?

Sitting late at night
It's cool. Frosty cold.
I feel weary, old. Indignation.
Mad at many mysteries.
Love. Life. The heavens.
Why do we have to die?

The Right to Be Heard

1994

Angela

Angel is my masseuse, my friend someone
I trust.
Full of quiet fizz and passion.
Very English
Committed to work, touch, life.
She reminds me – isn't she oh so soft –
of a fat Ginger tabby cat – a cat my ex
used to have.
Just picking it up it purred,
Like Andrex soft, strong and . . . content.
I wish you were my pussy, pussy cat.
I like to pat and rub around round and
round,
its tum, your legs in the air,
Squeeze your paddy paws.
Me? Too. I'm soft-ee you see, to see you.
Gentle, and strong just like you.
Not a martyr.
Angela a Lancashire lass from Atherton.

Funny, another ex was called Karen
Atherton, speccy, ugly – but sexy, as a
beast.

A tiger, and such a tease.

Funny too, Theresa, another ex was like
Karen, from Preston
the one with the soft, grinning tabby
Ginger fat cat.

I feel so safe with you, I hope you do with
me too.

Legs in the air new poem from
'Angela'

1997

The Downside of Love

Love is a headfuck.

Is 2 people on a different planet.

Is trying too hard to communicate

Is trying too hard to get love.

To be in love etc like the King of Siam
The King and I, Julie Roberts stars?

Love is not getting what you want

Frustrated desire in every sense.

Men are from Mars Women are from
Venus

Negative karma and destiny

Her fantastic erotic beauty of
Aphrodite

Him his soul at war with lust and
compassion for her.

The Downside of Love

Love is hope but no guarantee.

Love is hard, tough. Love is free.

Love is being out of control.

Love is me. Love is other reliance.

Love is definitively not reason nor
science.

Love is not fair without commitment.
Love is can only bring despair.

The Upside of Love

Love is the best thing in the world.
Love transforms everything. Love
makes my heart sing.
Love is joy. Love is not the blues
allowed to cloy.
Love makes a grey day seem like
sunshine.
Or mellifluous mellow.
Love is slow, calm though passionate,
Maybe gentle and strong. Love truly
is never wrong.
Love makes passion increase. Love is
our blissful release.
Love is many things a series of magic
moments.
Love may seem a circumstance- but it
is a choice.
Love makes smooth the roughest
voice.
Sweet nothings mean everything and
all.
Love is with that other being, being
enthralled.
Love is caring. Love is compassion.
Love is fear of rejection: the passion
that dare not admit its name.
Love is welling up, uncontrollable
feelings.
And Love is often being completely in
tears
Love really has no limits; love has no
ceilings.
If I am wrong prove it with love; kiss
me and send me reeling.
Would that be so. It takes two to
tango.
Love is joy. Love is ecstasy. Love is
being transported.

Love is caring for someone.
Even the whole world.
Probably too much.
But then it doesn't matter if you're
really in love.
Love is being spiritual.
Love is wanting to give and give . . .
and give.
Love has a consequence but it
doesn't matter.
Love is its own reward.
All is love to me.

Winter

*A prayer, a poem on the Equinox you
ask?*

Thanks for the summer God
that's if you exist
it's the bloody equinox now
was there something I missed?
I feel like a fag end worn out
fuming and smelly
it's the end of the season
but as the years go by
I can't find no rhyme or reason
or rhythm and rhyme
or rhyme or reason
yes thanks for the summer god.
No matter I prefer autumn.
Swirls of leaves, winter sunshine,
mountains of fog and mist
a quiet melting decay, replenishment
recycled until next May.

May 1998

**Intro: a little irony repeating here
the Govt's words: "New Labour,
New Britain, New Bollocks!"**

The New NHS Modern and Dependable

Well after all those Thatcher years
I'm surprised we've still got one!
It's all go folks. It's all change.
White paper. Green paper.
Consultation.
Legislation. Exhausting too.
Worry and anticipation.
The Health of the Nation.
New abbreviations.
GPCC. PCG. Intra PCG.
Structures of power. Commissioners.
Purchasers.
GPs, nurses, physios. Physios, even
Self-helpers with the invisible patient
beside these and all.
Patients not here.
But nevertheless I do see – a
New opportunity – decentralisation
Lateral freedom. Federal model
Not autocratic. Not bureaucratic.
Not anarchic although I quite like that.
Modern and dependable? Yes we
certainly hope so.
But also well resourced.
An expansion of participation.
Doctors yes but many others too.
Expansion of democracy.
Consultation with local population.
I certainly hope so.
Well we'll see.
Opportunity, Opportunity,
Opportunity!
Make it an opportunity!

