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*Edited by
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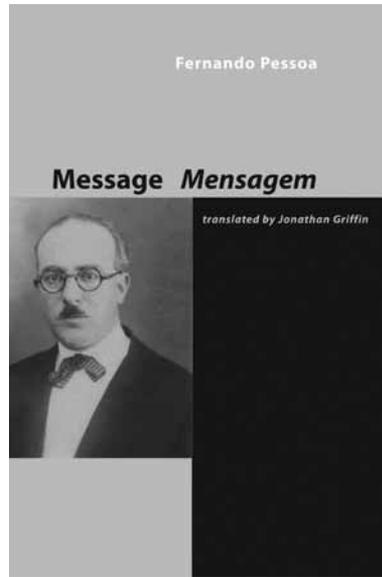
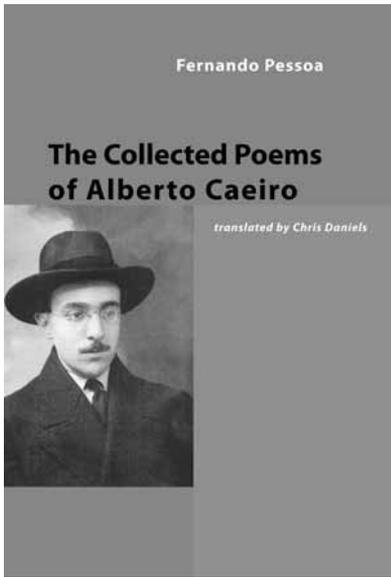


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Contents

Carrie Etter	5
Robert Saxton	10
Linda Black	15
George Messo	19
Janet Sutherland	22
Mark Goodwin	24
Luisa A. Igloria	29
Mary Michaels	32
Ralph Hawkins	34
Claire Crowther	42
David Kennedy	47
Sophie Mayer	51
Andy Brown	54
Patricia Farrell	56
Paul Batchelor	59
Rachel Lehrman	61
philip kuhn	65
Jill Magi	69
Tony Lopez	71
Susana Araújo	76
Rupert M. Loydell	78
Fergal Gaynor	82
Anna Glazova	85
<i>translated by Anna Khasin</i>	
David Huerta	89
<i>translated by Mark Schafer</i>	
Anna Hoffman	94
<i>translated by Catherine Hales</i>	
Gottfried Benn	95
<i>translated by Catherine Hales</i>	
Romina Freschi	98
<i>translated by herself</i>	
Luis de Góngora y Argote	101
<i>translated by Sir Richard Fanshawe</i>	
Biographical Notes	104
Recent & Forthcoming Publications	107

New from Shearsman Books



The Pessoa Edition

Available October 2007:

The Collected Poems of Alberto Caeiro (200pp, £12.95/\$21)

translated by Chris Daniels

Message / Mensagem (112pp, £8.95/\$15)

translated by Jonathan Griffin. Co-publication with The Menard Press

Selected English Poems (108pp, £8.95/\$15)

To be published during 2008:

The Collected Poems of Álvaro de Campos Vol. 2 (ca. 250pp, £13.95/\$22)

translated by Chris Daniels

Lisbon – What the Tourist Should See (84pp, £8.95/\$15)

Zbigniew Kotowicz: *Fernando Pessoa: Voices of a Nomadic Soul*
(with drawings by Aldous Eveleigh; co-publication with The Menard Press)

116pp, £9.95/\$17

To be published during 2009:

The Collected Poems of Álvaro de Campos Vol. 1 (ca. 250pp)

translated by Chris Daniels

Divining for Starters (43)

the discordant chatter
ends up in a skip
with the stained and frayed
sofa cushions and the
grandmother-embroidered
grotesquerie of holiday
characters gathered
from their days for one
menacing portrait,
one person's kitsch
another's vision of
provincial life

but mentally placing
others' disheartening small talk
among the rubbish
solaces little, and
the enormities crowd
forward like the dead
drawn to Odysseus's
warm, red blood

most days the sense
of personal volition

enervated by the images
that should not fall
into categories, the
armless orphan, the
friendly fire, the
bombing that struck
another fifty-six dead

most days veering
from chatter to paper
one more time even as
the movement feels
increasingly exhaustible

most days in the skip
rotating a broken object
to new angles in the hope
of discerning use, any
kind of use, any
scrap from which

Walk, Don't Lie Down

Unlike the long, the tall compare one another easily.
To gravity we surrender our litter and our grief.

Around the corner of a block, possibilities muster
like Cherokee high on a ridge, ready for action.

Horizons weakly advise a vertical species,
surprised to step onto the world's oldest tortoise.

Pedagogues, flyfishermen, waiters, pedestrians,
we all have our double star of feeling,

seldom seen but always immune from siege
within our ambit – the mouth and the shoes . . .

★

. . . whose ferrymen are the hands, ferreting softly,
unaroused by circuits of the cancelling self,

siblings who prefer not to touch, though they will
in extremes or briefly to encourage the others

gesturing to a rosebowl of ears and eyes.
They have two distinct approaches to gloves,

both active – to escape or to animate.
While the live parts learn to fumble, get lost

or stuck, sag, miss notes while offering deepest love
from its narrowest place, flake showers of skin

like snow, the dead parts, like trees, still grow.

