

## *Madrigals*

**İlhan Berk**, one of Turkey's most influential and innovative poets, was born in the Aegean city of Manisa. He is the award-winning author of more than two dozen books of poetry, as well as volumes of critical and biographical prose. He is also an acclaimed visual artist. Today İlhan Berk lives in the town of Bodrum.

**George Messo** is a poet, translator, and editor. Shearsman Books published his *Entrances* in 2006.

*Also by İlhan Berk in English, in George Messo's translation:*

A Leaf about to Fall: Selected Poems

*Also by George Messo in English:*

From the Pine Observatory  
Entrances

# Madrigals



**İlhan Berk**

*Translated by George Messo*

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**I'LL BE AT THE BIRD'S BIRTHDAY**  
**OR A BOOK READ FROM FIVE POINTS OF VIEW**

It should be read this way: as a single book and as four separate books:

- I. Birds Gold Cars Diamonds Shadows (patchwork)
- II. Your Name Was A Leaf (onomatopoeia)
- III. Madrigals (Collage)
- IV. Like An Old Car I Passed Through The Night (cut up)
- V. Or as I do (in fact): to be opened and read from anywhere.



**BOOK I**

**BIRDS GOLD CARS DIAMONDS SHADOWS**



I

Be.

## II

Whatever we write we write time

(we see it from there).

III

Foetus

that great ceremony.

## IV

Always there is a presence  
(to read trees, carcasses, mosses, dirt).

V

You say winds

winds have souls too

(sperm as well).

VI

Everywhere

I lived

with water's throng.

Water knows hope.

## VII

It's the letter  
source  
of voice  
and word.

## VIII

Rivers  
when rivers walk

time stops.

## IX

O doormats, toy guns, elephants and water pistols!  
and forty thousand silk screens  
and ropes, turnstiles, suspension bridges  
and you pedestrians:

Descend with me.