

edited by tony frazer
spring 2005 issue

58 velwell road
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www.shearsman.com

£2.50



shearsman 62

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PETER MAKIN

Hagoromo

Under the thick sheet of water
ribbed, rushing
an eye of air

A scattering of thin silver cigarette foils
on the black ash, like paper to the touch now they've been burned.
On the heap of rice-straw mats; then the flood from the typhoon took them.
Dislodged from her room with the carpet and the loose dust under it
and the padlocks.

How the bamboos sweep their heads down over the path
in honour of the passing.

thin sticks in soft skin

mossed up, and unsheathed;
bark hanging from the wet wood

In this dark bowl of the woods
where nothing changes
the sky silvered
with a stirring of the fronds against the light.

What was intended to be a root, of a tree,
and now the moss grows from it,
hanging in air.
And the other root, like a beard
with water-drops hanging from it
from the stream.

The road snakes round the hill
and hugs it
the bamboos fall off the mountainside
flopping in curls.

In the dark valley no movement.

Motif: the monotone
(steppes: Mali wastes)
where the plough turns
under the digue;
comes, and returns
unendingly.

Gleam, glisten, glide under the rock
where the old beard of fine roots drips;
pulse of a tiny wave over the moss

and now the bamboo-leaves will tremble
from the melting on them.

Little wormlets
at all angles over the bark
but not random;
flecks, nail-marks
on a silky dull green
in patterns.

Strange regularities
in the burrowings of the creatures
in the soft mud under the water
where I drink my drink for my
dead wife and wash my face.

Shaggy boiled crud, for bark
rhythms of ridge
open up,
ridges become cleft,
and re-fold

Silent wood
the woodpecker quietly
off,
and the crow echoing.

II

Light let in on the
wreckage of last year's snows

Green, mottled, rotting.

A little stand of mushrooms
along the groin of a meadow
under bamboos;

two streams of mist
so slowly, quietly rising
from behind the mountain.

Brown lip
where the bloodied scar of the trunk
drools, scarf'd
and welded.

The Jardin du Luxembourg,
driving back on black coffee from Arles;
what rage, what hate, what misery.

A trickle sound in the forest
and the leaf falls

Watching the light grow
crook'd in the arm of this tree
while the crows all around
Aw, Aw,

III

Leaves, shadow-lapping

rust and thick yellow, with green

her clothes (her sweep?)
her colours

translucent brush-strokes, for ribs
like an insect-pod Christ by Cimabue
but with more sense of what are muscles.

A crow straggles its way across the void
to meet them,
the fiery flood
across these uncompanionable peaks

where the bamboos
grind against each other
for the coming winter.

burning firewood, for baths
smouldering rice-hulls, for ash

the tobi circles around and doesn't find much,
the mice having gone to ground;
so that one is grateful for the red berries that stand out
and the thin peppers that glow
and orange fires under plumes,
and for any sunset without clouds
that slows down the waning of the light a little longer.
The wild boar (or tanuki?) now shit ginkos
with the nuts mostly intact
and a mush of digested flesh round them;
the old crow still hangs by the jaw
slicked down by the rain, over the weeks,
in the silence.

The hill of rice-husks
has a bunch of old bamboo stakes stuck in from the top
to let the air in as it burns.
The sharp odour.

Fierce orange-red
under couch-grass:

her colour,
my smell.

Small paddyfields
with rounded yellow-green grass banks bounding them in.

Coming down in sunlight through a broken glade
thinking of my wife as she then was

“Good morning Mr Sheeps”;
“Whoops!” for the tail of a rabbit, vanishing

Tensing and Silo in the snow;
in the Portobello Road, 6 a.m., baring her bum to a fire-hydrant.

The tea-bushes by our field: “We should do everything” (that pertains to
living in the countryside in Japan)
But Samson and Delilah
ran away

The ink puckers the paper
at the knots where the brush turned,
pulling the strength in.

shoes, detective stories, matchboxes, her major remains
washed away as ash when the river rose

So that at last she put her all into it
(tout pour l’art)

the glass rib wavers
back and forth,
plays over the lichen, the colour of dead blood,
under the unending rush,
which holds to the rock,
too thin to be shifted.

