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The Pistol Tree Poems: 1

this morning I'm listening to a little country music
by Schubert & liaising with the weather —
the naked sun did lift the sky but then it rained
& now it's putty & porridge cloud
dragging everybody's heaven to Leicester
ignoring my plans to mow the lawn
& plant some wild sweet pea seed
under the gloomiest section of holly
where Schubert has finally arrived too
did you manage to plant your rhubarb?
I think it needs a well-manured soil
& a little chimney to grow in
so it doesn't get smoke in its eyes
but grows long & firm in the dark
not like a shrivelled penis in the North Sea
teaching phonics to KS1 for £9 a year
didn't make Schubert very exuberant
nor did beer with Mayrhofer
the poet who eventually threw himself out of
the government building where he worked
as a censor: talk about performance management
what grim times for artists & citizens
the public interested only in dance fads
& minor celebrities sucking each other's faces
Metternich kicking out Joseph II's reforms
banning controversial t-shirts in the capital
abolishing trial by jury in certain cases
5 years in prison for breaking an ASBO
over 3 million DNA samples held on file
damaging GM crops defined as terrorism
the Anti-Terrorism Acts making it an offence
to advocate the violent overthrow of dictators
your internet history available
to entire herds of minor government voyeurs
citizens extradited to America with no evidence

profiles of 37% of black men held by police
peace campaigners prosecuted for causing
US servicemen “harassment, alarm & distress”
by holding a sign outside an American base
saying GEORGE W. BUSH? OH DEAR
here the rain it raineth every day
even now in early May
but Berlusconi has been shown a door vero?
Schubert was soon into deep mid-winter
I have done nothing wrong
that I should shun mankind
the road I have to take
has always been a one-way street
I heard a cuckoo at 6.15 this morning
& the house martins are back & building
the sun is trying to see us all again
for the cup final & rhubarb
is shaping to wave goodbye to this grey sky

May 12/13 Norfolk

The Pistol Tree Poems: 2*

The sky over the Po Valley reads like a Bisto pack;
it’s a duff way to pay the rent:
describing the describable,
and yet I’ve watched these hills for days and nights,
caught up in an infinitesimal part
of this huge tectonic sigh.
Once grounded, the rain’s designated path is a slew
of mud and road-strewn stones,
each taken so far then gripped,
nudged against unevenness;
too much friction is something to hold fast to:
much in the way that Mrs. Pina’s goat
is more an extension of herself,
even when, dizzy and drawn by illusions of freedom,
it bolts down the wet hill at gusty dawn

while due to leverage and tree-root shift,
the entire garden sways, imperceptibly plied
for an instant, ever so slightly from sloped earth.
It's perhaps because there's only so much slack
to take up at any given time
that what remains flaps free:
a soft awning of Ligurian wind,
which billows deeply sifted,
somehow leaves colours of the inter-tidal zone
mixed with tree leaf and shadow, and Rhubarb?
Rheums tube their 'neathward way hereabouts,
but on the surface? Nothing.
In search of a remedy,
I side-scroll the OS map, reshuffle whole counties
and select a corner of the Rhubarb Triangle,
which gets dragged south to Valverde,
accompanied by the idiophonic metal ping
of a successfully concluded desktop event:
distant pickers grope dim forcing sheds and emerge,
heroic and blinded by searing hill light,
to the hypnotic film score tones of octet for rhubarb,
goat,
virtual jukebox,
aching root,
petioles,
found objects,
soul-lack
and Prepared Triangle.
Somewhere between Liszt
and the Ottoman marching bands
dwelt the as yet unfelt, explicit
valvey hoof-click
of the bebop scale, and
Steve Reich's audient knitting:
a holding pattern; purl one,
a lossless,
ectopic
beat.

June 2nd – 4th Valverde/Milan

Maryrose Larkin

Late Winter 30-4

and out again
and horizon
and violet violet unsettling
and rusted more
and in again
and change clearly
and no east winter
and no east river
and no cerulean thirty
and gone again

and petal that
and out again
and petal this
and atmosphere awake
and surface startle
and in again
and gone again
and yellow gray
and moving white

and denominator
and ruination
and out again
and
and in again
and shadow throat
and line life
and mission to
and chain link fence
and cinder faced
and gone again

I'll be the 50% chance

Late Winter 30-6

rusted out and bluish and closed
shadow fronds and fence posts

station and cross scattered
rhododendron cinder in the visible

east a crocus blooming
insides missing violets I miss

spring yolk fifty percent ruination
Jonquil day an eye mapped limbs and ashes

impossible north except when impossible
here are 30 pictures of the sky

Photograph of Anne Sexton

You sit in your portrait
seemingly pleased,
talking aside but like your cheek knows
there is a man
looking with a lens.

