

a fine line

THE MAGAZINE OF THE NEW ZEALAND POETRY SOCIETY

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NEW ZEALAND POETRY SOCIETY
Te Hunga Tito Ruri o Aotearoa

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NOVEMBER MEETINGS

Saturday 6th November; 4.30pm for a 5pm start.

Turnbull House, 11 Bowen St, Wellington

2010 Anthology Launch:

across the fingerboards

Free entry; light refreshments; all welcome.

Monday 15th November; 7.30pm

Thistle Inn, 3 Mulgrave St, Thorndon

Guest Poet: Diana Bridge

Open mic; entry \$3 (Members) or \$5 (Public)

Randell Cottage Residency: the winter of 2010

Pat White

I guess the feeling of extraordinary privilege will settle eventually, but as I write this with a day or two left at 14 St Mary Street, I still feel a fortunate man to have been given an opportunity like this. Time to spend devoted to writing, and being expected to do so in fact, without having to worry about money or excuses to avoid the chores at the back door back home. I've had six months which warrant their very own weather report, in which by far the best option has been to stay inside reading and writing – what better scenario for a writing residency. The sort of winter weather Wellington has had this year is exemplified by September, when several regions throughout New Zealand had more rain than ever recorded, and that is how it felt here, a bit wet. The watery aspect did little to dampen the warmth of hospitality extended by the Trust and their Friends of Randell Cottage over my stay, and I'll take this opportunity to thank them for that generosity.

In some ways as I was writing about Peter Hooper who lived his entire adult life on the West Coast of the South Island, it was appropriate to have a wet winter as the 'Coast' is notorious for heavy rain, saturated forests, and sandflies that swarm in humid weather. Rain on the roof was successful in summoning the spirit of Peter into my writing. Yet, today as I write brilliant sunlight streams through the door to what I've come to know as the 'piano room', and it is basking weather. The neighbour's black cat is on the lawn outside, and somewhere a lawn mower is cutting back spring grass growth.

Although I came here to write prose, it was not long before poetry demanded attention, especially as news of Harriet Randell filtered into my mind. She appears to have been quite a woman (daughter of the original Randells), who played a significant part in holding the family together through hard times, and possessing a fine singing voice. Add that to the narratives across the road in Bolton Cemetery and there is plenty going on close by, all of which can be pondered while walking round tracks threading intricate patterns along the slopes of Tinakori Hill where native plants are being re-established. Peter Hooper would forgive me dallying with poetry from time to time, as he wrote some fine poetry himself. In any case, I have also managed to write close to a full draft of his life, tentatively titled *A Man and the Forest: a life of Peter Hooper*. The poetry is pure bonus territory, and all the more pleasing to have because of it.

What can happen when the distractions of daily phone calls, emails, gardens, visitors are placed at a distance? I have wondered for a long time what it would be like to gain a residency in which to spend time writing. Now, I can only say, it is a fine chance to test one's true impulse to write, and thankfully that is what I managed to do – write. It is time for me to travel home in three days time, and then start the process of reading what I have written, before writing more.

In just over a week, there will be a French writer, Yann Apperry, in residence over the summer until next April. Next autumn another New Zealand writer will be resident, and their application may already be submitted, awaiting selection. I'd like to think they will find the time full of words and a surprise or two.

From the Piano Room

beneath rag mats, design of world wars
in waiting, is an un-played sonata, cicada
song late as summer virginity lost without a
man within cooee, selling yourself happens
long before sharp voices, saying now play

the patience needed through lost afternoons
notes sashaying their dance down the street
sexy with their black and white rags tied
round fingers, petals of old tulips scarved up
around keys to an adulterer's door, on the floor

she practiced once with a New York girl, who
played viola, as if life depended on every note
which of course it did, she dreamed it so, that
tune, each key, the loving lilt of a lost child

From the National Coordinator

Laurice Gilbert

Welcome to the new look *a fine line*. This new design, by award-winning designer Sarah Maxey, was commissioned five years ago (before I took over) and has finally been dragged out of mothballs. It has a couple of advantages over the old document: firstly, the software makes it a lot quicker to produce (or will when I'm a lot more familiar with it than I am now) and secondly, I no longer have to use my free software to turn the original into a pdf for sending by email. It's built into the programme, and everyone should be able to open it. I have the charmingly patient Matthew Bartlett to thank for getting me going at last, and my long-suffering family to apologise to for my reclusiveness while I ascended the learning curve. The InDesign software was generously supplied by the Adobe Giving Program.