Abandoned (when she went to London)
but not let go.

IV

The pale cream of the circle of the lower sun
through the drifting grey,
cloud off the mountain;

the streamer bunches up round the flaming wheel,
wreathes it in shroud,
hides it again.

The snow, a stole
hanging off the branch of this tree.

There is the lichen that lives under the stream, at full torrent. Flat to the rock,
a dark dried-blood colour.
The long pocket of air, in the lee of a rock, that flips on and off
irregularly.

Strange convergence
this pattern, these flecks
on this hard wood, like limbs to the palm
that has the bark like loose socks
gunaikos, of woman, rucked up

gaunt bark, many-holed

round a vacancy.

Little scutterings of snow, trundling down the slope ahead,
diminishing.

The thick sough of the wind.

The souging of a thousand trees, range to range, as the darkness closes.

V

but lo, the bracken sprouts
& curls
cet immense pouvoir
qui se déferle
with the bronze-bright shaggy pelt
waiting to unfurl
spray of broken-down ferns
splayed from the centre
studded with them.

Colonies of pale and paler lichens
that meet like clouds or sea-wrack
and the bark already cracked

souls fade,
or there would be an encumbering in the world?
far-off surf in the pinetops
thick naked light on the scarred trunks

Leaf ironed out to a fullness,
old bamboo hard like ivory

a fullness; a stillness; present;
not etched but there.

Always with their tops chawed off
tips chawed off
the great phalloi
bamboo thrusting out of the ground

the green not vivid but virulent
the flat mirror of water with the border of mud
with ragged banks
so flat, so delicate
waiting to be disturbed
with feet and with plantings.

And under the roughened, fast-moving
water
the shadow of a frond, waving.

“I need *help!*”

huelp

Heavy surf, not far:
the storm working itself up in the treetops.
On the mountain, the cedars thrash,
the ribbed water rushing.

never bent
she knew she was a nuisance
never gave myself up to her
till 2-3 days before she died.

The halberds on the bronzes like these leaves;
the silvery-green fly-like creatures
flit about them intently.

VI

‘You are very calm about all this’

horrent et tremunt
and into the drowning-boats

and out of the dark cabin, the voice of a radio
and the two lights of slightly different tones
the white and the slightly yellow

tussocks under snow.

Tired and glazed and as if pulled square by the plastic surgery
gazing at me
flatly, making no argument.

Betrayed and hiding nothing.

Keeping my options open:
ne manquez pas l'épisode où vous gagnez

(coming down from the Sacré-Coeur past the closed-in bar)

Piles of boxes of neatly packed
cigarette packs, and maybe one of them will have the Key.

Under the thick sheet of water
ribbed, rushing
an eye of air.

A scattering of thin silver cigarette foils
on the black ash, like paper to the touch now they've been burned.
On the heap of rice-straw mats; then the flood from the typhoon took them.

The first answer was always 'No'.

In the stillness
the watersound cut off by the pass
the wraiths move on the mountain
the tiny waterpattering
and the owl behind me.

A very remote light there down by the roadside
a bit like a firefly

the mountain blocked off by the mist
and then again the dog-barks.

Motif: the monotone,
with a little relief
and texturing,
senza struttura
architettura

gotta get above the field-line
to drink water without poison
to where the snow lies yet
unmelted
Skeletons of old eyes
cracking
where they should have moved

O ye whom
I pass by
when I pass by the Yodogawa Christian Hospital
will you be satisfied?

with your monument, when I have made it
quod non imber edax

Afraid; dried; paralysed;
denied her thrice.

Steadily over the years

in small émiettements, witherings and closings:

“When I have got this done,
then we will have castles in Spain.”

con smaldi, with tiles, with green and blue
and the dark spaces in the garden
where you will be

Bluffly accepting her, denying her. Denied her thrice.

Videt peccator et tabescet
I, PJMakin, under the ribbed water, by the Ark, with head down
floating south

Eat some raisins,
couple the synapses,
gender more words.