Your dress looks like silk, eaten up
by orange holes at your breast, your waist,
your thigh, and pretty.
Your fingers are long and they speak
louder than you do,
a foot before your face.

I am surprised that it is clearly
1960-something,
I see the years in your hair,
the turn of your ankle and your legs
neatly crossed,
the way you brushed it, your
exterior décor,
you look nice.

Not sure if you wanted to be heard
or seen by me.
I prefer the artist to the art, always have,
the stories of their lives
and how and how face-on they faced
their final deaths.
You teased yours out
like a fine curl of hair made straight:
not possible, and yet, inevitable,
with enough work. The work of years.
It was a mask, or all of it, a masque.

It was those hands with nails,
hair in your hands,
dress smoothed on,
torn off, shoes so lovely.

It was all you gave time to, all your days
nailed to the year with photographs
and words.

You bade and made us listen
and we did,
and then did not,
and then could not but.

The Sound of Things and Their Motion

All night, the blank page.
All night, the unopened book beat its black wings against the glass,
and I woke, forgetful.

Just like in the movies, the girl is there then gone,
each frame suspended midair.
This moment, wherever it finds us, is neither

mine nor yours.
A place with no
single word rises around

us with the bare
suddenness of a house,
wherein one finds

an unstained coffee mug, a cigarette burned to ash.
An iris rots in a vase above the fireplace.
Which I mattered, which earned its belonging?

The nerves, their graceless hum, now quieted.
At times the window and everything in it is blue.
The wish to damage and deny is its own season.

Unless an omen overwhelms the willow,
the pond is dried up and gone and every
proposition forgets the one before it. The camphor field

between grapes and echoes, blazes until its darkening.
Nothing candles the heart so
much as loss.

Names tell me names to trace
the ways back

towards the saying of some
delicate,
 some infinitely stuttering thing.

Yellowstone Park, Wyoming

1

Sometimes I wake up crying. My face is wet and everyone's asleep on seats around me. The driver, who's watching in his mirror, gesticulates and waves his pack of cigarettes. We smoke outside in silence as the shadows dance and the road hums and glows in the bus lights. The following day I thank him as he drops me off at the Hotsprings. I saw my sister being gun-whipped and gang-raped. Now I find her lying in the algae beds. Her eyes are emerald green and her hair's tangled blue – it oscillates in steam.

2

Now my dreams take me somewhere below the surface of water, which was already deeper than the grind of city pavements. Now they seem to take me inside the impact of violence, as if it's no longer enough to connect a dead body with the elements and vegetation. I'm searching through rubber, leather and metal for any trace of her. But already they're clearing the road and I'm getting frantic. I want her head, her face. Fate gives me an indistinct remnant of leg clinging to steel, so I stare in a last ditch effort. At last it disengages, turns to face me.

3

After this it was easier to understand my husband. I'd thought he was fooling, going around with a sheet over his head. I reached up to kiss him and realised that the sheet was to disguise the fact that he had no head. Oh no, I thought, this cannot be: a man with no head cannot be alive, and I panicked ever so slightly to think I'd kissed the wrong man. So I pulled off the sheet to find a neck where the head should be, and I didn't know who it was until it opened its eye.

Echoes in Grey

I

On these dark nights,
the sky crimsoning, it builds
within me. A strange woman sings,
silken chords I couldn't capture
waiting by the window
for a glimpse of grey
mufti. You hated that tie,
like cold blood you said,
dark maroon; and I
at your feet making colt's eyes.

II

The man I remember
walks staccato past flower vendors
and Marz-O-Rin
where couples poise ice-cream
livid with cherries.
I follow quickly,
the street marked
with grey all the way
to my room, where I am

drawn to scent
of mango blossom filling air.
He leans in his chair,
his legs splayed. He is bad
he says, at words;
but our feet can speak.

III

All day long the neighbour's mare
has called in fields.
I try to appease her with apples,
but she runs away,
muzzling air. There is nothing
I can do, see how she gallops
bullet straight; half beats
like echoes. She looks back,
startled to see who follows,
but there's no shadow there.

IV

At night the mare is
a wave in the field,
her cremello foal nosing
where her mother's tail
beckons like a whip.