By the time you read this I will have completed my Poet in Residence position at the Mensa International Board of Directors Meeting in Auckland, and will hopefully have a whole bunch of new poems in my laptop. The prospect of writing a new poem every day is a bit daunting, but the opportunity to spend 5 days with the express purpose of writing is most welcome. I will also do

a reading to promote contemporary NZ poetry. While in Auckland I plan to attend Poetry Live, possibly the oldest open mic in the country - established by David Mitchell in 1980. Their guest poet while I am in Auckland is David Eggleton, who is good value.

The other really exciting event coming up is our annual anthology launch. This is the highlight of the year for me as National Coordinator, with all the work that goes into running the competition and supervising the publication coming together. I get to meet new poets who have possibly written their poems or haiku as class exercises, repeat entrants who are annually getting better at the craft, and old friends who have been writing for years and continue to support our efforts to promote New Zealand poetry. What they all have in common is that they have written something that this year's Judges Vivienne Plumb, Lynne Davidson, Tony Beyer and Karen Peterson Butterworth or Editor Barbara Strang have considered worthy of publishing.

Some of our junior readers might never publish anything again; others will go on to have successful writing lives. A glance through back issues reveals many names that have become familiar to the poetry-reading community. Whoever they are, this is their night, and I urge anyone who is able to come along and join us in celebrating their success: Turnbull House, 11 Bowen St, Wellington, on the 6th November, at 4.30pm for a 5pm start. Entry is free and there will be light refreshments.

About our Contributors

Jenny Clay has the odd poem published, and sometimes reads at Auckland's Poetry Live. She is currently writing a nineteenth century biography under a Society of Authors mentorship.

Keith Nunes is a former newspaper journalist who has had poems published in *Landfall* and *Takahe* as well as online journals. He writes to stay sane.

Maris O'Rourke has been writing poetry for about two years. She has been published in various issues of *Takahe*; been accepted for the upcoming *Bravado 20*; was the runner-up in the Auckland Sonnet competition in 2009; and has been selected for an NZSA mentorship in 2010.

Madeleine Marie Slavick is the author of several books of poetry and non-fiction. She is currently based in Wellington.

Gill Ward lives on the Kapiti Coast. Her poetry, scripts and short stories have appeared in anthologies, magazines, literary publications and on National Radio. Now retired from teaching, she organises the Kapiti poetry café monthly event 'Poets to the People.'

Pat White lives in the Wairarapa and has been published widely, including 7 poetry collections. He was the 2010 Randell Cottage Resident.

A Warm Welcome to ...

Rachel Anastasi Wellington

Paula Bisphan Hamilton

Frances Campbell Christchurch

Jenny Dobson Hastings

Maurice Gasson Clevedon

Simon Goodwin Coromandel

Janet Keen Rotorua

Valerie Kirk New Plymouth

Mackenzie Paton Martinborough

Madeleine Slavick Wellington

Maureen Sudlow Dargaville

Aysha Vitapa-Aspinall Waitakere

Lauren Williment Wellington

Becky Woodall Auckland

Congratulations

Gillian Cameron has a remix piece 'Still Life' chosen for inclusion in Cordite Poetry Review's *Cordite 33.1: Creative Commons (The Remixes)*. www.cordite.org.au/poetry/cc-the-remixes/still-life

Janet Newman has a poem in the Australian Association of Writing Program's 2010 anthology *Nth Degree*, which will be released at the AAWP Conference in Melbourne in November. Entry was open to anyone enrolled at a university or tertiary institution in NZ or Australia, and Janet is the only New Zealander included.

Maureen Sudlow was one of the last four finalists in the poetry section of the Cricket Art Prize. Results can be seen at: www.cricketartprize.org She didn't win, but was thrilled to get this far - a first success for her.

The online short poetry zine *Shotglass Journal*, edited by NZPS member **Mary-Jane Grandinetti**, has a New Zealand section in its September 2010 issue. Waving the candle for the NZPS are: Alison Denham, Laurice Gilbert, Mariana Isara, Maris O'Rourke, Deryn Pittar, Vaughan Rapatahana, Charmaine Thomson and Lonnard Dean Watkins. Great job, everyone. www.musepiepress.com/shotglass/index.html

NZPS members also made a great showing in the Klostar Ivanic Haiku Contest in English 2010, run from Croatia/Hrvatska. Third equal: Patricia Prime:

on the battlefield

I find half a button

slimed with moss

Honourable Mention: Catherine Mair. Choice of Haiku (for later publication): Margaret Beverland, Owen Bullock and Seren Fargo.