FRANCES PRESLEY

Windcorner

near St Hildegard's abbey

In Moment
in the moment's process
scrape

white butterfly black dots
dat dhat da

rummage scabious
purple clover
hemming by summerhouses

all night
an undercurrent
of bells
overcurrent of birds

I'm going inside my body
sometimes there's nothing
but Genglich
the gentle pressure of an entire landscape
on the left of my head
it's clearing
yolky

the river moves its houses
for and against
ingenious metaphor

a bird of prey
flies up
between the vines
we are flying towards each other

these are the wings this is the head she was thinking of

the wings in the drawing
— *the ardour of God*

April

on Grabbist

for Ian Robinson

saint george traffics
scrub oak bends further

lichen thickens
too many twists
in these trees
the weight of moss
the fracture of bark
sitting bone cracks

‘it was that bone which got broken in my neck...
the one they break when they hang people’

sand stones
percolate
periculo

black burnt gorse
‘too late to save the heather’

they’re making a clearance for
the purple headed mountain
because it is written
and according to estate

tree spindles upwards
economically inactive
but greening

circle these iron circles

cypress skyline
teeth towers
dark drawn in
shorthand
fade out

green circles move and tilt
leftward and
rightward slopes

sun on neck
uncircled

these sticks
my arms
will kindle
in gorse flower
air

.....
‘Thanks for the card – more trees! A tree does finally sneak its way in in the last of the enclosed drawings. I do hope you like them all – I meant to do 3 only but I tend to work in series until the vein is exhausted. It isn’t quite yet.’

(from Ian Robinson, 3/5/00)

FRANCES PRESLEY’s latest collection is the excellent *Paravane. New and Selected Poems* from Salt Publishing, Cambridge (2004). She lives in London and is a member of the editorial board of *How2*.

when they write about trains they're talking about time

grind black smoke to field-gold
sky the shapes left by the trees
& shadows snap time
if time was twigs imagined
shadowy, in a thought –
industrial bric-a-brac
on the edge, estates
where freedom is a ball & children
we cut through such green
I was led to believe was gone
inside the train
middle-class courting begins
through the medium of a crossword
“expelled”, six letters, begins with ‘o’
I think omitted – shit – too many & wrong
he says “ousted”
– I never think straight between places –
without spite, know he’s right

London to Liverpool, 30 July 2004

PETER BOYLE

Two Poems Without a Name

(17/4/04)

The strange sisters speak to us,
that they are lonely as we are —
all invisible
and breathing in the same quiet,
numbering the same stars.
We wanted to dwell in the future — a water-stained substitute
for the hard earth, the three a.m. chill
of damp grass under elms.

Insignificant things have travelled best.
You gave me a miniature rainforest as a present.
In its small brown pot
I watered it and clipped its canopy.
When the sky disappears beyond its
gnomic and intricately referenced leaves,
I will remember your face
and all its tenderness.
Everything you gave is alive somewhere.
In a world of strident crows
it whispers its litany.
Though I can enumerate nothing
it says, "I am what sustains you.
I am the everlasting catalogue."

(18/4/04)

Sometimes you have to follow strangeness back to its lair.
The furniture provides limited clues
as do the children
growing into altered versions of yourself but with
a withering refusal to endorse your chosen dead-ends.
If not the bric-à-brac what is it you've accumulated?
And what is this debt you've clocked up
pauperizing you for 25 years after your death?
At least you robbed your own inheritance.
At least you didn't have to blow anyone up
to put water into your bathtub.
Of the future's future less than five minutes is visible,
a haze where loss and guilt merge into green rolling vistas.
Dozo, the Japanese version keeps saying,
dozo, kono hon wa otonyo no skyblaetter desu.
An immense light glows where the words vanish.
Writing in effortless abandon
as befits the last days
of a warrior hermit gone to seed,
this at last could be the true life.

ALAN BAKER

The World Seen from the Air

To get used to the earth's edge
and pale vertigo is to lose

something not altogether but
the lights at night each little spark

and fugitive energy the evening sees
the cars like living things turned fossil

to fuel the night's decline the day's
displaced indifference

dusk, and the aircraft stack like geese
coasting in to land on a thawed lake the snows

no longer, is a learned indifference, rather
an acceptance of the spread plains, the sea's

inscrutability, the cities studded
as far as we can see

(there's nowhere to rest my notebook)

to get used to the earth's pale edge
is something not altogether lost as

(there's no where to rest)
it lights each little spark and fugitive energy

the evening sees the cars see
the living things turned fossil

to fuel the night's decline the day's indifference
dusk, and the aircraft stack like geese

the snows a learned indifference, rather
an acceptance as far as we can see

(there's nowhere to rest this...)