The slope of a hill

—what is the appeal
of leaning? Trees, houses, people, all leaning
in the same direction, as though
the world were tilted, walls thin
as tissue, a figure
so fragile it will topple
at the merest breath . . . *tulips*
float by leafless
uprooted . . . feet
together every few yards measured
it seems by the placing of the gate posts
she jumps – terraces – church, spire,
village hall –
skewed, propped one
against the other . . . *sideways . . . ballet legs*
sinuous stretched
to their limits resisting
the pull
earthward – faces, the faces
of women
are featureless, hidden
by hand, hair, the wing
of a passing bird . . . *downhill eyes*
down York stone on London clay a certain
conviction the appearance
of an unknown room . . . *steadfastly*
on a compulsion
. . . *replica clouds torn patches of chintz roses roses gloves*
for thin fingers a craving
for the taste of salt . . . *speechless*
she refuses
to fly on the other side
of plasterboard, voices
debate, prefabricate . . . *it is time*
to go
. . . *she slips could slip*
may well

... water
will not hold her comes up
everywhere

running
behind her back seeping
the length of a city

—pincers'
finger and thumb
a forefinger's
calf and thigh

—erasure ... she hears kind of
doesn't
stop
to listen
she can't
be bothered her legs
do not part her legs
are stuck together she is always

like this she lives
like this her hand
constantly
over her mouth her mouth
constantly
open ...

earnest voices ... this is the way

you hold
your head
hold
your head

the slant

of a ladder ...

fable

a monochrome land.

was snow

and there were pines:

infant, dwarfed.

horizons,

you could almost touch

but never reach.

sky

was black or grey

but never white.

a memory

of what we did

and were.

Janet Sutherland

Lost hearts

“the front room floor is beyond anything – decayed cement, rotten boards”

I got a strange feeling after I spoken to you
these broken voices
Were you at home? / Do you remember?
how can we touch
It smells of some light spice / Gone adrift
now that the room
a little ruby / It occurs to me
is empty

Lost Voices

“the beans were clean in their soft wool, and delicious”

I thought of you this morning
lines on paper
just a note to let you know
put down casually
the surgeon put my name on his list
you who are lost
the phone might be out for longer than we hoped
fold time
your big dictionary solved the last clue
you who are silent
I'll give you a ring nr the weekend
speak
by keeping busy we are able to cope

Mark Goodwin

Torridon Peopled

scree's broken words grate & clatter our boots punctuate travel the slip of stone over stone of frozen spears doors bullets of ground ice feathers tangling

white strands on philosophies of cold a foothold of silvery solid worth warm gold the sun plates slabs with frail light under ice-skin over glacia water wriggles

black gurgles downwards like tadpoles under cellophane east wind twists Siberian thoughts into our skin our fingers tinder set alight with ice whilst indoors invades

our centres with its distant mass as all this Highland vast wraps us with open our day is a gap of light cracked in winter's stone night we rush through we turn from hard iced

rocks & blade air we descend to the valley's waiting hollow shapes frozen moss & yellowed grasses cup our steps with soft crunches as the light drinks it self dry & dim

a crowd of birch saplings knee & waist high are a people we walk amongst I touch their twig-ends so the slender map lines they make vibrate like memories on fire but

Dark Bird with Corner

a rim of a ravine draped with moss
& heather a chough? a dark clotted

part of air her *crock-crock* a beauty
full breaking of sleek sky

-flesh into jagged elsewheres a writhe
of a burn's rubbing rock greased

with sea-bottom greens primeval
evidence water as melted mind ever

falling brain-white thoughts of clouds
running electrically across ground

and down crags a chough's finger
-feathers flutter like a pianist's strangest

dream white water fall-lines with
auroras of hiss-mist behind tangled

birch trunks & leafless branches inky
-slick claws black grappling hooks

sure of nothing a moor running from
a chasm's lips into distance a sudden

drop abhorrent to a ground's khaki
uniform of tussocky bog openness routed

by intricate enclosure a ravine a corner
of a world funnelling reverie at a

back of a vast stage An Teallach a mass
of ground's applause & roar solidified

she rolls her *crook-crook* reply to my are
you a chough? parcels her slippery

blue black twirls downside up flight
moment hangs shiny soot hands of air

a sequin eye inspects our bright
Gore-Tex-wrapped shapes her dark sharp

in our eyes unfathomable gladness a vole
trickles over snow swift as sorrow some

very small glass & metal room of our car
parked below is dead to dreaming move

meant a feathered throat & beak scrapes
the in visible corner a

cross close sky

Zy Skennor

trans lucent purr ple pink guernsey cows graze
lit silver grass Zennor sky smashed to peace

on mead ow! at forty thousand feet a corn
ish coast etched in steam moments merm aid

scale wisps ers soft granite out crops ancest or
ash tree living in through round a ruined cott age

of sky's gold oranges & silver streamers a sky's
insides inside a gurnard's guts a vast pub of

coloured gusts & mist musicians jamming cumuli
-guitars-sirus-chords-voices-accordion-anvils buttery

sky-milk dribbles twilight mines plum met deep
through heavens' rippling ringing tin song gone

Notes: Torrison is a village, a loch and a range of mountains in Wester Ross. *Torrison* is Gaelic for Place of Transference. *An Teallach* is a mountain in Wester Ross, its name means The Forge.

Meridian

Not the palm tree on left, nor the puddle
of shadow under the mail truck with its
insignia of wings. Not the tri-

colored tips of the bird-of-paradise plant
or the bougainvillea vines next to the fence,
nor even the adobe walls in signature

flamingo. What remains is this light,
delivering its first and only letter—
who lives here is no longer

here, who once struck blind
the ivory keys behind a curtain—
practicing, practicing—

one day felt the dead
weight of the familiar.
This is what it really means

when they say that sometimes,
a kind of halo encircles the ordinary:
the seal around windows can, after all,

be broken. Heat rises above
the town and its landmarks, dispersing
over a wilderness of directions.