NZPS members also did wonderfully well in the Whitireia Creative Writing Programme's 'Eat Your Words' Wellington Café Poetry Competition, 2010. Congratulations to: Mercedes Webb-Pullman, who won, and Tony Chad, Enid Flannery, Janis Freegard, Robin Fry, Anne Harre and Gill Ward, all runners-up.

Publications

New arrivals on the NZPS bookshelf since the last issue.

Kokako 13 Ed by Patricia Prime and Joanna Preston (September 2010)

Slip Stream Paula Green (AUP, 2010)

Viet Nam: a poem journey Jenny Powell (HeadworX, 2010)

New Selected Poems: a Collection of Flowers, 1967-2009 Edwin Wilson (Woodbine Press, NSW, 2010)

Competitions & Submissions

Note: for those not on the internet, please send a stamped self-addressed envelope to the National Coordinator for full details of any of the listings you are interested in.

a fine line - call for submissions. Deadline: 14 November.

The editor welcomes your contribution. We currently pay a small fee for Feature Articles. See publication guidelines for these and other sections of the magazine at: www.poetrysociety.org.nz/aboutsubmissionguidelines We also welcome submissions of members' poems, though there is currently no payment available for these. For that reason, we do not insist on First Publishing Rights. If you submit a previously published poem, please advise, so that attribution of the original publication details can be made.

Bedford Open Poetry Competition (UK) Closing

Date: 14 November. First prize £300. Final judge: Lucy Newlyn. For poems of up to 50 lines. Entry Fee: £3 per poem. Website: www.interpretershouse.org.uk

4th Segora International Poetry Competition (UK)

Closing Date: 14 November. Prizes: £100, £30 and £15 and publication Previously unpublished, maximum 40 lines Judge: Roger Elkin. Entry Fee: £3.50 for one; £6.00 for two; add £2 for each entry thereafter. Details at: www.poetryproseandplays.co.uk

Writers' Forum (UK) Rolling Deadline: 15th of every

month. Every month Writers' Forum awards £800 in prizes and publishes the winners of their short story, poetry and young writers contests. Poetry contest: Enter online at: www.writers-forum.com/poetrycomp.html Entry fee is £5 (approx. NZ\$11) for the first poem, £3 (approx. NZ\$6.50) for subsequent poems in the same entry.

Awel Aman Tawe Poetry Competition (UK) Closing Date: 30 November. Competition for adults and children in English and in Welsh. Theme: Climate Change. Judges: Gillian Clarke (English entries) and Menna Elfyn (Welsh entries). Prizes: Adults: 1st £200 / 2nd £50 / 3rd £25 Children: 1st £20 / 2nd £10 / 3rd £5 For poems of up to 40 lines. Entry Fee: £3 per poem or 4 for £10 for adults. Children: £1 per poem or 4 for £3. You can enter online and pay via paypal at: www.awelamantawe.co.uk Click on Arts & Climate Change, in the left hand menu.

Café Writers Open Poetry Competition (UK) Closing Date: 30 November. First prize £1000. Prizes for funniest poems and Norfolk resident. Sole judge: Michael Symmons Roberts. For poems of up to 40 lines. Entry Fee: £4 per poem or £10 for three poems and £2 per poem thereafter. Website: www.cafewriters.org.uk

Grist Writing Competition (UK) Closing Date: 30 November. Judges are Helen Simson (Short story) and Lemn Sissay (Poetry). 1st Prize £500, 2nd Prize £250, 3rd Prize £100; plus publication for all shortlisted writers. Short stories up to 3,500 words (double spaced) Poems up to 40 lines (single spaced). Entry Fee: £5. Website: www.hud.ac.uk/mh/english/grist/competitions/index.htm

New Writer Prose & Poetry Prizes (UK) Closing Date: 30 November. Three categories: fiction, poetry and non-fiction. Over £2000 total prize money. Poetry category is for single poems of up to 40 lines and collections of between 6-10 poems. Entry Fee: £5 for up to two single poems, £12 per collection. Website: www.thenewwriter.com/prizes.htm

Odes to the Olympians Poetry Contest (USA) Deadline (must be received by): 30 November. Authors of a historical novel series offer this free contest with small prizes for poems about Greek and Roman mythology. Top Award: \$50 apiece in adult and youth categories and publication on website. The current contest is for poems about Athena (Minerva). Categories are youth (under 18) and adult. Guidelines at: www.tapestryofbronze.com/OdeForm.html