*

what is between us
 is, lacking certainty,
the bowl of sleep
 at least of
time shared, time imagined

leaves in the breeze and the glare
of a hazy day, churn of cold water
 guillemots, gannets,
nests, ledges in the glare of sea,
and others
 between us flight
 a swift sleeps
 on the wing

a bowl shared, time shared
flight imagined at the borders
and churn of ledges, rocks
in the glare of sealight

we have come this distance,
inland, a sparrow's flight,

a swift sleeps on the wind,
the air as earth to us, the earth

alien, and peopled with the strange,
incapable of speed and movement

or rest, and sky will enter in
our eyes, the wind our ears

as if we could master it only in
stillness, and that at best

or sky that will enter in
our eyes, and wind our teacher

the leaves in the haze of day,
cold water, breeze, a bowl

might mitigate the time spent
or imagined between us, sleep

a swift on the wing, or rest
might mitigate the cold

of earth, as alien, we have come
this distance, a sparrow's flight

peopled with the strange, leaves,
cold water, churning flight

*

Memory extends its current
in the late air,
different shades for different
depths and directions

sedge, willow and alder, a pair of kingfishers,
blue jewels, quick,
sedge, willow and alder, a pair of blue jewels
like kingfishers your eyes

blow the wind southerly

*

a studied velocity
and wing flick
turns a line to lift

these birds never alight
a life on the wing

and a perspective on life
all summer weave and call
feed nest
 from this vantage point the town and lake

the summer migrants and the herons
with the slow wing-beats
 enclose

wherever humanly possible, an image
of the lilies of the field

(I should have been a bird)

the children lulled to sleep by their calls
their wills weakened, letting slip
the calls of evening

each leavetaking like the last, to rest,
migrants calling time on summer

wherever possible the practice will
continue, they are exemplars, some will say

wing-flick and slow beat, migrations
and sedentary populations

spread across the surface of the globe,
in transience, lulled to sleep, or woken

the calls of evening and the weave
of feeding, nesting, wave on wave

To leave your home and know
there's no returning

so many suffer such a fate,
so many, lulled to sleep,

perspective on life awake, right here, now,
no time to waste or weaken

*

(midnight)
each little spark and fugitive energy
the cars see the living things turned fossil

to fuel the night's decline, the day's
and the aircraft stacked like geese

the snows gone and a learned indifference,
rather an acceptance

*

Tracery of branches
brushed by south wind

A heron makes the sky a home

In continuous brush-stroke light
I cast my mind across a pool of answers
we may go fishing in later

*

Sedge and willow, alder, a pair of eyes
blue jewels, quick kingfishers,
a pair of blue jewels
sedge, willow and alder, your eyes

and a wind in the sedge

*

As if it were
brush strokes
or streaks of cloud half-visible
in what we called vision
but now know better...

as mind bends to perspectives,
brush strokes, sleep, slowly
to the hum of engines, the
earth, I take it, tentative, and
encompassed by sleep,
a vision of sorts

yet streaks of cloud known better
than the hum of engines
we need to talk, she said,
as the brush of sleep stroked
encompassed the bending vision,
seas, the open shore, night

earth, I take it, tentative, and
encompassed by a vision of sorts

ALAN BAKER lives in Nottingham, England. He is managing editor of Leaf Press, assistant editor of *Poetry Nottingham* and editor of the arts and poetry webzine *Litter*. He has published two pamphlets, *The Causeway* (1999) and *Not Bondi Beach* (2002), both from Leaf Press.

PETER BOYLE is an Australian poet living in Sydney. He has published four collections of poetry in Australia: *Coming home from the world* (1994), *The Blue Cloud of Crying* (1997), *What the painter saw in our faces* (2001) and *Museum of Space* (2004). His translations of French and Spanish are widely-published and his most recent book as a translator is *The Trees: Selected Poems of Eugenio Montejo* (Salt Publishing, Cambridge, 2004).

