

Michael Farrell

bagboy

he knew the butt tattoo his friend had but said nothing
afraid someone might think theyd swum together in the school of
easy knocks or aversions he came like a shark & butted
his teeth into the lovers they locked him in a cell
the bays connected to the sea like a heart & he
had rather kill than retreat to his midden of pipis
noone writes about it noone has the rough knife on bark
style needed at night when the nausea peaks & his work
lies undone & an automatic feeling brings him close to someone
who says what he auditions to the air & the speeding
trees he empties his pockets as pathetically as at an airport
sunshine you arent going anywhere but theres noone there to say
it only a building sensation & blood coming out of him
in ecstasy or as close as hell get sympathetic homicide they
call it hallucinatory bullet wounds & the culture says adulterys anachronistic
& jealousys for straights it seemed to him hed proven something
the prison had great acoustics & he had an escapees lungs

Angela Gardner

Bel Canto

moments intervening

one voice and another
between language and coupling

spathes of unthrifty music
engage a beauty

not your present truth

that devour how when
when — glass paper metal plastic

all the elements —
into an imitating movement

traced back to the work itself

which it fills with rightful obsessions
heated to a liquidity of touch

of intention a glancing gaze
or silence remembered

as woven voice opulent

even in the sweet mistaken
wholeness of the body

the face
in the tray is
remembering light

is the memory
of light
put down
— such a load —
for just a
moment

When I first
saw this
I knew it was
something

all about her
faces
whose time
had come
again

David Malouf

Like Our First Paintbox

Like our first paintbox: colour
in graduated rows more various even than the rainbow,
encouraging the eye
and the small adventurous hand to try for others, cloud
-castles of a sky more Disney-gaudy
than the azure overhead, as if mineral
dust and breath could reach alchemical midday
on a planet further off
than the one they taste and smell of. Bruise
violet and veridian a threat
of storms I could conduct with an index finger wet
from the cup, catching a hint of what God
felt, trying for this, then that; learning to see the earth
as it is from failed experiments — and even those we give
our hearts to and can't forget.
When sleep has unsealed
our eyes, we walk in the pink woods of that other world our hands
imagine — lost, like all
angels, in the flesh. Mauve grass, red weather,
the fruit gift-wrapped in its blue peel, O so edible!

Futures and stardust

A mesh that is not so seamless.

Those little dings and impossibilities.

Glow out of the big sky.

Innocence is a universe – but not sanctuary.

If friends crash and faces are hollow.

If the thrilling emptiness is just a biology.

Kiss the children between the lies.

Stoke our whitewashed outlines.

Touching the walls, what is common.

Your cool skin maybe but breathing.

Beyond the stages of importance.

Burrow into the sweeter afternoon.

Perhaps the stardust song settles it.

It must get easier out in black.

What flowers, we don't know yet.

What remains, what you touch.

It is like a photograph, you step into it.

It is like space.

*the most thought-provoking thing
in our thought-provoking time
is that we are still not thinking*

& what of thoughts that you lose accidentally
before you have finished using them stones
fallen deep into a pool of forgetfulness

could i persuade them to stay bribe them
with chocolates or new joggers try barring
the door arms operatically outstretched?
but those conceptual delinquents wear their
baseball caps backwards menace me with handguns
& flee

what goes from land to land in the holy night?

i send tracker dogs to retrieve them but
thoughts have weak scents & when something more
pungent drifts on the air the dogs take a
disloyal detour & i'm left racking my brains
hoping these moments of absence will pass
as now

we are a sign that is not read

Chris Edwards

Missing something

Maybe I've been missing something
true, luminous and noble — Ian Thorpe
has his Kylie Minogue CDs, other people
have Ian Thorpe. Maybe there's something in the world I need
to get down pat, or get patted down by like the rest of the crew.
But if so, what — or who? And what's this here about going
for gold down a pitch-dark stairwell to the startled but
amenably blacked-out landing where rioting
allegedly continues?

Somewhere, somebody knows
something about it. All over the planet people
are training kaleidoscopes on it — whether it's tips
for effective how-to-ing or quick and easy charms
for reproducing winning recipes in chilling
little monsters, the kind no-one would ever suggest
Ian Thorpe resembles. That'll be him now, wanting to talk
to either you or your auxiliary committee about the freak
crisis he faces, along with the rest of us, who have been
faced with it for quite some time. It's his mission
in life to be a reminder, I suppose. I'm confident
you'll deal gently with him — after all, it isn't
a crime to go traipsing through other people's
dreams all night on, what is it,
seventeen feet?

Michael Farrell

proust aboard a doomed corvette

the blue car was too slow marcel
insisted this was a virtue so we
toured the galleries gave cats lifts
painted bodies as we passed there
were some whose souls we entered
briefly & saddened like weevils
in an opened cheese remained
illdisposed to heroics haircutting
ate nothing so this is the moon
marcel remarked gloomily the life
forms are disappointing i dont
understand what god was getting at
leave god out of it i said
annoyed at last by his trilby
twitching watch the road baron
he replied there arent any moon
roads anyway i thought you
were driving out of petrol time
to abandon vessel lay low hope
a cattle farmer comes along we
can steal his wife horizon his
bitter expressions well the first
figure to come along was an army
deserter we were too sentimental
to harm we lent him a cork
shelter a phone that remembered
princes number ned kelly shrieked
mp we continued without holdups

Dorothy Porter

Radiation

When
pushing back strands
of her hair straying
around her dangerous
quick-quipping mouth

kissing her
feeling her mouth open
like an anemone
under mine

when I flow to her
fast and shallow
like a channel
from a deep lagoon
frothing across to the sea

I have her intense attention.

It's only afterwards
wearily driving home
I feel my skin
flake away
in a leprous snowfall

as if I've strayed
and played
in Jupiter's radiation belt.

Pam Brown

This is all

this is all I will bring to you
from the deep humidity here
where everything about this evening hurts,
from the helpless beauty of the pale orange sky
to the darkening wall of the cemetery.
tonight it seems we were never here,
that we never slept here.
that the dust gathered in a brand new house
and it became a museum overnight.
this evening short involuntary gasps
interrupt my practice of abstinence
and hurtle me across the equator across the world.

Scott-Patrick Mitchell

tHIS scRIBing s&

all these beached
ripples will wash away their
being to reappear
, varied only by wind

for the autistic sand
knows no better

& the gleeful waves
do

so listen here sea:

we'd be lovers
if you weren't so

wet

& blue

litorally changing your mind
every second

...adieu.