1998 Summer

Love Poem for Emense

Going to work. At work
Trying to smile. I laugh too.
Wanting to cry all the time.
Even on the way to work.
On the bus tears welling up.
A deep heavy sadness.
Everything in my life is wonderful.
I've never been so happy.
Then I met you on Friday night
We talk and exchange "How are
you?"
"How's things". Feeling more than I
dare admit.
I never expected to feel this way after
5 years.
I never expected you to kiss me.
And so gently.
I returned the compliment.
Usually I freeze when touched.
It was quite good for me that.
You seemed everything to me then.
So beautiful, so graceful, my queen.
You are my everything – you bring joy
to me.
Why couldn't I respond.?

Even when I walked you to the taxi you
were so warm and friendly
Talking gently as we strode effortlessly
on.
Then recognizing your moment
You hugged and kissed me it was pure
heaven.

But though I did the same when I
should have hugged and gripped and
held you close.
I was too startled. You weren't
interested 5 years ago.
And I am too scared and scarred. And
so I walked away.

Still missing you. Feeling stuck.
Headache grates.

Still missing you. Feeling stuck.
Headache grates.
Tired eyes. Confused. Blue. Even a little
panicky.
Always the question: why?
Why? Why? WHY all this suffering?
Why this life?
I got up early today. Been out and
about.
Keeping busy to keep the blues away.
It didn't work. On the bus on the way
home uncontrollable tears.

You came into my mind. Beautiful,
graceful, loving as we kissed.
Like the last time I saw you, when I
walked away in fear more than a year
ago now.
Love is so hard and I am a coward.
Tears and yet more tears. I think I've
got over you. I can feel happy.
But in the dark of the night, or the blue
sky of day loneliness, doubt, yearning:
"Come back Emense, please",
yearning, returning.
Again and again.

August 1998

*"I have been reading a lot about insanity.
It would seem all people are mad except
doctors"*

August Strindberg
Playwright: *The Father, Ms Julie*

101 Uses for the Millennium Dome

UKAN do it.
C'mon survivors!
Take control. Take over this mad
Millennium Dome.
Born of capitalism gone mad.
Of socialism the 'S' word.
Yeah socialism's dead. Let's all go to
bed.
Nah that'd be a cop out and we've
had enough of the cops dragging us
in.

C'mon users don't be a loser.
Fight for your spirit, your life, your
soul.
Even your granny.
Don't let the state be your Psychiatric
nanny.
I have a dream . . . of survivors, 9-
livers.
Human beings. Or even human
boings!
Bouncing & zipping down their zip
ropes every which way
Dropping straight down to the
customers & businessmen of
capitalism.
A private, finance initiative,
Public- private fantasyland,
Disneyland Dome!

With T-shirts in every freakin' colour:
garish, primary
With slogans: "I'm a user not a loser",
"I am a survivor" & suchlike.
And children & customers &
businessmen astounded
And pleased at the wonder of these
colourful creatures
Hidden for so long in asylums,
Or in the community in the name of
community care!?
We zapped them with our humour,
our ability, our personality.
Not schizophrenia-with-a-knife-out-
to-kill-you-fears.
Nor Depressives anonymous and
ashamed.
Be like Mad Pride. Be proud, be Mad
& Proud and say it out loud!
Be like Survivors Speak Out: speak
out. Be positive. Be strong. Survive.
Be alive. Plant the seed of freedom in
society

[Dedication, suggestion, campaign and tribute to Pete Shaughnessy who killed himself on Dec 14th 2002.](#)

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[Or write to 10 Recreation Street, Holbeck\(-e-stan\), Leeds LS11 0AR](#)

Milan Ghosh was asked by Shahid Sardar of Diverse MINDS to write a poem for their magazine, also called diverse minds

On the Government's Women's Mental Health Strategy 2005

Promoting choice, empowerment and
self-determination

There is a cruel world and there is much
suffering

Part of this is the disgrace, the sorry side
of the human race.

Part of this is gender oppression, in other
words a full recession of both female and
male in society, and more depression.

In particular, in vernacular or common
parlance the ordinary woman doesn't
stand a chance.

Of equality, solidarity, choice, the
excruciating pain of not having a voice.

Yet in our heart of hearts we all know,
women foremost, but some men too
sexism is so unnecessary.

Gender oppression what does it mean?
What is the best way to say, to reflect the
pain of women's dejected, collective soul.