Mary Michaels

Fly

Her painting of the garden, as it used to be

yellow and purple irises, a red gladiolus, lots of red roses
and brown shadows like animals rushing towards the pond

a man is standing near the corner in the park with bread in his hand
complaining that there are no birds to be seen

the rim of the letterbox curtained with spiders' webs

the grey torn net – pull across the window-pane – car exhaust blackens it

mauve buddleia spikes, pink hydrangea heads, white roses
orange and maroon gladioli and a tendril of ivy like a leafy snake

when it was hers

★

Pale underbelly of the robin, cormorant's white throat
song of robin – cormorant diving –

not being able to find the memorial stone
although it was the month of both parent's birthdays, looking
over and over, crossing paths, recrossing, with the red-haired woman
who comes down on the train and takes the bus back

she walks about alone, with binoculars and quickly

the trees turning the colour of her hair – just slightly red, light red
light red, yellow-green – the sky clumping them up
with sunshine and shade

finding it finally

★

Black crows along the beach

somebody picking up seaweed and putting it in a plastic bag
turnstones that look like white-flecked pebbles

three birdwatchers, all green Gore-Tex, tripods and binoculars
stride off across the shingle past the notice that says
ROOSTING AREA – PLEASE KEEP AWAY AT HIGH TIDE
water coming up, up, up

bending to their tripods, in a line, like a row of early photographers
heads under the hoods of their cameras

it is high tide

★

Crow sitting on a dark branch
and all the long grass of the rain-soaked park
deep green and the trees
their leaves being lifted off with a fluttering

a woman on the tarmac path lying down
with her keys a little distant
her fall, not seen

out of the hole in the black bottle-bank
a wasp rises like a wisp of smoke
the bottles dropping still sticky with wine

a slow fly on the curtain, cleaning its legs

from the potter's display in the market, a bluebottle zigzagged

the tall, pale, oval-faced woman in her brocades and wimple-like veil
looking down on the wares and the vendor

the fly runs up the window-pane.

Some Questions Concerning Civilization

the bastard sons were dropped from sky drums
nourished by nitrates
hardened by the life of the forest
and when the moisture from their breath dispersed upon the earth
a fiery substance went up into the air
producing thunder bangs and lightening swords,
forks to stab endless victims, these are they
that became the war-like clans of our earth endlessly migrating
hunting hunters in caves
shepherds in tents
and farmers the first to build proper huts

* * *

geometric compositions typify interiors
the door seeps a dribble of natural light
dogs are copulating to form a pyramid

naturally as she is having
an affair with another inhabitant of another hut

outside the birds sing in the evening rain
if only we could understand the song

* * *

motifs like a river run through
1611 Gabriel Rollenhagen's *Book of Emblems*
the use of the window for procurement and seduction –
to drink a love potion opens a window
causing the natural essences of life to surge
foolish love I feel like a lemon
a third party
Perch'io stresso mi strusi

the clients only moderately drunk, only moderately vulgar
it's the picture of an idea of society
husbands, marriage, clothes, wealth, comfort, vice
the rug from an original city
river valley market
the Volvo and the drink going to my head
Frans van Meris *The Soldier and The Prostitute*

* * *

Was Heidegger a Buddhist
 did he copulate in the woods (*Holzwege*)
with a maiden of the woods
[do you remember her subsequent children and the
accompanying illustration]
 there to contemplate being and perhaps a mushroom
do you remember the Woods
could I be a Buddhist?
I'd call you (you need mountains to yodel) my nymph of the woods
Did Heidegger suffer from nympholepsy
or was he too concerned with hammers and nails and wood for his
 wooden hut
Did he have a brain room in his hut
Did he have rat poison
I must get back to you
I must return by the ship of the mind
Chemins qui mènent nulle part
(ways that lead nowhere) leading me on letting me go
if I yodel across mountain thyme
would you answer (those tracks which wind purposely from one point
 to the next
the odd goat and goat herder looking on, the odd whistle from the
 wolf, Mrs Woods
calling the sheep in)
we could retrace our steps through the woods which led nowhere
I could cook for you (wild mushrooms)
You could introduce your children and your husband
the woodcutter (are there trees in the Himalayan foothills)

Up in the mountains the Cave-Dwellers hoard cinnamon sticks
in order to add flavour to Pygmy Stew
EVEN DWARFS STARTED SMALL
anything that breathes shouldn't be eaten
I'm beginning to wonder about Natural History
The President's dog has fleas (did I mean Pygmy Shrew)
The President has a Pygmy Shrew
Did Alexander Pope have a sex life
Noddy had big ears

He wanted her
but she was married
she made arrangements, assignations
seeing him at night
briefly, quickly
he mobbed her gently (text defective)

it was as dark as hell (said Constantine at Aptera)
one room for Demeter and one for Persephone

and of course they used iron to make bullets*
and bubble gum to keep the toilet seat up

she was such a beauty
that I kept her hidden
for years
my secret

*Hesiod attributes the forging of iron to Crete,
to the Dactyli of Mt Ida

bubble gum was my solution

St Anne's Apocrypha

i Joachim Emeritus

Here's what Joachim wanted
her to find: a bent black gas tap, unused
for years, on a ledge beside the door. An old plastic watering can,
nozzle arched and long as the stem of a flower. No plants.

A twenty-one inch screen presenting
a document titled *The Wrong Sort of Electricity*.
The frayed lip of a grey wool-covered seat.
Two mugs, rimed with coffee in one long lip round each brim.