Literary Laundry Competition (USA) Deadline: 1 December. New online journal offers free contest with good-sized prizes for poetry, short fiction, and one-act plays. Prizes of \$500 for best poem and story, \$250 for one-act play. Undergraduates are eligible for special \$250 awards for best poem and story by a college student. (They may also enter the main contest.) Winners will be published online and may also be included in the annual print anthology. Guidelines at: www.literarylaunder.com/submissions

Charlotte Newberger Prize for Poetry (USA) Deadline: 15 December. Free contest for unpublished poems with Jewish and feminist themes (open to both men and women). Top Award: \$150 and publication. Published since 1976, Lilith magazine charts Jewish

women's lives with exuberance, rigor, affection, subversion and style. Address for submission: Lilith Magazine, 250 West 57th Street, Suite 2432, New York, New York 10107, United States. Contest is open to both male and female authors, but entrants should familiarize themselves with the magazine, which is geared toward Jewish women. Entries need to have both feminist and Jewish content. Guidelines at: www.lilith.org/writers.htm

Search for Prole Laureate (UK) Closing Date: 24 December. Prole Books are looking for entries that meet the editorial ambitions of Prole: to make writing engaging, challenging, entertaining and accessible. All forms of poetry welcome. First prize: £100, publication in Prole and showcase on website. 2 runners up, £30 each and showcasing on website. Entry by post or email. Entry Fee: £3 for first poem, £2 for subsequent poems. Online entry with PayPal option at: www.prolebooks.co.uk/page6.html

Writers' Journal Poetry Contest (USA) Deadline: 30 December. Reading Fee: \$3.00/poem - U.S. funds only. Prizes: First: \$50.00, Second: \$25.00, Third: \$15.00, Plus Honorable Mentions. First, Second, and Third prize winners published the Writers' Journal. Send Entries to: "Poetry Contest", Val-Tech Media, P.O. Box 394, Perham, MN 56573, USA. Multiple entries from one party may be mailed in one envelope. Please make cheques or money orders payable to: WRITERS' Journal. Submissions must be postmarked by the deadline date. Entries postmarked after the deadline date will automatically be placed in the subsequent contest. Submissions will not be returned.

Franklin-Christoph Poetry Contest (USA) Deadline: 31 December. Free contest from seller of luxury pens and desk accessories offers large prize for unpublished poems. Enter by email only. Top Award: \$1,000 & publication on website. Ten Merit Award winners receive a high-quality fountain pen (\$150 value). Notify if accepted elsewhere. Published work (including self-published) is not eligible with the exception of poems posted to the web outside of online journals, such as to a bulletin board, email list, personal web page, critique site, or public forum. Guidelines at: www.franklin-christoph.com/Writing/PoetryContest.html Submission email: fcpoetrycontest@gmail.com

LYNN DAVIDSON – Poetry Mentor

I am an experienced Creative Writing tutor, having taught poetry, fiction and nonfiction at polytechnics in New Zealand for the past nine years. I have also held writing workshops in a variety of settings.

I have published three poetry collections: *How to live by the sea*, *Tender* and *Mary Shelley's Window*, and a novel, *Ghost Net*.

I am available for online poetry mentoring and one or two-day poetry workshops. For more information please contact me at: lynn.davidson@live.com

Advertisement

Regional Reports

WINDRIFT, Wellington: August

Sally Holmes

Our August meeting was generously hosted by Jenny and Bevan Greenslade and perfumed by Kerry Popplewell's narcissus. We had three sections: (a) open (b) our length of days and (c) the emotion of horror.

Open section:

at the end of a grey day pink-edged clouds

Karen Butterworth

empty feeder

crows fighting

over nothing

Ernie Berry

a weedy blade

in the pot

insisting the colour

Harumi Hasegawa

The word "insisting" gave a very different stance.

Our length of days:

coating grey hair with colour

revives a youthful patina

Ariana Te Aomarere

winter solstice

I phone my niece

on her longest day

Kerry Popplewell

In the third section the **emotion of horror** proved gripping and salutary. With some, there was the shock of starkness.

killing fields

no skull complete

Penny Pruden

back pain hell

it takes forever

to die

Neil Whitehead

Everyone knows someone with a chronic back complaint. Torture while they wait. Other efforts showed death with subtlety:

albatross lecture

from hand to hand

a royal head

Nola Borrell

lecturer's sarcasm

my armpits drip sudden sweat

pearls of wisdom

Bevan Greenslade

WINDRIFT, Wellington: October

Karen Peterson Butterworth

Originality was the keynote of the October Windrift meeting held at Nola Borrell's Normandale home. The pre-set topics – 'Well-grounded' and 'Deception/dissembling' – had stimulated poets to plumb their imaginations exceptionally deeply.