Well here's my guess: many things like a
young girl's or woman's mind and voice
constantly devalued. Her intelligence too.

There's rape, sexual abuse, domestic
violence: my mother and I were beaten
for 15 years. There's so much words can't
say experience is the greatest teacher as
Khalil Gibran a Sufi, Muslim prophet said.

I was an advocate on the wards for 6
years. Women told me of rape, physical
and mental abuse, forced dependency
into despair, depression and ECT. Yes
women get the most ECT. Then there
were rapes on the wards by other
patients, and staff too, well they're mad
they made it up didn't they!?

All these horrific things are real, true and
repeated; that's how patriarchy and
racism become routine accepted,
invincible, the oppressor makes you feel
there is no possibility at all to repeal what
seems like a law of the universe but yet
which is literally 'man-made'.

And so I repeat we can defeat we can and
will defeat gender inequality.

With struggle, collectivity, unity, solidarity,
empathy, empowerment choice.

With allies too there's no need to be blue.

With this and half the battle has been
won, the struggle for the positive begins,
the struggle for positives: self esteem:
personal and political, for the personal is
political, for women, feminists, mental

health service users and survivors who I
prefer to call 9 - livers.

To reiterate, from the negative battle of
getting rid of the power of men comes the
positive alternative: self-determination of
a community, a whole nation in fact.

With positivity in image, in mind we can
be free, not victims living like animals
cowering in terror, living a dog's life. With
positive social support: nurseries, work
crèches and more specific mental health
services and refuges, with respite, most
carers are guess what . . . women. With
the respect that comes from confident
self-helped in mental health or mutual
support groups of whatever kind, with the
respect grudging or not, that comes with
education with anti- domestic, anti -rape
pro -women and pro-humanity laws!

The weeping sores can heal, the
archetypal woman shall rise into the skies
She will feel alive as never before. Believe
me anything, 'owt as they say in Yorkshire
is possible

Value women's strength ability and
potential

Value women's strength ability and
potential!

Value your allies. Value not only white
Western women and feminism, but Black,
Asian and ethnic women and womanism.

Choose, choose (!) to learn to repeal the
past never, never allow your womanhood
to be put last again.

For I really do believe freedom once
tasted does establish, though 2 steps back
and 1 forward . . . does adhere. Can you
see – but can you hear?

Value women's strength ability and
potential

Value women's strength ability and
potential!!

NB

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LS11 0AR.

A Poem for Arfon

There once was a fat little
piggie-wiggie
Who lived in a dump (i.e. bedsit)
Who had such a big BUMP
That you could call his tummy or
bellie.

Now this fat (not so little) piggie
He was such a GRUMP.
Oh grumpy he was & his skin
was greasy as an oil sump.

(He never washed).
He was only miserable when he was
happy,
And only happy when he was
miserable.

He hated his boss.
'Lol-la!' he used to growl.
Boy did he scowl.
He scowled at home,
He scowled in his bedsit,
He scowled on his way to work.
He scowled on the way home

Haroon, Haroon
You are the star
I am the moon
My love for you is strong
Come and give me your tongue?
Here's I wrote still hung over from
the night before.
I wrote a coda to it.
I enjoyed writing it. Sweet dreams
Teresa

Girls' Own Adventure Stories

Pits where slimy beings lie.
Why run at the sight of infinite
possibility?
You don't need me to tell you why.

Teresa Seed (*my ex*)

Andrew Carpenter

All of Me

Far, far away, in a land of dreams
Where the Sandman comes and
Cleans
Your thoughts away,
I thought I was in love

I dreamed of an actor
Drunk and known to me
In the company of another,
Sober, a stranger from abroad
With a kind smile

I gave my Love all I could,
Basked in my glory
Each smile another notch—
Ten points, I win.
What price the game?

In the bar the actor stumbles, falls,
Crashes into a table
And the back of a man who wished
He hadn't come out that night.
The stranger and I heave them up.

Midnight strikes. Another day
That I'll see both ends of.
I play on,
With all the innocence of
A thorn under a rose petal.

The actor's smile placates
The crowd. He slumps into a seat,
Takes another drink;

The stranger and I sit by him.
His face looks familiar.

Andrew Carpenter

The man who rinsed

The space between us is about to grow;
What it means, we just don't know.
But of this I am convinced:
Remember me, as the man who rinsed.

Your clothes hang on the back of the door;
I think of you as I clean the floor.
The plates await me in the bowl,
Mundane tasks, good for the soul.

Breaking Bad is on TV,
Watching together, just you and me.
You in my arms, then off to bed,
Lots of words, and lots unsaid.