BRIAN LOUIS PEARCE, poet and novelist, was born in West London in 1933, the son of a carpenter. Married with one daughter, who lives in Corfu, he has been a college librarian, a local historian, lecturer, and much else besides. His earlier poems are collected in *Selected Poems 1951-1973* (Outposts, 1977) and his mid-career work is found in volumes such as *Gwen John Talking* (2nd edn, 1996) and *The Proper Fuss*. His most recent collection is *Growling* (Stride, 2005). His novels include *Victoria Hammersmith* (Stride, 2nd edn, 2001).

VASSILIS ZAMBARAS

Two Poems

How I Was Cured Of Hunting

spied

thrush in thicket
looking

after its wound,
a sprig

of therapeutic

o-
re-
ga-

no in its bleeding
beak.

Separate Entity

A multitude

Of solitudes, each
Accumulating

Particular
Singular

Concentrates
On what is left

Unsaid

.

Immaterial?
Witness

Scores of voices
Interlocking over

Bedrock in
Separate

Congeries
Of air-

Tight alibis
Of the dead.

JANET SUTHERLAND

4 Poems

Cinnabar

He gave me cinnabar, in a small suitcase,
 just before my ship sailed out of port.
 In the first days when I dare not walk
 on deck I would look at the red stain
 on the soiled leather and remember his
 hands. Each morning I checked the old
 barometer for weather, *heel schoon*
 it said and the sea was flat, silvered.
 Progress was slow. Sailors called to me.
 The captain looked away and would not speak.

Later, a swelling sea, *veranderlyk*, and a coastline
 near enough to hear the breakers crashing
 against rock. Birds on the cliff tops rising
 and wheeling, falling as one, gone to nothing.
 Sunsets were vermilion, madder lake.
 The water, lapis lazuli and azurite. I could
 not sleep. The stars reminded me of home.
 A dress hung in my cabin waiting for landfall.
 Lamplight drew a face upon its folds.
 In the creaking of the timbers I heard voices.

One bone black night, I walked on deck,
 a lead white moon dipped in and out. The sea
 became the folded downs, a lighthouse flashing
 endlessly. Near dawn there came a glimmer
 on the waves, a glaze like mercury on glass.
Bestendig, then, I took my suitcase out
 and opened it, a fine red dust rose up
 to darken on the surface of the sea..
 Though I am emptied too, my alchemist
 spent all the hidden gold he left in me

Heel Schoon – perfect weather; *Veranderlyk* – changeable, or variable; *Bestendig* – settled

Blackbirds flying

white threadbare linen, hooks removed,
steeped, pounded, placed in vats
and raised in mesh to drain
then dry,
compressed

a winter sub-song heard from undergrowth

as iron gall, dark like a black bird's eye
flowed from the sharpened quill, gum
Arabic prevented feathering

the warning call with flicking wings and tail

sometimes the sonnet put itself aside
for lists of births and deaths and marriages,
the cost of fish and ale and wheat for baking bread

a loud and pleasing warbling flutelike song

a cadence rising delicate might be
a broken arc of shell in greenish blue
another place to move to outside this

on the edges of dense woodland, a song post
as permanent as paper scratched with ink

(untitled)

an image of skin I once knew intimately
like water stalled below a bank of autumn trees

mirrored; unreachable as trout,
slipping under an eel trap for shelter

in the dust under the willows
the heifers stand idly

dung laden tails swish
to their round swollen bellies,

some of them swam to the bull
on the other side, risking the current

and had to be fetched home, long miles
in a lorry, carrying chaos

and I count them, their little bastards
growing unplanned, not by the book

like water stalled below a bank of autumn trees
mirrored, unreachable as trout

An Orchard Subject 1946

This war time gardener
lauds his sweet cherries:
red turk, ursula rivers, smoky dunn
governor wood, hooker's black and elton heart

precisely accurate and dry his text explains
the cuts and mazzard stocks, the tips and tricks
for heavy crops. He mourns the fruits
devoured by birds at cherry picking time

his sour cherries do not suffer such attacks,
a passable dessert, he will allow,
when fully ripe. Self fertile, un-acclaimed,
anonymous and humble, fruit for pies

he sends his female pickers out in pairs
to cut these modest crops. Their constant chat,
an irritant to him and to the birds,
is sweetened, useful, scattered under trees

unheard, these women mutter constantly,
between the careful lines in counterpoint,
and spit, like restless saboteurs,
delicious, dangerous and tender juice.