I remember you as a boy,
hawk-eyed by your father's shoulder.

V

Not all things are
shadows filling rooms.

The grass is green here,
no voices like ravens
hopping on bare branch to branch.

I wake to light
pawing furniture,
velvet ripples in fields.

My rooms are full of windows.

VI

The south-clouds have blended
the mare grey. She is
invisible in shadow;
a flame in light.

I watch her appear
and disappear, hooves whipping
iris and purple heather.

She changes shape,
out-distancing hedgerows,
becomes the scent of rain.

The Penitents

*Seal up those things which the seven thunders uttered
and write them not*

1: Time no longer

processions & parades,
displays of public fervour

the many-coloured madam
manifests divinity

orphreys & precious stones
dalmatic & chasuble over his alb

the fierce & gentle qualities
of suffering

distillation of sanguinity
the corpuscles & the salt

the glimmering world is the past
it flickers in & out of our lives

in a halfcrazed round
of nursery songs

penitentiary doors
inlaid with graffiti

gilded columns, ornate
painted & pargetted rooms

the past is everywhere
at either side of the altar

gothic arcading in Manhattan
frescoes rich & modern to the age

processions parade
the darker side of fervour

many-coloured madmen
penitents & flagellants

a man disguised as an animal
peeps at a prostitute with scalloped sleeves

the distinctive sound of psalters
slipped back onto shelves

into the grey uncultivated sky we climb
step by tedious step

edges worn perilous
by pilgrims & the perfect

wicked men attack
divine authority

essences of sanctity
& sin

shameless science exults

2: Lest ye be judged

Brooklyn gothic, perpendicular brownstone
a priest with a hamburger
grease stains on cassock sleeves

behind shiny glass
jewels borrowed from the Egyptians
chasubles in lightweight Lurex

every world is immutable
the torn & broken edges blurred
thumbed-over ends of bread half-stale
to be cooked again or puddingstone
warmed over

we travel by wagons-lits & tram
not crawling as penitents
but this is St Anthony's thumb
or the prepuce of a post-lapsarian divine
– the deep belief of those
who still wear down the stepstones
with their flesh & bones require it

forensics pick for flesh beneath the nail
scratched surfaces of paint
– rood deliverance
from iconic burdens, dyed in the wood –
hold up a glass & see the stains

the castle we enter retains
many aspects of the prison
graffiti in the stonework

in his house he will chant impiety
he stripped off his robes
& also prophesied

beware of the scribes

if this is all true I have been betrayed

Salt

A loud crack gets my beat-up vehicle of indeterminate make
sputtering down the street.
Scarred brick
buildings, a square,
and in the interval, a parking lot.

Bricked-
up windows lend a stiff mood to what, at one
time, would have been a black bow-tie affair. Now it's just a square

meal, courtesy of a few square-
shouldered Wall Street
mergers. One
might more nonchalantly make
eye contact under the dimly lit street-
lamp where Lot

lost his wife. I'm talking about the same Lot's
wife who turned into a brick-
faced pillar of salt when she stepped one
dainty foot across the line into a macro

precipitation of thermal brine. Hot showers of brick-
bats in the hummocky lot,
so I keep to the center of the street,
move on to the next black square.

Whitby Abbey

it almost blew me away
over the cliff
like a hat or a shopping bag

the freedom

the down in my jacket
begging for it
like Icarus
without the proper equipment

how easy it would be

once off the ground
to keep going

purloining a fritillary

squeezed from a tube commercially skipping hair and legs to a
fairytale ending
each wing-beat is an anticipation of a last step back in advertising
she is as elusive as tinnitus

pentecost

her loom the belittlement of silver
the old tin cans buffering communication
across a tennis court
wintering without nets coal is hibernating
like a jewelled toad
ornate as the janitor
of our lady

a grounds-man measures trees by their weddings
it seems none
have sprouted a crucifixion or were rolled by picts
some however caught in a garter and spick and span
themselves over skylines
weighing the creases of faces gilding graveclothes

