

Poetry contents

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The University of Technology, Sydney

Adam Aitken

Poetics 101

This cool and pleasant corner of the earth, where
due to lack of sleep, too much exercise and cornered
by salivating dogs, the fox expired
in a fury of blood, viscera and fur.
Then the hunt retired to a mouldy drinker
where the hunter-poet carried on
finding ways to spin that incident in the Uni Bar
with the sniffy Yank reviewer who thought his poems
lacked a sense of tragedy, despite their darkness.
Perhaps travel with a permanent hangover & a split tooth
or a torn hand skinning Irish rabbits inside out
are *indifferent things*, so unworthy.
One can, however, write of why you write -
from a *lack of loving ourselves*
as mother once said, back in our rural childhood.
Being helpful in a Drover's Wife way
she dabbed at his skinned knees.
Then Dad's advice:
A good left hook'll do the trick. (Florence, 16th Century).
Such bragging, those wild images of passion
the lecturer can't explain, or why the country
needs more horses and bullies, all armed for a siege.

Adam Aitken teaches creative writing and theory at the University of Technology, Sydney. Romeo and Juliet in Subtitles, his third collection of poems, was shortlisted for the South Australian Writers Festival Awards.

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Vivienne Glance

synaptic cleft

when a word reveals itself
to me and in a microsecond
spills
onto the bright page -
i am swallowed
by mystery

from billions of neural possibilities
a single chemical
ignition
leaps across a synaptic cleft
tussles with electrical pulses
in my spongy brain
and steals this word
from my blood-dark
articulate heart

creation is more than a succession
of cellular awakenings
flooded
with chemical sap

as a tear
a perfect sphere
balanced on a rose petal
reflecting the world
must be more than water
and pigmented carbon
so poetic thought
expands beyond action potentials
aimed along axons
networked through this fleshy structure
that seems to be me

Vivienne Glance's poetry and short stories have appeared in various publications including Short Stories Australia and Blue Dog, and she has won prizes and a commendation in competitions. Her plays have been performed in Australia and abroad. She regularly performs her poetry at readings, and has run performance workshop for writers.

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the mouthless earth lulling one to leave

 If it could speak it would say
here is the silence here is the question

Dominique Hecq is the author of The Book of Elsa, a novel, four collections of stories (Couchgrass, Noisy Blood, Magic and Mythfits), two books of poems (The Gaze of Silence and Good Grief) and two short plays (One Eye Too Many and Cakes & Pains). With Russell Grigg and Craig Smith, she also co-authored Feminine Sexuality: The Early Psychoanalytic Controversies. She is senior lecturer in writing at Swinburne University of Technology, Melbourne.

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Robin Parmar

Countdown

In about forty-five seconds there will be a great sound
like being locked naked in a room with no door,
a room with concrete four metres thick and anodised steel lining,
buried half a mile below the surface of the earth -
a sound like the void.

In about thirty seconds there will be a non-event,
a lack of cause with no effect,
a subjective completely free of any object.

In about twenty-four seconds
there will be a silence as words are evacuated
into the lack of language known only to
plants slowly striving towards the sun
or mute infants grasping their way across the floor.

In about sixteen seconds
time will cease counting,
the clocks will stop ticking,
your heart will stop pumping,
and all will wind down,
the very stars themselves
returning to the imaginary realm from which
the universe began.

In about five seconds I will stop writing and
there will be nothing,
nothing,
nothing,
left in the world of words,
the poem being done.

Robin Parmar is a sound artist, poet, programmer and theorist, who has appeared at numerous festivals. In 2005 he co-edited and designed Microphone On (White House Press), an anthology of one hundred poets who have performed in Limerick, Ireland.

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