JANET SUTHERLAND lives in Lewes, Sussex. She has featured regularly in recent issues of the magazine. Shearsman Books will publish her first full-length collection in 2006. The Dutch words in the first poem above are weather indicators from a barometer.

CHRIS McCABE was born in Liverpool in 1977. He has published poems in a number of places including *Poetry Salzburg Review*; *Angel Exhaust* and *Great Works*. He currently works as Assistant Librarian at the Poetry Library, London. His first book, *The Hutton Inquiry*, will be published by Salt Publishing this year.

VASSILIS ZAMBARAS was born in Greece, and returned there after twenty-five years in the USA. He teaches at the language school he founded in 1977 in Meligalas, and has published two small volumes of poetry: *Sentences* (Querencia, 1976) and *Aural* (Singing Horse, 1984). Some of his poems were included in the anthology *How The Net Is Gripped: A Selection of Contemporary American Poetry* (Stride, 1992). More recent work can be found in *The London Magazine* and *Poetry Salzburg Review*; also online at *The Salt River Review*, *Maverick Magazine*, *fine-words.com*, and *Tattoo Highway*. He has an unpublished third collection of poetry titled *The Intricate Evasions of As*.

BRIAN LOUIS PEARCE

Corfu with an Umbrella

Waves, red sail, boy fishing;
girl watching, hair brushed back
by the beach breeze, gusting

after the poet's cap.
Waves sough the pebbles in
sequence; rock boy casts his

rod of shadow and sun,
stiff, still, and hard pressed, glistening
brown sculpture, lithe as an

up-country *piscator*
with a spear. Inland,
the coy lake leaks, cicadas

message the shore's mosquitoes.
The stiff brush brush of the
poplars below the pass

spells for donkey and scooter
shade on the way to the grave.
Waves of heat; daze of leaves:

the leafy sails that are the
parasols of Corfu,
one for each voyager;

the salmon pimpernel
and lemon butterfly,
await you at the oak.

As waves reach for the beach,
so the cypresses go up
in pairs toward the peaks. Saints

at the rail receive girls
with infants at hip from the
back of the church. Straight, supple,

the girls, hair brushed back, gaze fixed
on the Metropolitan,
except when one laughs or plays

with a child's finger. The early
icon of the Virgin's one:
boy, poet, stop to look.

Bait bikinis that fish
the beach at noon in high
season are nothing to this.

I, who have sat below
the wall at Kaniaro;
climbed above the old harbour

at Kerkyra the steep
Antivouniotissa steps;
looked down them on the blue

bay framed by the door: I
speak what I know, having poked
Corfu with my umbrella

till it is green and cicerone,
white above pools of marine
green, olive above white rocks.

I tell you how it is,
seeing that sitting out
siesta here in the

shade on a balcony,
I should know. 'Shade in which I
trusted, I can't mend your spokes.'

Shearsman magazine is published quarterly by Shearsman Books Ltd, and is also made available at the Shearsman website, approximately one month after publication of the printed version. The online version also carries reviews of new books and magazines, for which there is usually no room in the print version. Single copies cost £2.50. A four-issue subscription costs £7 in the UK, £9.50 for the rest of Europe (including the Republic of Ireland), and £12 for the rest of the world. Payment should be made in sterling, and cheques should be made payable to Shearsman Books Ltd. We can accept Dollars or Euros, if necessary, but please add the equivalent of £6 to cover bank charges.

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Lisa Samuels	<i>Paradise for Everyone</i> (April 2005)	[92pp, £8.95/\$14]
Dirk van Bastelaere	<i>Selected Poems</i> (April 2005)	[108pp, £9.95/\$16]
(translated from Flemish by Willem Groenewegen, John Irons & Francis R. Jones)		
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