Letter to Apollinaire Written in Père-Lachaise Cemetery

An Aubrey Beardsley designed France Télécom phonebox
Roof collapsed & nettled with cobwebs
We couldn't find you again Guillaume
It rained so heavy
Last night I dreamt of killer monkeys with clowns' noses
Francis Picabia, Cendrars, Picasso
Playing poker on your tombstone
But found instead this Modernist Needle
And Jacqueline alongside you
(you should see Barry's b-sides, they're right up there)
We put a crapaud in your croci
Then went to find Jim
You can take a taxi to any tomb you want to see
Just say Avenue Circulaire or Number 63
It is only a baker's dozen to your centenary
The girl who loved poetry on the train at Nice in 1915
Who wasn't sure, but thought she might have heard your name
Now everyone knows who you are
You are going nowhere
Guillaume I too found love,
She makes a slip of the tongue, says "smile" instead of "stone"
Then showed surprise that a cemetery should have a W.C.
The living still need to go, some dead choose not to
We kissed at Colette & thought so much more at Abelard
Even here, men look down her blouse
Like Mummy might be lost there
Guillaume, it is only September & already on St Germain
The windows show silver mannequins in winter wear
Conkers fall on stone like wooden knobs on bank doors
I want a tap on mine to keep me topped up
Such sweet tight release of a rosé cork
Cut a picture of the lost lovers in the death bibliothèque
But when she went to smell the drains again
I sat with two glasses & looked destitute
She knew where I was by virtue of Balzac's bust

I smiled as she strode back along the stones
Three wild cats passed along her path
There was no misfortune in that
As we waited for the grave of Jim to clear
A policeman shouted “non alcool”
And marched us upright to the gates
And I’ve just turned twenty-eight
Next year we are coming to live here
And together give out guided tours
Starting “each man kills the thing he loves”
(before you let rip you have to reign them in)
Charged at three euros a head or a bottle of vin

11 September 2005

Experiment Perilous: Hedy Lamarr

She invented the mobile phone because no-one else seemed to be getting around to it. She even confessed her eternal gratitude to past influences, but they would not free her. Doesn't acting, *good* acting, mean dismantling the personality to see how it works? Of course, you have to be able to put it all back, and that's the difficult part, like knowing just when to step out in an x-coloured coat or y-coloured shoes and sparkle for the cameras. Sometimes her eyes have that crazy look horses have close-up, and her good looks are the doomed good looks of European Jewry, thick-skinned and lumpy. Did she lose her beautiful dreams, become habituated to failure, sit in her apartment watching the objects stare back? Maybe there's a back-story with friends and pets and not entirely unsuccessful cosmetic surgery. A towel-turban and shades speaking German to eternity.

James Bell

from The Just Vanished Place

you gave us an ode
by Neruda as food –
celebrated his metaphors
about melons
thought about my own
metaphors for melons
and how they have
transformed over the years –

soft and hard and so on

★

you show this to nobody
which seems the right decision
as the potential for directness
could be destroyed

makes you self-conscious
nevertheless –

knowing this is a promise
to yourself –

is this egocentric?

★

The Baby

after Carver

the baby worth its weight in liquidisers
the baby running a protection racket from the womb
the baby with the luminous green clock face
the baby with its own supermarket trolley
the baby chucking up gruelly stuff down my back
surprise baby
the clammy handshake, goo-goo smile,
never-says-this-never-does-that-presidential-candidate baby
the baby enjoying a good poo on the carpet
the baby with its finger on the button
the baby covered in flies
the baby we stare at but don't help
the baby that never cries
techno baby
the baby addicted to ketchup and raspberries
the baby with footballer's legs
the baby whose first word is 'jam-jar'
clever baby
the baby with ancient balding dreams
the baby that didn't show
the baby we never talk about
the baby at the centre of the universe

our baby

from withholding whispers

14. alternative history in minor cadenza

[Was it like that? Or did the young widower chance upon a girl's slender neck bent over her latest copy of the *Westminster Review*, the publican's quiet daughter reading the English mail where the shade cast by an apple or pear tree was coolest? His first wife died of an abscessed tooth before she reached her twentieth birthday. Catherine couldn't read. Elizabeth read as if there were no tomorrow. George, who had never heard poetry read, recognised sonnets in her deeply blue eyes.

George Dalton Lane, son of George Lane and Martha Bell. The name Dalton came from Martha's family, the Lanes clinging to it thereafter. George Bell was a conman sentenced to seven years' penal servitude in the colony of New South Wales, a punishment he doesn't appear to have served. He was adept at securing privilege, meeting up with his young wife and baby son in Rio de Janeiro en route to Sydney Cove. That's where Martha was conceived, her mother following George on another ship sailing to the Great South Land. Records show that Martha was born at Cowpastures, New South Wales, in 1814, six months after the couples' arrival to the land of the peerless blue sky.