Bevan Greenslade played with words:

pregnant

at the bus-stop

wait-bearing

Other examples from the wide range of offerings:

black ice

the undertaker

cracks a smile

Ernie Berry

Whiteout

Can't see a haiku

Neil Whitehead

on the way home

a fragrant olive

showing my direction

Harumi Hasegawa

lowering sky

the albatross sits

on a fibreglass egg

Nola Borrell

Metonymy Exhibition, Auckland

Jenny Clay

Metonymy is a project of collaboration between poets and artists which is in its third year, organized usually by a few regulars of Auckland's Poetry Live. Christian Jensen, a current MC at the venue, and Renee Liang, a past MC, were two of the 2010 organisers, along with Rosetta and James Allan and Meng Koach. The poets and artists are matched on the basis of information they submit on the equivalent of a blind date. As with real life blind dates, unless mutual ground is found and the motivation is high enough the pairing can stall in the early stages. For those who find a point where their two art forms can interconnect, either challenging or threading together, the process continues over six weeks to produce a piece to submit to judges for an exhibition. They are not only assessing the final work but also the interaction that produced it.

Of the fifty-six pairs that began the journey this year thirty-seven finished works which were submitted to the selection panel of Sam Sampson, John Daly-Peoples, Simon Ingram, and Riemke Ensing, and the works of twenty-five pairs were selected. These were exhibited in the three gallery rooms at the Corbans Estate in West Auckland through September until mid-October.

In the second room at Corbans 'Let's see where it takes us' by Sin-Mae Chung and Rachel Heimann was about the making process itself. A tape recorder played the clatter of the typewriter and a roll of paper punched with 0s spilled onto the floor. On an aged Imperial type-writer there was a text, that could be added to by the audience, where a jumble of letters became words.

Selene Simcox and Charis Boos had poetry on paper towels that could be ripped off from the dispenser and dropped into the rubbish bin below:

soft jazz
from the souls
of purchases

The pair were inspired by "erasure and other found poetry and entered the language of receipts and docketts". They called their installation 'Please retain me'.

In the same room there were two large photos of a young woman and a man, with SMS messaging next to parts of their bodies. The collaborative piece by Jeong Yeung Whang and Callum Stenbridge commented on how people are often more comfortable and open up in impersonal communication such as txtng, than with face-to-face.

2 liv iz lk 2 luv
aL rEsN iz agAnst it
+ aL helthy in stinct 4it

Although many of the pairs met regularly at the Poetry Live venue The Thirsty Dog, in cafes, and homes, a few of

the participants did not meet up through the process, and some were based outside of Auckland. David Eggleton of Dunedin and Andy Clover communicated only through email, ordinary mail, and a couple of phone calls to present 'Elvis and the Vulcans' – graphic style cut-outs in green on black and illuminated, evoked by Eggleton's poem of the same name.

Helen Sword, who teaches a paper called 'Poetry off the Page' at the University of Auckland, was paired with painter and graphic designer Anne-Sophie Adelys. As Sword was in the United States when the Metonymy project began, they started writing and drawing in notebooks which they swapped through the post each week, only meeting after the project was complete. Their display was the envelopes they sent to each other, on the wall, and the two notebooks beneath. They explored childhood memories. After a pencil drawing of a woman in a knee length skirt, beret and scarf appeared the poem 'Bird Feeder'. The first stanza:

the humming bird
outside our kitchen window
paints my mother's portrait
in thin air

In the other notebook was a foldout bird whose wings opened and shut with the page.

Renee Liang's poems based around parts of the body and beliefs were contained within Paul Woodruffe's cobalt blue ceramics in the first room, where there was also a large print 'Baggage', which Beatrice Carlson and Michael Botur collaboratively produced. Beatrice is a new Kiwi from France, and Michael is the first of his family to have been born here. Beatrice paired a Karangahape Road building with a European façade in a large digital print on Perspex, and incorporated Michael's poem alongside the juxtaposed buildings: "when at parties, they'll interrogate me: Am I Kiwi?" and continued,

that Croatia, Polynesia, Asia
Are connected by a common sea
Uninterrupted by nationality. Europe was a squeeze
And so this refugee begs residency.....without you,
I wouldn't have a space to breathe.