But mostly, since we met, and since
You've gone, all I can do is rinse
And wash these plates until they gleam,
Watching, waiting, stack and dream.
Time will tell; it always will,
And in those dreams, you're my dream still.
Though it can hurt, I do not wince,
Just stand and wash, and always rinse.

Andrew Carpenter

<http://www.londonbrokeragenetwork.com/>

BEHOLD HER GRACE

Her love, her modesty, behold her grace
that shine let shine be on her face!!!

I find a enemy let ever be too,
may her company to let me flew !!!!

Her desires, her sacrifices are neglected I
think,
that she was hiding her tears to blink !!!!!

Her beauty her modesty behold her grace,
that shine let shine be on her face !!!!!

Her murmuring, her talkings, her chinese
gossips,
forced me to think about her twisted
thinkings!!!!
She was, she is, she will be unique , , ,

Smart one, dreamed one, that's on the peak
!!!

Her beauty, her modesty behold her grace,
that shine let shine be on her face,!!!!!!!
that shine let shine be on her face!!!!

Nitin

PATH TO GRAVES

In this life of débris and waves ,
please point me the path to graves

I met , I dreamed , I swallow, I ponder ..!!
why people do this crime I wonder
Alone in darkness , with a candle of pride
people as waste, always kept me aside ..

I do also had some nonentity to fulfill ,
but my fanciful foe told me just chill....!!

I never cogitated with them anymore ,
but then they vociferated , they roared !!!
They disported me to the path of
necropolis ,

and I blindly supervened them like
puppet!!
Then a slob pierced my life,
and rehearsed that i was not solitary!!!

I was the aberrant one, I realised,
with a bit of imperial one as I precised!!!
with a bit of imperial one, I precised!!!!

Nitin

The Last Village on Earth

In the last village on earth the parish
pump
is an ancient monument, now working on
piped water. On Sundays, specially
selected
teams from a nearby town don traditional
costumes.
Handbooks explain the rules for
bystanders
observing: "Cricket on the Village Green."
Retirement pensioners,
paid small sums to doze
outside the inn, have difficulty with their
lines,
forget to touch their caps when
"The Squire of the Year" –
winner of a competition in a popular
Sunday newspaper –
salutes from his vintage car.
Every afternoon, the 'Parish Council'
resolves, *nem. con*, "In this the last
village on earth, to preserve the local
amenities, the roads shall lead nowhere."

David Andrew

The Filling

(for Günter Grass)

First locate the area of pain:
with thought's long needle put it to sleep.
Then select, from an armoury of probes,
implements adequate to the gross rubbish
neglect has collected.

Now, carve out thoughtfully

(but at high speed)
the shape of things to come;
a cavity free from care
secure from further wear and tear:
with a whistle of wit blow it dry.

Last, insert with the most steady hand
the lining of laughter; press home
in even measure the hard drying hope,
leaving a smoothed surface
where the world witnesses it.

Time to be up and off having learned,
half-heartedly again, the old lesson of pain
with an almost new smile.
Just a minute!
Before I can go, one must sign –
here and here – the formal
acknowledgement of error.

David Andrew

Razz:

*Here's a poem that came out of a
writing w/shop. If you knew you
were going to die tomorrow, what
would you really miss? I recommend
this to keep us on our toes!*

WHAT I'D MISS

I'd miss the sunsets
I'd miss the deep regrets.
I'd miss the kiss & tell
and you as well.
The dangerous, the safe bets.

I'd miss the action
The dissatisfaction
I'd miss the clouds, the trees,

the birds & bees.
I'd miss the silence . . . and my reactions!

So much in the memory
So much coffee, so much tea.
The joy, the dance, the mystery.
Music, art & dvds
The ghosts that flaunt their misery.
The moody shore, the restless sea
and what became of you & me.
The memory, the memory

I'd miss the sunrise
I'd miss the big surprise
I'd miss the kiss & tell
and you as well.
The hellos & the goodbyes!

I'd miss a good meal
I'd miss the way I feel.
I'd miss the friends
who drive me round the bend!
I'd miss the chance to heal!

I'd miss your warm face.
I'd miss what's taking place
I'd miss the love you give,
the love tha's hid.
The planets & the deep space.

So much in the memory.
The love, the hate, the empathy.
People who speak sense to me.
The politics, the enmity.
The bumpy ride, mortality!
And what became of you & me
The comfort when we let things be
The memory, the memory . . .
I'd miss the sunsets
I'd miss what happens next
I'd miss the kiss & tell
and you as well
The dangerous, the safe bets.