History steers a tricky course at this juncture. George Lane, Martha's husband and progenitor of Australian men named George Dalton Lane, appears to have been born to two question-marks at Cowpastures in 1810, symbols grammatically destabilizing who I thought I might be.

Perhaps George's mother was a convict girl working for a parson called George Lane. There was one proselytising the faith among the criminals and the hapless indigenous at the time. Perhaps the mother was indigenous, the parson granting her the privilege of giving birth to a ready-made Christian. Perhaps an indigenous woman met up with a Chinese man, a ship's boy pursuing serendipitously prospects in the new colony. My only reservation about this construction is that indigenous mothers liked to keep their babies and did so before the law advised that they should be stolen by welfare officers. A convict

mother may have given up hers, whoever the father might have been. Or was George's mother the wayward daughter of an embarrassed family bent on respectability, the religion of those fearful for their reputations.

Perhaps my antecedent was an exclamatory conception.]

5. interlude in blue

blue eyes
always
navy
cornflower bright
millpond deep
grey blue
the fuss about colour
skin too pink hair too black
touching was not done
being longed for
the direct gaze
blue eyed
the studying embrace
distant and
wanting to know
who are you, exactly?
what are you up to?
her mother said
sew a fine line, dainty
hemstitches are rare
make money,
pin-tuck and
embroider.
Lizzie, earn your
usefulness, so
she studied maths and wrote
clear sentences,
her inked letters
blue

Friendship

We were off the road. The trees were on the left. We were to the right of them. “You might want to stay on the road,” I said. “I am on the road,” you said. “No. You’re not.” And then we began to fall. You turned toward me. I said, “Don’t worry. It doesn’t matter. Our love will last forever.” You moved closer. “A kiss before dying?” you asked. And then we ran quickly to the water because our feet were on fire. When we dove into it the cold shocked us at first, but then we got used to it and we went out farther into it, deeper, past the sand bar and into water of a different shade. I tried to stay below the surface for as long as I could, to meet the challenge without a flinch and to think nothing of breath or light. I tried to be as a bottom creature, walking in that sand without a care or worry other than a next meal or the escape from the mouth of some other creature. I tried, but I failed. My chest got tighter and heavier, yet this strange weight forced me up rather than down. There was nothing to do about it. My pain increased. And I sought to free myself from the agony: that grip. I went up against my will, my wishes – my feet as flippers pushing off a locker of stone. Then the light blinded me for a moment, but I adjusted. The pain had quickly gone; nothing of it, not even its memory, remained.

Rainy Summer

A sentence followed me, a long and wordless shape,
 the negative of sign and silence, all possible sentences
 sounded there: I slept more soundly for it, followed it on
 tiptoe, heard no other, condensing raindrops e to mc^2
 a lifelong sentence tracing back creation
 so deep I couldn't sound its depth
 this secret sequence, beginning with the gasmain
 in its wired enclosure metering the
 sentence where I saw your eyes or glimpsed my son
 quite liquid, mirror-tongues across his changing skin
 drawn in towards the onward, shining stream, the iris crypt
 of sentences, this sentence, commencing or continuing

A sentence followed me, long wordless shape the
 chrysalid of deepest heartvalve, untried wing
 —film ravelling a mansion's length of winding streets,
 the cutting of my days, a mauvine slip unfurling as the
 sentence curled the soothing breeze or murmurs through the rain
 of speech, and underneath its words or hidden by a face—
 sometimes I hear it right away and only need one word—
 the curve a single letter makes on empty sheets,
 is where? that sentence heard when I am wakened by its nightly
 pulse afar, flashing its asides- is this
 the sentence, sliding down tectonic palates
 or not this sentence but some other, always otherwise

A sentence grew the deepest scar, no memory
 below the sweet-skinned sleep said wake now, wake now
 sentence, tracking wordless searing hatred
 spinning in the flesh and wanting none—
 no pause or rest or passing come to birth
 a soundless sentence spoke by no one, none to hear,
 sounds the cardial nightclock out of time
 in empty gravelled courtyards sounds the chained-up dog,

the sentence pulsing like the sea within a scuttled hull
 glistens in the berries of a dream to murmur wake now, wake now,
the shoreless stormcry carried off by blinding waters,
 the measured tambour threading sea to moon