Several of the exhibited projects engaged in ideas of home, history, and memory. Siobhan Harvey and Ronald Andreassend explored sense of ancestry, lineage, migration, and broken whakapapa using poetry within a key, a heart, a medal, a mirror, and a necklace. In the round medal the text circled "wanted my grandfather last seen England 1943", the beginning running into the end. Hana De Roo and Rosetta Allan looked at memory reconstruction and appropriation in 'The tobacco tin and other distractions', where each other's memories

were overlaid with their own, examining memory as “an untrustworthy landscape”, a mixture of fact and fiction. There was quilting of fragments, layers of material, in the installation – a line of fabrics in a hanging quilt – and in the poetry contained within tobacco tins.

Kate Sellars and Penny Somerville looked further into the past. Kate, on visiting Penny’s house, noticed a piece of rimu Penny had rescued from the gutting of an old cottage up the road. Kate’s attention was drawn to the fragments of newspaper and wallpaper. She followed some leads on a Mr Tole from this, online in Papers Past, and the piece developed from there. Hessian partly covered rimu slats, with a hole to view the small flowers on the wallpaper behind, with passages on the side printed from Papers Past. Some of the words of the poem on the hessian: “my fingers scratch the walls ...peeling faded rose paper/ words call out/ echoing in space”, between quotes from the old papers embroidered onto attached fabric: Fisher the ‘erstwhile genius of the Occidental Hotel’,

In Ramsgate the churlish

militant teetotalers were assailed
with volleys of wet mortar

but it is Mr Tole from the original fragments of newspaper who “will decide the question”.

Janet Charman’s short poems, engraved on Ian Weston’s small slabs of plaster, envisaged a moment in the lives of imagined women born in the 1930s affected by memory loss, whose names were engraved on the other side.

June:	Margaret:
think what to write	Every
scrub mould	thing i knitted says my Mum
off the bathroom ceiling	casting on for my daughter
spores released	

Daniel Larsen wrote haiku. Alby Yap etched these into a triptych on plywood, selecting certain words within for larger lettering and emphasis:

and/ the / light / blinds / my / eyes

and he painted moths around the triptych.

Isla Osborne and Miriam Barr produced ‘Pathways we carry with us’, seven glass wall sculptures influenced by pacific navigational charts or stick maps. Rods of glass were fused into geometric star-like patterns. Fragments of the text of Barr’s poem were contained within each one. Some were phrases from the artist reworked and others from the poet herself – “wherever we touch/ the current changes”, “the intersections are/ where the islands are”, and the poem concluded:

a rising star
doesn’t go straight
from the horizon

sometimes we
find ourselves
in the knotted places

I Want Everything to Matter

Madeleine Marie Slavick

We are in a dark room with thick sets of curtains, all closed. The stage for the writers is black too, with several black office chairs and one black skirted table. A friend says it reminds him of the large Communist Party halls in China: power is one-way. Another friend chooses to stay away from the whole Going West Books and Writers Festival, sees it as staid, exclusive, expensive. I attend all three days, not preferring the darkness or hierarchy or cost, but accepting the balance of things, wanted and not.

The Festival opens with the powhiri, held on the floor, not on the stage. Here, everything matters: the person, the world, our rights, our words. With the advent of the super-city, this is the last Festival hosted by the Waitakere City Council, after 16 years. The powhiri marks the moment, the change, the promise: Maori and Pakeha, women and men, politician and supporter, writer and reader. It feels as if everyone is here, though only one of us in a long feathered cloak.

For me, this is what resonates from the three days.

I remember Paul Millar giving us a poem by J C Sturm from the 1940s, telling us that James K Baxter had rejected it and other poetry she would ever submit to that Canterbury publication. Millar thanks Sturm for letting him publish a Baxter manuscript he had unearthed: it helped launch his career.

Bee Dawson seems to see story as integrity, and it leads her as she writes, whether on history, air force psychology or heavy haulage. Jack Ross hears symmetry when he hears poetry in a language he does not know. Bill Direen creates his own mini-stage, complete with haunting song and anarchy, but assuring us that it will be alright.

Jeny Curnow votes that *Coal Flat* is a great novel, that a writer may only get one. Elizabeth Smither reads a kind of love story on Bill Pearson, one with humility, care and humour. Albert Wendt presents Bill as friend, uncle to his children, and persecuted person, as Samoans can also be. As Samoans get poorer, he says the church gets larger.

Roger Horrocks brings us as much Len Lye as an hour allows: film, poem, letter, anecdote, complete with a leaflet to take home. Tanya Batt merges versions of folk tales, as if to say, play as you think, think as you play.