One decorated with a sketch of Einstein.
Awards laid, stacked or propped in frames.
A blackboard: pairs of rectangles, a set of five points,
The World Watching underlined, a heading OLD TABLE,

crossings out, drips of chalk.
A keyboard alone on a shelf. One
white box with four black lids stored inside.
A grey safari jacket hanging on the door. One window blinded,
the other open to a view of roof tops.
The phone slipping off the end of the desk, its wire dangling
into a half-open drawer. Lever Arch files labelled
Strain Balance.

ii St Anne's Hard Hat

Maria put down her Dyson in the doorway. 'Enough
of this. You'll sack me if you get pregnant and by the way
you're only fifty-three. Here, put this on, it's cool.'
The scarf she handed her employer spread, a cloth

of morning glory; blackberry bramble. It covered the long garden where Ornamental Crab, John Downie, fruited

red, yellow, along the post. Green dust had coated her since morning. 'And put this on.' The new hard hat.

Anne strimmed along the chine. Finger bones of root shook free from soil. 'Inside, I feel twenty

but what can I look at and not feel barren?
Even these bitter apples have come to good.'

A surface differs from its interior physics. Her broken nails glittered under grey leaves of wave.

iii Joachim's Escape

The Astroturf was powdered with the trainer dust of physicists who measure, under the Jura,

the half-life of elementary particles. 'Come on, Dark Matter.' Joachim, their captain, used his head –

thick. 'Where are you, Exiles?' Thirty years since cold chambers of liquid hydrogen warmed up

yet on came the Bubble Chamber teams, red-shirted Kaons and Pions, still chasing protons

the millisecond before it boiled, smacking electrons into negative action, recording the infinitesimal lives of goals.

iv Honeymoon Outside the Golden Gate

The language was immaculate.

Joachim chatted to the driver: 'Béarnais was a village then, the prettiest. I would cycle right into Cern.'

White horses, like tall sheep, raced in their hundreds.
A plane hung on its vertical vapour trail above a chateau
with four square turrets and many ruined barns.
It was a revisitation in old age
of what had become angels, clouds of cherubim heads

v St Anne's Epigraph

while the sun instilled the night
in their window,
black glass
from a radiant, dangerous furnace,

and geese raced left to right like words,
each bird whirring
in its letter,
rewriting a written sentence:

Come back, day, un
broken.
Come
back day, unbroken.

vi Mary's Bargain

Mary, in Anne's spare room, huddled
under a hand-embroidered throw found
in a sale, crumpled beyond its physiology.

It cost pence due to the odd maths
of reduction – Fifty Percent! of the sale price,
which was Fifty Percent!! of the first Price Cut

plus An Extra Ten Percent Today!!!
She owned not one thing Anne would call exquisite.
She even calls her body art, casual stable keeper.

La Spagna

I

Musica ficta,
adding accidentals,
 pauses awash

with green noise,

tree static foaming
in leaf shoals
 mocking the dry stream.

The laptop drizzles
one passamezzo
 after another,

tones of equal measure,

over the dry stream,
'some parts upon a ground',
 where stones in stones are drowned.

II

Musica vera,
crossing the stream, trudging
 round noon's turrets,

all I see

here is being here,
purged with heat,
 up by the old gate.

Covenants of space
pull me through alleys,
 up steep cobbled paths,

first one step then a half,
above the old gate,
to audits made in stone
of settlement's full tones.

'La Spagna': dance tune for the lute, popular in the 16th century. *Musica ficta* (lit. 'feigned music') is music in which the performer introduces sharps and flats – often unnotated – to avoid unacceptable intervals. *Musica vera* (lit. 'true music') refers to passages which involve no such alterations.

Unstoppable Languages

Unstoppable languages
took their energies

down the bypass
and out of the valley,

says the empty café by the bridge,
hanging over the Allier;

their way of having their way,
say the ruins marked 'à vendre'.

The cadastre, parcelling land
you either can't find or can't get to,

is a map of the commune
only its ghosts could follow.

What got bounced out of the cart
was people repeating

the same actions in the same place.

What got left in the road

were explanations coming to an end

in romances of the castle

overlooking hanging gardens

where we see only matted *gradins*.

It's about as likely

these woolly, windblown ledges

were where the serpent

the centurion saint's killing in the church

would curl round the rock

and sleep off midday.

Yes, explanations come to an end somewhere,

and if weeds are flowers

in the wrong place then ruins

are houses in the wrong time,

something that strangely pleases

and upsets me every morning.

Carbon Dating

after Michael Winterbottom's '9 Songs'

1.

Nothing much remains.
Carbon, trace of her

burn in me, is all. Exhale once,
twice, again, and it is gone

almost, hanging before my
furred mouth, a cloud

in which I see our residue,
entwining.

2.

Rock. Star. Elements
in any form, coming

together. Small talk like
radiation, reaction, the fight

against gravity. Her fingers
are glowsticks, their length

tastes of sweat, smoke, iron:
heavy metals.

3.

And in her, a universe and
an age. Why range only in

space? Whorled. Mine, she is,
and striated, so I trace her

history, bury myself in her –
take the tarnish off these

phrases in our translucent
newness.

Lunar Notations

Change is the reason my kids and I sleep.
Then we're satellites to no one, dreaming
our lives as elsewhere – ourselves as fiction –
as we dissolve into the schemes of others
running towards the horizon to jump,
to save ourselves from daytime's common chances.

But, gradually, our bones have come to tell us
of longings deep within – a hummingbird
inside the flower; the figures in a showcase
in a museum we dream wakes up at night –
leaving us, wondering, how all of this began,
and where it might be leading: Spring's revenants;
the nudes of summer; autumn's bellowing posture;
across the blade of winter's keening knife?

A Picture Story

I.

Not all things start or end with an idea:
things happen like a montage in a film

for so long, then one day we wake to find
our thoughts are up and out before us:

out there on the road between the trees
at the edge of the lake; out there in the world –

the ceaseless flow beyond our windowpanes
that shapes us to its needs – the complex drift

of grasses in the rides, the river's spine,
the crimson thrill of dogwood in the snow,

the wild-ness that emerges at the edge
of what we know or what we think we know . . .