A sentence short or long wordless tune—
 you hear its rustle when you run
then stop, it grows quite still, it stammers in your chest
 and day and night the sentence, always there
beyond the Gulf is pulsing out its love
 unspoken by the speakers of a tireless body, mute—
the sentence dancing on immobile limbs
 sings high notes for the head, or in the closing
velar stairwell plunging for the next floor eyes quite shut
 a sentence reckoning, fast as alpine shade,
a flying sentence, lighting from the storm,
 a phantom rider, dead astride his charcoal mare

A shadow sentence travelling eternal nighttime
 autobahns, passing from the depth of fog to never find the
exit sign beneath the trampled snow or lit by fires
 that signal blue, lighthouses, blue-good, good—
this rolling sentence closing eyes against the stream,
 rolls on without an end in sight,
a sentence slumped on intercity trains that pierce the
 darkened crossings far beyond each
whispers of the fog, the catatonic speech of slurried ice,
 deserted service-station pools of thickened oil—
advancing sentence, unknowing where it goes or comes
 from, turning sentence, spinning, letting fly

A sentence speaks, long wordless lake
 of water disappearing- when I think
to flood with more the sentences pour on- I hear no
 more, each sound-replacing sound, the deafened shower
draws on each sentence through the brain of wire,
 tattooing the undercurrent dolphin skein
of sentences that swim with promises
 unkept—all this I'll follow now, without a sound,

to leave behind me all my words, a sentence where there's you and
no-you, language of fire and earth unknowing every
word, the body of the sentencing now unframed: forlorn flight
receiver light, secret-guardian unworld-silent, wall of soil.

garden

my mother had a butterfly garden and every day she watered their roots with the sap of her sobbing with the wet crust of her tears she weaved a line of words that only the butterflies knew how to decode they in return only gave her the silence of their wings from their aerial vertigo the hushed breathing of their fragile bodies now my mother is dead and the butterflies are gone from the garden

tree

behind broken fruits or never pronounced names between riddles of sap and chlorophyll next to the silence of crusts torn into pieces in a void under this other mode of breathing leaf by leaf falls winters and dead afternoon hours like the tree I have been from my shadow I look at you I'm just a silhouette a tree ghost that wakes up in the thirst of your roots

hat

I didn't want the rain to wet my memories so I put on this old hat in silence I put it on all the things I've forgotten all the names I lost I didn't want the wind to snatch away the voices of my past the brown silhouette of my doubts but the truth is it doesn't rain today nor is it windy and there's nobody in this town to see my hats rolling on the ground

Mother-Daughter Territory: an excerpt from *Charenton*

because individuals resemble persons but are institutions. The mother-territory contacts the daughter-territory to find out how we are; i answer we're fine, that they're going to perform a hepatic extraction on you. If the mother-institution were a person i'd tell her your liver (i saw it) is full of stars, which isn't very precise, i should say "your hepatic cells are star-shaped"

it all happens so fast; the earth that wasn't the same, nor that of the hereafter—promise but a Florida, vanishes and the desert grows (under my feet, obviously)

i must produce earth. Earth manufactures itself from an precise position of the body in space. The poem can survive in the kingdom of snows

this journey might have happened at any lost point in the youth of Mariana (any woman today aged between 40 and 55). Night, lying on the blue train seat, head against the window, she contemplates *the grandiose Canadian landscape of lakes – which a light wind ripples – and interminable birch forests*. Preference for nocturnal-moving panoramas. London, at dawn, uve-K enters the clinic, M heads for the British, later the Tate: Rothko, Naum Gabo, Pevsner. The bison of Nevada interrupt the journey

the same thing all over (with mosquitoes)

now you're in what may be a perfect parallelepiped with stairs to the roof and two italianate alcoves communicating with twin tunnels of white fog (coral fossilized and smelling intensely of sulphur). There's writing on all the walls. The bartender, an old cupid with quiver and arrows, sets a stone cup on the table. You don't drink, you memorize the countersigns of poems (celtic warriors, baked into corn bread). In instantaneous mutation, you enter, stand up, fade out

what fascinated me about the radio were its keys (elephant ivory) and the greenlit mermaid eyes of a glide that registered sound intensity; i was mesmerized and pretended it was me making that music (i made as if playing the piano) soaring over the savannah, with two hundred thousand elephants, from the jungle

truly (uve-K)

warm objects, of writing

(in the sanitorium washroom, a clear space)

a group of actors sip tea

delight themselves with the minutiae of the tray-coffin: *the cups resemble funerary urns and the napkins shrouds*

INMATE (he) #1—it seems she'd rinsed them –my curls–/and with gold she tied them

INMATE (she) #2—my brother grabs the device –a cathodic vitrine–, eats there, sups there; doesn't rise from his chair all day –three, four A.M.– eighty pills

We, working men and women of Galicia, together in Vigo under the most adverse circumstances our class has recently known, wish to take the floor to proclaim . . .