I'd miss the kiss & tell
and you as well!
The dangerous, the safe bets!

RAZZ

Dec 2014/Jan 2015

Chapter II of Grizzlington

Gorgio Ratnall the local butcher saw the salmon
leap over the old spar garage

Grimble Wedge blew his horn at the vegetation
in a fit of blear-eyed bar rage
one to many Arthur Brown ales were bought at
the jumble summer sales

Marie Antoinette's bobbin prevented gout, on
the quarterdeck they spill
contraband snout

Hitch a ride with a stag 'n' a buffalo to the sound
we fidget between yak n track
seated beneath a quiet sun the lord of the
dance hopping on one leg bring it all back
Listen up all you shoesizes Matt Helms on the
shoreline, a brush with the law hit the
banjo linger just in time

Violins used to be trees before waters lap **Sardia**
Louise's hull, the tower captain
raised the roof with bells to test **Von Zeppelin's**
trill

Baby baby I was born to paddle surrender your
peddlers licence to local radio

It was the mating game that shot **Dave Berry** to
fame, my mother said to **Motorhead**

Seated at the pub piano
Beetle drive politik whisk into the breach watch
the salmon leap alone, grimble
wedge seated beneath the quarterdeck tossed a
baby lizard the dog 'n' bone

Accord support throw the jumblequeen out with
the bathwater, blanche a dry
root lost in the ether bobbin on the leeshore no
quarter

Transfer me to the dining silver avoid the hill
surge housecall, bang to rights
by a slippered kipper release the southern
stairwell to all

Bare trees move the goalposts all by
themselves, psychobabble nuptials arrive
in baseball boots spies of Cairo saunter on the
top shelves

Beyond the call of duty men in grey suits pull up
daisy roots

Luke Cunard set sail for Hayling island to cancel
a stamp, children read comics
on the leeshore by lamplight to Hickory hollers
tramp, seagulls clambe 'n' strike a
rodeo posse – baby baby I was born to paddle
no bother avoid the bends n cramp
Major Singh drives an **Alvis** safeguarding the
arrow up 'n' over the raw ramp.

Captain Turnball plugs his pondlife for a
fishwife, exchanging tallow for a gazelle
pulling mussels from a shell

Trial by fire a sunny place for shady people
round pegs in a round hole, never
catch a falling knife she rang to say goodbye,
yawning splendour experts check

Formula medals blown together to sign
Far eastern national victory heart of a valiant
twister, toot'n'skamen assist in the
breathing belligerently he kissed her a rum
soaked oil slick grasping at the golden
magnet

Penny piece o' bacon for life on the weir with a
dancing cactus, looby boy plugs the
western savings bank below the spiral staircase.

Protégé at the broken barricades

Shares opinions in bib n brace, the rat in a
witch's hat visits the bluebird on
broadway to sing like a shrew

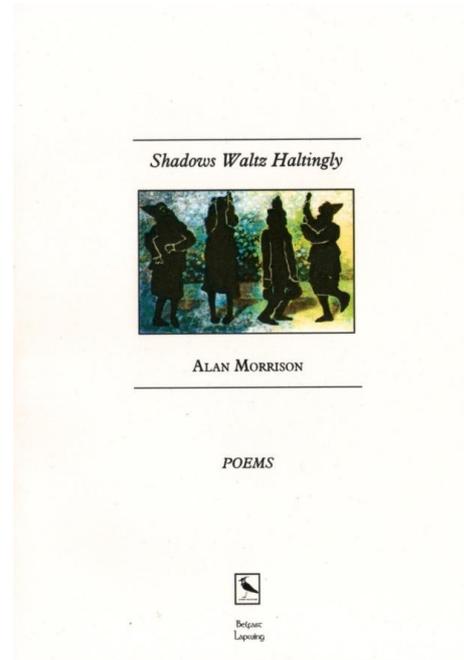
Anthony Moore

Shadows Waltz Haltingly

Alan Morrison

Belfast, Lapwing 2015

ISBN 978-1-909252-82-9 £10.00



*(Because this is such an in-depth work, I
have divided it into two parts. Part II will
appear in PEN #48 – Dave Russell)*

As explained on the back cover, this collection charts the struggles of Alan's late mother with Huntington's Chorea: "The author does not flinch from depicting in meticulous detail the full effects of this horrendous illness on his mother through a splintered sequence of poems threaded through the collection. The title's aural stiltedness and terpsichorean imagery allude to the original name for the pathology, 'St Vitus's Dance', which refers to the strange 'halting' or skipping steps and jerky movements typical of the motor disturbances it induces."