II.

We only know these few things: this unplanned
appointment called 'a life'; the earth inside

the marrow of our bones; this prize beyond
our habits and beliefs; the fading ink

in the footnotes to our daydreams. For what
we seek in change is all the proof we need,

discovered where we least suspect to find it,
as we continue on our journey to and from

being. We're only guests, just passing through
and always come back here before the end,

along the forest path that brings us back
inside these bricks built round the central hearth:

III.

this common space beyond our small conception
where we are called to things and rooted in

witness: the scent of dust on radiators,
woodworms leaving flight holes in the dresser,

a deathwatch beetle knocking in the beam –
the threads that knit our dreams together,

making room for hope and trust and change;
these last stones in the walls of memory.

Climbing

climbing on shoulders to view the street
the same now
retreating
but different then
hoisting him by his middle
watching beyond the waving hand
until after little years he slumps
then rises manifold
turned to the rejoicing
hiding something sweet behind himself
watching
crawling up the sides of his container
all joining hands
turning his way and that way
he sits so straight when the eye is upon him
falling backwards into his own arms
leading forwards and out

let us draw him in and put our hands together
swallow him on inspiration
hold our breath
and turn to face the eye in flight
we can look up at it and smile
look down
and inscribe his features on a piece of paper
grip the surface
and draw him with the wrong hand
then he will stare into space
and try to remember his next move
turn and we can rejoice in his memory

repeat it
an image of home

buttoned into our bodies
counting our hands and feet
we drift forwards
each other checking
for attempts to interlace our fingers
meeting ourselves
as we come the other way
and stop a moment
stop to watch the raising hand
stop to look away

bearing down on the back of his head
nothing changes after big years
we are still as small as we ever were
pulling at the lines on the blank surface
or as big but blinder
to the middle distance
passing the space from hand to hand
he has found a vantage point
leg raised to climb the next step up
nothing will stop us looking
wrapping ourselves around ourselves
and swinging forward and beyond
the same now
but arranged on different levels
bringing each other home
leading each other into the distance
a series of still moving bodies
along the street
looking over his shoulder

The Honest Dreamer

Drunk, I lie face-
down on the grass

to watch the moon
with the nape of my neck

as you'd watch a girl move
through a crowded room

for so
long that when you try to say hello

you find your tongue
has lost its cunning

like the peeping tom who broke
a tell-tale rose's back

or the lock
that swallowed its key

or the riverbed stone
(smooth as the nape of your neck)

that men in drink say fell
in love with the moon.

Virga

Alone on the front porch.
Voices from a late night game in the park.
The northwest sky scintillates and the east.

So well the body remembers
what the mind forgot.
If I could climb inside my thigh,
I'd find you, perched and quivering on the edge of the bed
the feline cut of your hair blending with mine.

Twice now, the storm began
on either side of my house,
wide-angled and moving away.

It's so easy, in this dry space.
What I know, everyone knows—
but when I tell it to you, it's strange.

Every night the storm continues.
Every night an attempt
at something new.

How do I explain:
when it's too comfortable,
I never loved you.

Michelangelo said:
A block of marble
holds within itself
designs more beautiful
than the artist conceives.

My body
like marble, would mold to what you see.

Lit windows. Birds
screaming from their nests.

Suddenly, on my knees,
I sweep the ground
in a gesture
where long ago
you did not exist.

Note: *Virga* (noun): Streaks or wisps of precipitation that evaporate before reaching the ground.

Prayer-Carving

How much can you hold
before the— *oh so sweet it burns?*

Cold tea. A tilted chair.
My pointing finger against your pointed chin.

If all we spoke were flowers—
a peony instead of a tear.

There is no broken.
I came. I opened.
I danced golden leapfrog
into a shower of leaves.
I held my palms outward like prayer.

You leaned in from behind, warm shadow
breath disguised.

Lost islands on the sea floor
come to me.

from At Maimonides' Table

1. But if we explain these parables to him or if we draw his attention to their being parables, he will take the right road and be delivered from this perplexity.

imploded

warriors

stroma

as hillel the elder

watched a skull

float upon the face of the water

sewers opened

flow of raw art

vessels

cracked banks

rats crawled ashore

implex of reason

sprung from eagle of córdoba s

stain enlightened sky

scourge of tongue

broken star

gravelled words

refracted light

as

sacred scrolls

cradled mountains cities & oceans

it were as if a dance

of two companies

cratered monochrome image over hebron

lugworm
leucoma
lenticular lesion

for the sound that lies in rhythms speech

last man orders from ship-soiled sailors arrived on shore

blood from the book
&
blood from the tongue

fent figments of flesh
erased their wounds
as angels of death dipped
reed-quiivered fingers
into metallic alphabets
 & gouged gods writ in
grift appointed universe

listen at the wandering ear
 far greater than maimonides eye

shimon bar kokhbah
 stepped out of jacob s covetous *stall*
man
 of destiny
 anointed
your glory
 lies
 beneath
white wippen waters star-studied earth

 as the angel of history
 skims
the deceitful brook
 the river that failed

2. *The Sage accordingly said that a saying uttered with a view to two meanings is like an apple of gold overlaid with silver filigree-work having very small holes.*

broke this this spell
 this *conatus* of desire dissolved

 this brocard pretension
 of *brocatelle* dream

this god of love
 is
 not
 this
 god of love

 but another love
 like *this* love
 from love
 over-flows

so
 abide not in love

 but *be* in love

 not this love of singular reason
with its
 multiplicities of shapes
 figures
 & identities of shadow

 nor this love
 lost in
 ironic gaps of reason
with cunning intellects
 of resplendent logic
 denied

so
be not that self
nor that other self
wrapped in loves attributes
with its parables
sheathed
in orichalceous mountains of gold