INMATE (he) #3 – i'm in a rush, i know, it's suffocating to recount this soap opera

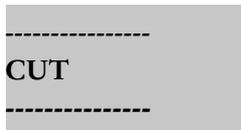
seeds came out of me, the rule took its time letting me go, i lost half a stone, spent a fortune on underwear, new swimsuits, shoes. On Saturday, Fernando'd stayed with a friend to go to the chalet, i was officially supposed to go with Teresa to watch Holy Sunday videos. I get on the plane soaked in sweat, after endless waiting

MAXI – when the party's over, the muse runneth over, enters the dream of men

chews cellophane, pale viscera of Dionysus

this is politics sampled

cold



cut the roses, make a

bouquet

bestow it on me

Notes on contributors

C.J. ALLEN lives in Nottingham, and has been widely published in magazines and has been broadcast on the BBC. A prize-winner in several competitions, he has four collections, the most recent of which is *A Strange Arrangement: New & Selected Poems* (Leaf Press, Nottingham, 2006).

DENNIS BARONE is Professor of English at St Joseph College, West Hartford, Connecticut. His most recent publications are *The Walls of Circumstance* (Avec Books, 2004), and *God's Whisper* (Spuyten Duyvil, 2005).

JAMES BELL lives in North Devon and is co-host of the monthly reading series *Uncut Poets*, in Exeter.

PETER CARPENTER lives in Kent, and is the co-director of Worple Press. His most recent collection, *Catch*, was published by Shoestring Press, Nottingham. Recent poems have appeared in *The Rialto* and *Poetry Ireland Review*, and reviews in *London Magazine* and *Use of English*.

RICHARD DEMING is a poet and critic whose poems have appeared in *Field*, *Sulfur*, *Colorado Review*, *Indiana Review*, *Mandorla*, *Kiosk*, and other magazines, as well as in the anthology *Great American Prose Poems: From Poe to the Present*, edited by David Lehman. He is the author of *Somewhere Hereabouts* (Potes and Poets Press). Currently he lectures in the English Dept at Yale University.

NICOLE DEVARENNE grew up in South Africa and the U.S.A. She wrote her PhD in South African literature at the University of York, and now teaches part-time at the University of Dundee. She is currently writing her first novel.

TAMARA FULCHER's poetry has appeared in a variety of magazines and was recently awarded the Poetry Society's Geoffrey Dearmer Prize for 2006. Shearsman Books will publish her first collection *The Recreation of Night* in 2008.

LUCY HAMILTON lives in Kent, where she teaches Chinese girls at an Ashford school. She has poems published and forthcoming in several magazines, including *Staple*, *Magma*, *Smiths Knoll*, *Scintilla* and *Agenda*, and also in the anthologies *Parents, Entering the Tapestry* (both Enitharmon) and *In the Company of Poets* (Hearing Eye).

PETER HUGHES lives in Cambridge, where he is Deputy Head of Newnham Croft School. Born in Oxford in 1956, he is also a poet, painter and translator. His *Selected Poems, Blueroads*, was published by Salt in 2003, and his next collection *Nistanimera*, will be published by Shearsman Books in late 2007.

TOSHIYA KAMEI is the translator of *The Curse of Eve and Other Stories* (Host Publications, 2007) and is an MFA student in Translation at the University of Arkansas. His translations have appeared in various literary journals, including *Burnside Review*, *International Poetry Review*, and *The Modern Review*.

MARYROSE LARKIN lives in Portland, Oregon, where she works as a freelance researcher. She is the author of *Inverse* (nine muses books, 2006), *Whimsy Daybook 2007* (FLASH+CARD), and the forthcoming *Book of Ocean* (i.e. press). Maryrose is part of Spare Room, a group of people who organize readings and other events in Portland.

SIMON MARSH is a poet and musician who has been based in Milan for many years. His publications include *Bar Magenta* (Many Press), *The Vinyl Hat Years* (Many Press/Tack) and *The Ice Glossaries* (Poetical Histories). The sequence of 'The Pistol Tree Poems' continues to unfold on the Great Works website.