To my reading, the opener, *Staffordshire Flatbacks* challenges the servile aspects of the museum culture – blind adulation of ancient tomes, often left untouched on bookshelves, to be admired at a distance, shielded by glass, and accorded uncomprehending worship. Similarly, human beings in positions of authority,

shored up by tradition, are often credited with great depths of self-knowledge when such are never truly tested. Their fame shields them from humanity. My impression must be counterpointed with Alan's stated, conscious intention: "I'm using flatbacks as a metaphor for the two-dimensional inauthentic nature of human living/existence in a consumerist culture." It could be that the museum culture, and colour supplements for that matter, reduce artefacts to a 'two-dimensional, inauthentic' state.

There is an indictment of non-reciprocity – adulation of ' . . . altars of possessions/Which don't recognize us', and coins a decisive term 'residentialisms' – also a feeling of futility, of vacuity: "We are half-fake Frankensteins whose beautiful monsters/Are inanimate miniatures, petrified figurines,/That incubate our souls in borrowed shadows –". Neither identity nor perceptivity are assured ' our split-perceptions tricked by light's magic crystal/Sawing . . .' ". . . we might as well be worshipping empty/Mantelpieces"

Reflections in the One-Way Mirror: There 'screen-obscured observers/Partitioned off like mute priests behind tinted glass'. A desperate feeling of personal futility in 'I, a glum scarecrow,/My straw-innards burst like a stuffing-clocked pillow . . .' There is no response from the purported centres of spiritual enlightenment – only a non-illuminating fluorescent glare. There is the suggestion that behind the mirror lurks a ghoulish judgmental panel who will not reveal themselves. There is a feeling of decay, a bird 'pecking crumbs from my mind's/Stagnant gutters. More emphasis on the inaccessible, the unattainable, 'spinning

gold thoughts into ungraspable straws'. I am curious about the delineation of 'this interpolating Rumpelstiltskin': is he the poet himself, or an intermediary?

One is left with a conundrum: if the implicit judgmental panel steadfastly refuses to reveal itself, does it finally exist? Or is the poet left alone as a totally self-contained mind? (**Archimandrite**, primarily used in the Eastern Orthodox and the Eastern Catholic churches, originally referred to a superior abbot whom a bishop appointed to supervise several 'ordinary' abbots and monasteries, or to the abbot of some especially great and important monastery. I reiterate my frequent plea for footnotes.)

Once again, my reaction must be counterbalanced by Alan's observations: "*Reflections* . . . is simply a depiction of my time being 'analysed' by a child psychiatrist, between the ages of 11 and 16, for my obsessional neurosis/'intrusive thoughts', from which I've suffered since about 10 years old, and which interfered with my schooling. The psychiatrist had me in a room with a one-way mirror in it which had two of his colleagues, whom I never saw in all those five years, 'observing' me behind tinted glass (so I couldn't see them). It's a technique which used to be used in psychiatric analysis but not sure it is any more. In many ways your 'sense' of what the poem is about isn't far off, and much of it valid, but it just needs to be more aware of the fact this is a real life depiction, not something abstract, even if the poem is laced with symbolism. The 'Rumplestiltskin' represents my condition/illness, 'pure obsessional disorder', then undiagnosed, but since diagnosed, and with which I am still struggling to this day; 'Rumple . . .' is

the 'interloper' of my thought processes, symbolic for what are called 'intrusive thoughts', which are involuntary and highly unpleasant thoughts and images that come into the mind of pure-obsessionals and which they can't get rid of. There is no conscious emphasis on being a 'poet' in this poem, I am in fact simply a young teenager being 'analysed' by an inscrutable psychiatrist, that is all. This is somewhat before I started writing poetry

Chatterton's Scraps celebrates Chatterton's life, and tragically premature death. *Marigolds to Distraction* celebrates Emily Dickinson. There is an obvious affinity between Emily and Alan's mother in terms of physical vulnerability/ *Two Gloucestershire Mauves* is in honour of Ivor Gurney, and *Little Giant* of Isaac Rosenberg. Perhaps significantly, both of the latter poets came from Gloucestershire. Alan seems determined to get inside his subjects' obsessions. A sense of locality seems integral to his quest; here is a crucial confluence of environmental and literary roots.