or *that* other self
as pale as silver tried in a crucible seven times

or that self
that spins webs through inextricable distances of time
with love fashioned from in-dwellings of love abandoned
or
that self
inflected through an interstitial difference of sound
with its lustres of grace
trapped between the visible and indivisible
the sheaf of a tongue the pearl of a *tear*

note

These are the first two sections of *in the fields of megiddo*, book one of *at maimonides table*. This long textured poem, which takes as its starting point Shlomo Pines' translation of Maimonides' *The Guide of the Perplexed* (University of Chicago Press, 1963), suggests a series of meditations on some central themes in Jewish history—exile, persecution, diaspora, memorialisation, & the messianic impulse—read through the Babylonian *Talmud* and *Tanakh* (the Old Testament). The “eagle of córdoba” is a reference to Maimonides; “the deceitful brook”, “scourge of tongue” & “broken star” are linguistic & rabbinical-biblical references to Shimon bar Kokhbah's “messianic” uprising, brutally crushed by the Romans at Bethar in 135 CE (AD).

Jill Magi

ATLAS

skeleton at the edge of the village presides over
valley here is the female pelvis
again more open than some
skin pulled or still attached drawn
for contrast

skeleton rests his hand on a skull placed on the laboratory table
implements of science the dead study the dead some
more open than and well-lit

LOT

mounted
alone statue-look look away and horizon

cast caste clay claw

state of paralysis a memorial just so
or liberty ultimate limb limb
limb to hold a sword or trigger flag
survey and
anthem

a posture

Closed-Circuit Televisions

If he touched my hand again
the breasted skin by the knuckles
would exhale back the grains
and black birds would come
to reclaim the tenses
I mixed up with a fork
like the first rice

I know that scissors of steel
cut through and across the skies
seam stresses of
pitiless paper dolls
multiplied into thousands
of siamese trabeculae, lost
souls of past perfect sand
nothing other in my hands

In the shores of banality and bad dreams
travelling with the shape of things, surface
along with millions attached to their chains
from lakes of desked death in foreign telephone centres
speaking English in tongues too far, fast and late
while we sleep, while respect is a fifty pound fine
to dress up the father, the mother and the food
while the foam of holy health will rule
edify and tell apart

So if they divide green heart and lungs
already apart
I will breathe again and against will
breath is an empty hand
which will not feed but will call back the blind
Cormorants nesting on close circuit
televisions in Ovingdean.

Rupert M. Loydell

from The Uncertain Future

Mournful Delay

reclamation & reconstruction subsiding into night
revels in abundance amplified morning light
neurotransmitter chemicals muttering paranoid threats
most likely sued for libel no friends no girls no pets

airways over the city not a flying man
the world has little room for him or new adventure games
flat mundane description collaboration has begun
work leads to mutation authorship transformed

indulgent & expensive black holes on the stage
garish neon lettering photos on the page
the media our salvation nothing hard & fast
investigate the process separate sheep & goats

can sound put things together? what is going on?
confused on several levels translate all the poems
early literary history got drunk never looked back
things found in a junkyard lines from other books

Not The Original Ending

disorder threatens order kind of presupposed
all is true not interesting however much we know
blend of corruption & promise attention to design
cosmetic counter specific intelligent disdain

depart as quietly as possible ever so eager to learn
fabricated in the basement disappointed man
gratuitous foreign diction happiness out of town
in situations of extreme stress he lights out on his own

textual experiment & shock the idea of poetic sign
being locked in is unthinkable too many words around
mind can move & loop & stretch city's liquid form
mystification got away it's now a darker world

underdogs in the catastrophe zone angels sometimes win
universities that encode formalised extremes
versions of the story inherited status & power
we need less institutions more reasons to write home

Open Studio

cold brilliance & glittering eyes humanity uncertain
space between silence & silence a stumbling block to all
underlining lots of phrases too polite & too restrained
reading other people's work much more could be said

strong words in a wooden box mostly apt & true
considering relocation give me a year or two
hibernation or chronic doldrums frightening at the time
good to have a next-door-nurse this how I am

enviably large studio space known through photographs
some engaging encounters people wandering in
avoiding overdrafts for a year walking to restaurants
biting & snapping at the world not too ob-scure or -tuse

not sure what the portrait was nail the lid down hard
vision blocking tractors heavenly choir behind
designed to push the boat out sentences acute
the first one was an interim this one is the last

Catherine Hales

in the name of

& when faith seems so much like a failure
to live & the procession moves on to finish
fireworks of course & the damage left

sticks & stones may break my remember
but words can never places we'd put up with
the mind's collateral taken together alone

in a yurt somewhere savouring how sand
scours at the subtle lies we live by bones
aren't even the half of it on the march

narratives

out of terracotta hills free-
wheeling down to dry valleys even

roads villages where facades conceal centuries
of untold bruising the normal rigmarole

we're too preoccupied to notice whizzing through
sniffing the earthiness up ahead the darkening

a sprung gust upsets our equilibrium
but not for long here's a rustic taverna chianti

& pasta & postcards sitting it out while the storm
fractures a perfect day until we can carry on

from Stepping Poems

IV

Dry commotion
a cast of bones

★

what?
would you burn
shadows?

★

evening lights the fires
so under the northern star
sign of endurance
the inner life opens
the characters line up

★

you
the first time
by a wrought-iron gate
among laurels
among yews

★

echoes
the afterlife

★

on the water's surface
sunstrikes
gathering
NOW

Six Poems

lamplight falls into no hand.
in the book a face cools
shaved off by a hair
as a second
shaves a zero off the time.

in this book one cannot but read
not of someone's path around the lamp.
no lamp nor the sun but an eye
revolves there.
it reads with its hands
the tracks which the light leaves behind.