CHRIS MCCABE was born in Liverpool in 1977. He has worked in several jobs since graduating from university, mostly as a side issue to writing poetry. His first collection, *The Hutton Inquiry* was published by Salt in 2005.

ERÍN MOURE is a poet and translator based in Montreal. Her most recent book of poetry, *Little Theatres*, won the A.M. Klein Prize for Poetry and was also nominated for both the 2005 Governor General's Award for English-language poetry and the 2006 Griffin Prize. Her next collection, *O Cadoiro* will be published by House of Anansi in Toronto this year.

A section of her translation of Chus Pato's *m-Talá* appeared as a chapbook in late 2003 from Nomados in Vancouver. She has also translated poetry by several French and Hispanic poets. Her complete translations of Chus Pato's *m-Talá* is currently seeking a publisher. Shearsman Books will publish the complete *Charenton* in late 2007, in collaboration with BuschekBooks of Ottawa.

KEVIN NOLAN is a poet and translator based in East Anglia. He is Director of CCCP, the Cambridge Conference on Contemporary Poetry, an annual event.

CHUS PATO (Mariá Xesús Pato) was born in Ourense, Galicia, in 1955. She teaches college History and Geography in the interior of Galicia. In her words: "writing metabolizes the world, even that world that cannot be absorbed into writing." And: "I have a predilection for those constructions which investigate the possibility of a language-thinking that refuses to repeat the already-written and lives in contact-lamination with the seams of the unsayable, of what hasn't yet been written into the corporeality of the poem." "To me, the poem is a freedom-machine." "My autobiography? It does not always seem to be mine; sometimes I would rather have other lives. Insofar as all autobiography participates in fiction, I prefer not to be forced to choose, so I opt not to have one." Her work: *Calpurnia* (Urania, Ourense, 1991), *Espiral Maior* (Heloísa, A Coruña, 1994), *Toxosoutos*, (Fascinio, Santiago de Compostela, 1995), *Nínive*, (Xerais, Vigo, 1996), *Noitarenga* (A ponte das poldras, Santiago de Compostela, 1996), *m-Talá*, (Xerais, Vigo, 2000), *Charenton* (Xerais, Vigo, 2003), and a selection translated into Spanish: *Un Ganges de palabras*, (Puerta del Mar, Málaga, 2003).

KATE SCHMITT works in the library of Middlebury College at the Bread-Loaf School of English in Vermont. She has some recent poems in the *Annual of Urdu Studies*.

AIDAN SEMMENS was co-editor of *Perfect Bound* and *Blueprint* magazines and founding editor of *Molly Bloom*. His poetry has appeared in a number of small press magazines, and online in *Jacket*, *Jack*, *Great Works* and *Stride*. His short collections from the 1970s, *reluctantly* and *The News Pages* are out of print.

TUPA SNYDER, originally from Calcutta, currently lives in Exeter where she is in the process of completing her PhD at the University. Shearsman Books will publish her first full-length collection *No Man's Land* in 2008. She also has work in the recent *Stride* anthology *The Allotment*.

NATHAN THOMPSON lives in Exeter. His poetry has appeared, or is forthcoming, in a number of magazines and webzines including *Stride* and *Great Works*. He is currently working on a first collection, tentatively entitled *Poems*. This will be a sequel to his unanimously well-received *No Poems*.

KRISZTINA TÓTH (b. 1967, Budapest) is one of Hungary's most highly acclaimed younger poets. She has won several awards and her poetry has been translated into many languages. She lives in Budapest where she also designs and produces stained-glass windows. Her work was featured in the anthology, *A Fine Line: New Poetry from Eastern and Central Europe* (eds. Boase-Beier, Buchler & Sampson, Arc, 2006). Her Hungarian publications consist of five verse collections, including *Az árnyékember*, (*The Shadow Person*, 1997) and *Porhó*, (*Powder Snow – New and Selected Poems*, 2001).

SARA URIBE was born in Querétaro, Mexico, in 1978. Her most recent collection, *Palabras más palabras menos*, won the Premio Nacional de Poesía Tijuana in 2005. She currently lives in Tampico, in the state of Tamaulipas, Mexico.

CAROLYN VAN LANGENBERG grew up in the rural hinterland of the Far North Coast of New South Wales. She lives with her husband in the Blue Mountains. A trilogy of her novels — *Blue Moon*, *Fish Lips* and *The Teetotaller's Wife* — has been published by the Australian publishing house Indra.