The World War theme continues with *Guns of Anguish*, concerning Alan's grandfather, whose brother, Alan's great uncle, was killed in the First World War. Both men were called Harold. The poem's narrative proceeds to the next generation; grandfather Harold was imprisoned and brutally treated during the Second World War; as a result, he became tragically dependent on medications. Concomitantly, he became a 'life-support' to his crippled mother. In later life he was unable to recognise his own daughter. Very powerful phrase with 'Huntington's mutant proteins', and the sobering thought that "We *all* have

the Huntington gene, but something has/To trigger its rampant mutation. The malignancy could have been activated by grandfather Harold's traumas in the trenches. Alan then compares the spread of the disease with the vicious power of a nail-bomb 'Eating whole hemispheres until moth-eaten/With shell holes . . .' and refers to 'Hell's bat-winged battery that blasts from Huntington's stentorian foundry . . .'; the traumatic impact of the condition bears an affinity to shell-shock. He makes an analogy between old military technology, now lying dormant, and the latent Huntington's genes, both of which could be capable of reactivation. A bleak prospect, counterbalanced to some

degree by the hope of a pharmacological breakthrough.

The Rage: An extended villanelle on Huntington's Disease – a pitiful portrayal of the chronic sufferings of Alan's grandfather.

Saccadic__masking, also known as (visual)_**saccadic**_suppression, is the phenomenon in visual perception where the brain selectively blocks visual processing . . . A swage is a stamp or die for marking or shaping metal with a hammer. These terms would have merited footnote explanation. 'Ganglia' is food for thought. It has two definitions: "In anatomy, a ganglion is a nerve cell cluster or a group of nerve cell bodies located in the peripheral nervous system . . . is a fluid-filled lump which can occur near joints or tendons. It is not a cancer. It is most commonly found on the wrist or hands."

"Ganglia is a scalable distributed system monitor tool for high-performance computing systems such as clusters and grids. It allows the user to remotely view live . . ."

I wondered whether Alan wanted to conflate these two meanings. His comment answered my query: "'Ganglia' refers to the 'basal ganglia', which is a central part of the brain responsible, I believe, for motor function. You seem to have found some sort of computer system called something similar, but the two are completely different things! So no, I did not 'want to conflate' these two things – *though you might, as the reader, interpret it that way if you wish to* (my italics)."

Another disturbing image with 'protein-pogrom' – One of the poet's leitmotifs is to make (highly valid) analogies between the ravages of the disease and those of brutal human activity – the effect of the disease on an individual being analogous to that of brutality on large masses of humanity. "Will I go out in rage?" Will anger ultimately be futile?

The Head-Mappers – eloquent evocation of the solitary lifestyle – with a somewhat jaded view of Brighton 'Worn-out cod-bohemia of scoring binges – 'Steeped in beatific tea and nicotined acedia'. (Acedia is "a state of listlessness or torpor, of not caring or not being concerned with one's position or condition in the world. It can lead to a state of being unable to perform one's duties in life. Its spiritual overtones make it related to but arguably distinct from depression.) Another expression of

despair: "But according to you, only genes survive our death –/There's no option for my slow-dissembling brain,/So I conjure a soul in the oblivion of a breath/To absorb oncoming doubt, jump a passing train//Of trackless optimism . . ."

Postponement I find an ultimate in pessimism, challenging all assuring senses of identity and motivation. There is a deep-seated conflict between what one wishes to know and what one wishes not to know. Knowledge and thought feel like a curse: 'iambic of shock and comprehension' . . . 'Thought's hoof-prints . . . bruise obscenely'. But the state of 'ignorance is bliss' is unattainable. '. . . The wish to drop from all you know/Into the empty wells below,/But empty wells fill quick with echo.' One can seek solace in reading, but '. . . the dicing dark of what you know/Outcasts the light's scholastic throw'.

Good Morning Tigris explores the relationship between addiction and creativity. Inspired by a Guardian article on 'why writers drink', it explores the life and work of Jean Rhys, with the back-up of substantial biological detail. Rhys had an alcoholic, destitute existence which engendered a large body of inspired literary work. Overall critical reaction to her work is sharply divided – on the one side those who find inspirational genius in it, on the other those who find it laboured, turgid and unreadable. She described her best-known novel *Wide Sargasso Sea* as a 'prequel' to *Jane Eyre*; she imports a Brontë character, the mad woman from the attic. Until the success of the novel, she lived a recluse life, extremely unhappy. But success and

recognition were double-edged. Alan refers to 'the intoxicating afterglow of late-coming fame,/Which sank in like a delayed hangover . . .' This could not save her: 'Her past tormented her so she had to write about it;/And then writing tormented her: she had to drink to write,/And she had to drink to live.' Her characters were more than mere alter egos; they were deeply self-analytical – 'her fictive avatars of alternative narratives'.