* * *

cut the pages then glued them back together,
never disturbing a line.
ate a cigarette end not his own,
spit thrice into open doors.
took leave.
said this but then turned back,
never said it but asked to pass it on: that's all right,
thought it would be like new.

in the dark you're the same.
remember the gray sky, extinguished thread, and
i shivered as i waited.
forgot, drank water, table stained: somebody been smoking.
wrought hair from the bulb with no light,
on the pillow, to scrape the cheek with.

dim; were sitting. i think so, yes.
caught another's leg on the edge,
are you joking? "for the night is thick."
listen, all right, lie, lie, but at least with feeling:
words got soaked, couldn't speak.
covered a dry wine stain –
ashamed, that's what you are, or maybe afraid.

i still have batwing shadows about my head,
that's after that flight, been spinning, head swimming.
let's take the fire exit? no, you say
no, no, no, i can't. you be the one to live.
me, i'm kind of not here. dust.

go shake it out, though not into a bag,
i'll sit here for a while. anyway you can't see in this dark
how last night they burnt stumps.
cream at the cut, cremation,
as they sipped, no, snipped the dairy plums.

never-ending game

his outward form in the iris
height girth & colour of hair
skin & eyes
a green like deep in the forest
sparkling more than the canals of suzhou
fingers like summer storms
& filing all this into memory
trying out everything taking everything
like tobacco & coffee with milk
& his tongue beating in agreement
double double
using every centimetre
for the great music of our bodies

then abandoned
then cornered by daylight
then lobbing names into the dark
then parcels arriving news
ransom – the complete folksy bit –
nothing helps
opening her veins to lethe she flows
with warm litres
now her eyes peeling her eyes
leaking away from his memory
images that no longer mirror or hold
anything i.e. from his brain
& hers removing final doubts
(cries)
carefully paring muscles from bone
eradicating bumps & dips
carving her body into 1000
now inhibitions disappear
under the knife pieces of heart
into a little red box

from Solaris

Suddenly I respect the ancestors
quiet soul that wakes up
wants to end up with the minimal
bundle of loose ends that shine
only by its extremes, optical fiber
this universe appears as minimum stars
in their travel across time
it all dazes and goes dark
and planetarium recycles its functions
a bundle of functions the functionaries
the waffle and rennet of their river lectures
and a gladdened beach
only by lust for being happy
where do loose ends end up?
how do they let out, put together the lane
or where does it start, oldness of time
and loose ends never end
we wish to silence that try
or leave the wire naked,
but, is there music in that wire?
do we find love in discontinuity?
voices in my head scream
with conviction and noise
is a mirror in the pavement
there's no pose or potion
it all softens
diminishes
occupies
sadness does follow its line of immensity
disappears
gives up fear to happiness
senses the asthma of the abyss
as a love asthma
it cannot be diluted
brain burns

the humor of the dark
settles the soul

not even weeds in the ocean, oh yes, the disaster
nuptials that twinkle, sway, unthread
what comes out of, what becomes extra
wakens over the pledge
and wheat bread:
the offering
the marital state
some of the incense love
all that is sensed is intense
a mouthful of asthma
gladness with a loud crash
I get dizzy
some of the conscription chases me
to be born later or to be born too much
it all anchors to me absurd in the past
a layer sustains me
there's a huge centre of this summer
a sea in the centre of the earth
a stone far over
isosceles
buzzes the wine, white, mantle
rummages around like a wave, a breathe
burn from the centre of stomach
moss skin
extra demential this terrible territory
snow field

Notes on contributors

SUSANA ARAÚJO is originally from Lisbon, but now lives in Brighton and teaches in the Dept. of American Literature at the University of Sussex.

PAUL BATCHELOR lives in Northumberland, and is working on a PhD on the poetry of Barry MacSweeney at Newcastle University. His first collection will appear shortly from Bloodaxe. A chapbook, *To Photograph a Snow Crystal*, appeared from Smith/Doorstop in 2006.

GOTTFRIED BENN (1886-1956) was one of the most significant German poets of the first half of the 20th century. The poems translated here are all drawn from his early expressionist work published before and during World War One.

LINDA BLACK is an artist and poet who lives in London. She won the 2006 New Writing Ventures Poetry Award, and has a pamphlet titled *the beating of wings* (Hearing Eye, London, 2006).

ANDY BROWN lives in Exeter and teaches Creative Writing at the University of Exeter. His latest collection is *Fall of the Rebel Angels, Poems 1996-2006* (Salt Publishing, 2006). A collaborative volume with John Burnside is also due.

CLAIRE CROWTHER is working on a long poem project 'Link' for a PhD at Kingston University. The poem explores the conflicts between the cultural expectations and real lives of twentieth-century grandmothers, and the work published here is drawn from it, as was the text published in issue 67/68. Shearsman Books published her first collection, *Stretch of Closures*, in 2007.

CARRIE ETTER's poems in this issue come from a manuscript in progress, *Divining for Starters*. She lives in Bradford-on-Avon and enjoys blogging at carrietter.blogspot.com.

SIR RICHARD FANSHAWE (1608-1666) was an archetypal Renaissance man. Fluent in several languages, he served at the English Embassy in Madrid in the 1630s, and was Ambassador to Portugal, and then Spain, under Charles II whose marriage to Catherine of Braganza he also negotiated. He was a fine poet in his own right, but is best remembered for his remarkable translation of *The Lusíads* by Camões, undertaken while he was under house arrest during the Cromwellian interregnum. The only modern edition of his work is the *The Poems and Translations of Sir Richard Fanshawe* (2 vols., ed. P. Davidson, OUP, 1997). His translations of Góngora, Hurtado de Mendoza and the Argensola brothers will appear in the anthology *Spanish Poetry of the Golden Age, in contemporary English translations*, due from Shearsman in February 2008.