And I think I will always remember Joan Metge calling for a ‘New Zealand Language’ to embrace all that is here.

DUNEDIN

Linzy Forbes

Poetry @ Circadian Rhythm resumes: The Sep 22 event featured Richard Reeve as the guest poet. Richard's reputation ensured a large crowd, a mix of regulars and first-timers, despite some wild weather. Open mic readers included Carolyn McCurdie (also MC for the night), Sue Wootton, Liz Breslin, Ann Jacobson, Martha Morseth, Megan Kitching, Brittany Travers, Kay McKenzie-Cooke, Shirley Deuchrass, Susan Smirk, Angela Trolove and Julia Hughes. When Carolyn announced Richard's name, he stood, and at that instant a huge gust of wind punched open the front doors and a section of the ceiling fell down. No one was hurt. And it seemed right. Poetry in Dunedin is like that.

Featured Poet:

Maris O'Rourke

Femmes au Jardin

whenever I go to Paris

I meet Monet at the Musee d'Orsay

step into his sunny summer garden

have breakfast with the girls

I wear a gauzy dress of polka dots

a tight corset

twirl a fancy wax-paper parasol

perch a frilly little hat on my pinned-up hair

I lower my Frida Kahlo eyebrows

over huge flourishes of roses

suck up the scents

feel the gravel path close at my feet

I'm one step away from sun-dappled grass

dazed with heat

so close I can no longer see

anything at all

until I step back

Back to Back

they placed the Head of Hillary

in the foyer

in your face

he'd hate the hagiography!

a skewed hatchet of a face

crag-crevassed hair

over acute precipices

ravine-gashed mouth

avalanched shorn-off ear

gorge-slitted eye

they placed the unknown warrior

around the corner

hidden high

he'd hate the obscurity!

a polished perfectly symmetrical

Polynesian head

massy cut-close hair

complex carvings score

curved cheeks

golden kauri gleams

back to back

foreign

familiar

they gaze past us in opposite directions

Notes:

The New Gallery, Auckland 2008

Head of Hillary acquired 1959: Sculptor Alison Duff

Kauri Head acquired 1995: Sculptor Unknown

On Maungawhau

On the grass by the kumara pit,
under a Puriri tree,

I lie back in Da Vinci pose
legs spread, arms out.

Drop salt and vinegar chips
into my mouth.

Take a swig of Rioja wine
straight from the bottle.

Shut my eyes;
let the mixture lie

Roll it around;
sink into the taste.

Swallow
Spanish memories.

Seen in St Germain

A Saracen, silken turban pinned with a silver clasp
long drapes falling across his gold taffeta coat
and pure white galabiyya.

Be-jewelled turquoise sandals on black dusty feet
tell of Berber warriors from distant deserts
come to take France again.

Striding through, eyes steady above the crowd
speak of scents and spices; gold, frankincense and
myrrh;

the long journey to the star.

A Saracen, pulling his roll-along suitcase.

Free to go

In Cell 10 at the Jailhouse
the last occupant has left a letter,

I don't know who will read this...

and his photo.

A blurry man in black on a motor-bike:
in India.

Ten years on the road
he leaves his picture,

I like my hair flying free...

wherever he goes.

And a note of where he's going next:

Argentina.

A traveller since 16
shares a sliver of his life

I want you to know something of me...

with strangers.

We know he exists and he was here:

in New Zealand.

I wonder what he's doing now.

Working his passage to South America?

I want to have adventures...

Living with an artist's model
above a bar in Buenos Aires?

Note:

The old Addington Prison in Christchurch has been converted to a hostel – the jailhouse is Gothic Revival architecture and has been accommodating people for over 130 years <http://www.jail.co.nz/>

Coleridge was a drug addict. Poe was an alcoholic. Marlowe was killed by a man whom he was treacherously trying to stab. Pope took money to keep a woman's name out of a satire, then wrote the piece so that she could still be recognized anyhow. Chatterton killed himself. Byron was accused of incest. Do you still want to be a writer? And if so, why?

Bennett Cerf, 1898 – 1971

Reviews

Steal Away Boy: Selected Poems of David Mitchell ed. Martin Edmond and Nigel Roberts (AUP,) ISBN 978-1-86040-459-8 RRP \$34.99

Gill Ward

Reviewing *Steal Away Boy* is, for me, both a pleasure and a responsibility. Knowing David Mitchell from the early years when he was around Wellington with writers and 'wild boys' such as Nigel Roberts (who co-edited this volume with Martin Edmond) means I need to be mindful of bias. However, after a lifetime of poetry immersion, I have reasonable credentials on which to base my assessment of this long awaited poetry collection, Mitchell's only book since his award winning first publication, *Pipe Dreams in Ponsonby*, in 1971.