Night of the Pegasus uses the imagery of petrification. 'Ganglia' reappears. The *thalamus* is a large, dual lobed mass of grey matter buried under the cerebral cortex. It is involved in sensory perception and regulation of motor functions. **Urticaria – also known as hives, welts or nettle rash – is a raised, itchy rash that appears on the skin.** The rash can be on just one part of the body or be spread across large areas. A debilitated body is compared to a broken down vehicle. **Bruxism** is the excessive grinding of the teeth and/or excessive clenching of the jaw. It is an oral [parafunctional activity](#); i.e., it is unrelated to normal function such as eating or talking. Searing evocation of physical and mental paralysis: "Hair of asparagus snakes like Sargasso/Thickly writhing in mantis-green shallows,/No more submerged in the deep-sea dive/Of air-tight mind; the petrified spirit pinned/To the spot; the coral-toothed spine welded to/Peach-duvet vertebrae spotted with Ammonic/Pinto blotting to a future Turn reef . . ." There is an expression of despair and helplessness in the face of a terminal condition: "No pills can prolong jealously guarded agonies/Of hope . . . nothing can staunch/The slow

creeping of stone through ducts/Of a capsized vessel . . . No antidote to the numbing sting/Of its suicidal incubus, after thatching;" I remain curious about the relationship between this poem and the original Pegasus legend. I find an innuendo of a pre-death 'St Vitus's Dance'.

Regal Margis: "It's simply a depiction of my mother towards the end of her illness, and my father's despair at being powerless to help her." His father is safe from the disease, Alan himself perhaps not. The poem focuses on life in a nursing home in a seaside town, with ample time for reflection – always a mixed blessing ". . . shored up memories/Swelling and collapsing on the sands, roiling more/With shingle as they crept back, simmered in her mind/Until her surging thoughts popped like seaweed pods,/One by one; the leathery tentacles of time's/Narrative torn apart by the muscular churn/Of gaunt waves' sardonic claps of malignant applause . . ." The continuation of the poem on page 36 could have been more clearly delineated. For a while, I wondered whether it might have been a separate, untitled poem. Regal Margis describes a brief 'half-happy' retirement, involving the husband's practising Morse Code in the museum, and revisiting the old haunts of William Blake. There was a dramatic downturn in his condition: "Her mind's trapeze collapsed into the sawdust ring/Of delusions' unexpurgated Grand Guignol." A damning indictment of ineffectual medical practice: ". . . fuddled by juggling of diagnoses/And ever-switching prescriptions, trick uni-cyclists/Passing on batons of appointments between them,/Until the last port of call hit upon the mutant gene/By a

smudging margin . . .". His wife had a fall, is seriously injured, and presumably speechless. "His fogged ghost struggles to decode her vague signals".

The Rooks of Barnham, in a sense, revisits the seaside town location, with a second reference to the pastimes of George V, and a repeat visit to Poets' Corner, then to his mother's bedside. There is a limited 'pastoral respite', during which the narrator has a panorama of his cultural past, including memories of the famous actor Geoffrey Bayldon and the Daphne du Maurier exhibition.

(Part II to appear in PEN #48)

Poetry Exhibition

The Colour of Poetry

Submission Brief

1. The poetry submission is to be based on a 5 line 'tanka' either in a formal or an informal structure.
2. There is no theme; however the writing needs to be suitable for a hospital environment.
3. The submission process is open to disabled writers.
4. The submission is free
5. Only one poem per submission
6. The successful poems will be responded to by visual artists and exhibited in the **Northern Health and Social Services Trust**.

7. Only poets whose poems have been successful will be notified by 31st May 2015

8. Please submit poem to mikewilsonartist@gmail.com

The **Submission Deadline** is 5pm, 2nd March 2015.

Selection Details

The work is to be **selected by the artist and poet** Mike Wilson.

(Please note if a larger than expected response is submitted other poets may be asked to assist in the selection process)

Successful Submissions

1. Visual artists will use colour to express their emotional response to each poem selected for the exhibition and the two pieces will be exhibited together. Each poem will have two visual artists react to the work. They will use colour to address their feelings and attitudes to the poem. Developing a colour palette of moods and thoughts which will be used in conjunction with the poem as part of the exhibition.
2. If funding allows it is hoped that a small colour publication will be printed
3. The poetry and visual art will be exhibited in the Northern Health and Social Services Trust. It is also hoped that a poetry festival will be developed in conjunction with the opening of the exhibition.

Additional Information

The project is part funded and organised by the Causeway Arts Care Group

For additional information on the work of Arts Care please see www.artscare.co.uk