PATRICIA FARRELL is a poet, dancer and artist, based in Liverpool.

ROMINA FRESCHI was born in Buenos Aires in 1974, where she still lives. She teaches at the University of Buenos Aires and has published four collections, most recently *Villa Ventana* and *El-Pe-yO* (both 2003). She edits the review

Plebella (www.plebella.com.ar).

FERGAL GAYNOR lives in Cork, Ireland. A collection of his work will appear shortly in the U.S.A. from Miami University Press, Ohio.

ANNA GLAZOVA is a Russian poet, born in Dubna in 1973, and is currently working on a doctorate on Celan's translations of Mandelstam. She studied architecture at the Moscow Architectural Institute and the Technische Universität Berlin, and took her MA at the University of Illinois at Chicago, before moving to Northwestern University for her PhD. Her first poetry collection, *Pust' i Voda*, was published in Moscow in 2003.

LUIS DE GÓNGORA Y ARGOTE (1561-1627) was born in Córdoba and was one of the most significant poets of Spain's *siglo de oro*, or Golden Age. Creator of an inimitable baroque style, his work fell out of fashion after his death, but was reappraised by Spain's *Generation of '27* in the 20th Century; he is now regarded as one of the very greatest of Spanish poets.

MARK GOODWIN works as a community poet in Leicestershire. He has published in a wide range of magazines, and his first full-length collection, *Else*, will be published by Shearsman in 2008.

CATHERINE HALES grew up in Surrey and, after various stops and jobs, now lives and works in Berlin as a freelance translator. Her poems and translations have appeared in several magazines, in print and online.

RALPH HAWKINS lives in Essex. His last collection *The MOON, The Chief Hairdresser (highlights)* was published by Shearsman Books in 2004. His next book will be published by Shearsman in 2008.

ANNA HOFFMANN was born on the island of Rügen, Germany, in 1971 and now lives with her partner and son in Berlin. Her collections include *Pandoras Box* (Parasitenpresse 2004) and *Rote Magie* ('Red Magic', Corvinus Presse 2007).

DAVID HUERTA is a poet, journalist, critic and translator. He was born in Mexico City in 1949, the son of a fine mid-century poet, Efraín Huerta. His first book appeared in 1972, and he has published regularly ever since. In 2006 he was awarded the prestigious Xavier Villaurrutia Prize. The translations here will appear in a book from Copper Canyon Press in the USA in 2008.

LUISA A. IGLORIA is an Associate Professor at Old Dominion University, Norfolk, VA. Originally from Baguio City in the Philippines, Luisa is an eleven-time recipient of the Carlos Palanca Memorial Award for Literature in three genres (poetry, non-fiction, and short fiction) – the Philippines' highest literary distinction. She has published nine books including *In the Garden of the Three Islands* (Moyer Bell/Asphodel, 1995), and *Trill & Mordent* (WordTech Editions, 2005).

DAVID KENNEDY lives in Sheffield, where he edits *The Paper* and publishes Cherry on the Top Press. His latest poetry collection is *The Devil's Bookshop*

(Salt, 2007). He has also recently edited a volume of essays, *Necessary Steps*, for Shearsman Books.

ANNA KHASIN was born in Russia and lives in the U.S.

PHILIP KUHN lives on Dartmoor. The text published here comes from a long poem, *maimonides table*, which has recently appeared in a limited edition from itinerant press, isbn 978-1906322-01-4.

RACHEL LEHRMAN is an American poet who now lives and works in London, where she directs Nomadic-Collaborations, an international team of artists dedicated to promoting communication and collaboration among different artistic disciplines, places, and cultures. She has recently completed a PhD in the Communicative Dynamics of Collaborative Art at Royal Holloway.

TONY LOPEZ is Professor of Poetry at the University of Plymouth. His most recent collection is *Covers* (Salt Publishing, 2007); a collection of essays titled *Meaning Performance* has also recently appeared from Salt. With Anthony Caleshu, he recently co-edited the collection of essays *Poetry and Public Language* for Shearsman Books.

RUPERT M. LOYDELL teaches Creative Writing at University College Cornwall in Falmouth, and also edits *Stride Magazine* and its associated press. Shearsman published his *A Conference of Voices* in 2004 and will publish his new collection, *An Experiment in Navigation*, in 2008.

JILL MAGI lives in Brooklyn, New York., and her next collection *Torchwood* will be published by Shearsman Books in January 2008. The poems in this issue are drawn from a manuscript entitled *Compass & Hem*.

SOPHIE MAYER has work in a number of magazines, and a chapbook *above / ground* in Canada, where she was living for several years. As Sophie Levy she was joint author of *Marsh Fear/Fen Tiger* (Salt, 2002) with Leo Mellor.

GEORGE MESSO's *Entrances* was published by Shearsman Books in 2006. His translation of Ilhan Berk's *Madrigals* is scheduled for publication in early 2008 by Shearsman Books. He is working at present in Saudi Arabia.

MARY MICHAELS lives in London. Her most recent publications are *Assassins* (Sea Cow, 2006), a poetry chapbook, and a book of prose fictions *My Life in Films* (The Other Press, 2006).

ROBERT SAXTON is editorial director of a publishing company in London. His second Carcanet/OxfordPoets collection *Local Honey* appeared in August 2007.

MARK SCHAFER lives in Cambridge, Mass, and has translated a good deal of Mexican poetry, above all *Migrations* by Gloria Gervitz for Shearsman in 2004.

JANET SUTHERLAND lives in Lewes. Her first collection, *Burning the Heartwood* was published by Shearsman Books in 2006.