To call it simply a poetry collection is a misnomer. In this book Roberts and Edmond have given us an introduction to Mitchell's life and times. It makes for absorbing reading and a valuable background to David Mitchell, the person as well as David Mitchell the poet. The editors have given us a picture of Mitchell, employing Michael King's notion of "the compassionate truth". Those who knew David knew him as often erratic and unpredictable, but he maintained a following of affection over many years. I would advise reading the biography, so meticulously culled from many pages of notes, information and recollections provided by Mitchell's friends and colleagues in the poetry world, before embarking on the poems. It gives a backdrop to the poetry, the stories, the lovers and the travels of this troubadour poet.

It was a race against time to put the volume into Mitchell's hands so he could see and hold it. He now lives in a nursing home, unable to speak, slowly being overcome by the degenerative disease of supranuclear palsy.

In the days when we were all discovering e e cummings and Kerouac, Mitchell was the beat poet of Wellington. His poetry has his own distinct beat. It is performance poetry. It looks like performance poetry on the page. The shape and style of the poems are important. The layout and spacing present as a script for the stage. This was what Mitchell did so well and he encouraged others to share their poems this way. He founded Poetry Live, at The Globe in Auckland, in 1980. A weekly event, it hosted established poets and gave emerging poets a chance to read in front of an audience. But, go on – read the book, go to Mitchell's page on NZ electronic poetry - www.nzepc.auckland.ac.nz. Listen to Mitchell in his own voice.

New Zealanders are getting braver about exposing themselves in their writing but this was never a problem for Mitchell. His love poems are graphic and moving. He put them in all their intimacy on the page and was never shy about leaping to a table or a chair to recite and rave to an sometimes astonished and unexpecting audience.

Thanks to the generosity and unstinting graft of

Roberts and Edmond we now have this book by (dare I use the word) an iconic New Zealand poet. It reads like an autobiography of Mitchell's life and times in poetry. He is not afraid to take us into his pain, his intimacies, his loves, his passions and share his political commentary.

Excerpts and titles in this review keep to the punctuation and form as written by Mitchell. I have a difficulty with quoting lines of poetry out of context but who could not be stirred by the closing lines in 'night through the orange window':

she
who caught my lips gently
between her small cold teeth
who kissed the husks from my slow eyes
so that I too might weep
for life
I remember her as a fifth season
who came unheralded
and walked in beauty.

Mitchell's poem 'la condition humaine (man's estate)' is a rhythmic tribute to Mt Eden. It takes you there, sets you among the rambling plants and waltzing butterflies of late summer. It is another side to his poetry – a joyous song of suburban life which follows a long and affectionate poem of his "wee neighbour in Mt Eden" giving him a gift of guava jelly. There is Mitchell doing domesticity with every bit as much assurance as writing of Paris, Barcelona or at sea along the African West Coast. Yet as well as joy there is such a well of sadness in so much of the poetry:

when all this sensual night has died
& dried away the mottled skin
remember how it was / those summer days
when
we drew orange blinds across the world's
enormous room /...

The only way to appreciate this book of poetry is to buy it, own it and read it from cover to cover.

To take some last lines out of context from a particularly moving poem, 'kingseat / my song 1969',
you know my song / & you
know my name . . .

my name is david mitchell

Pocket Edition Geoff Cochrane (Victoria University Press, 2009) RRP \$25 ISBN 978-0-86473-604-8

Keith Nunes

I'd like to meet Wellington poet Geoff Cochrane's muse. I imagine her/him as being wild and free – inspiring and quirky with periods of darkness. These are the qualities that Cochrane's work presents to me – coming at life from the side entrance; dismissing the front door as a waste of creative time.

The Pocket Edition collection is – as with most of his work – fascinating and surprising. He doesn't lay out a tale but prefers to twist it till it bleeds and then he gives you the unfinished product.

I read him as dawn woke the neighbourhood and dabbled when the sun got pissed off and went home and still I found the same characteristic about his work – this guy's different!

Pieces like 'The Last Time I Saw Him' make me take notice:

Sunbeams titled in
like death rays

His wet soul winked and steamed

Like jellied blood

'Looking to Antiquity' is equally brief and moving:

The limy light of a feeble Calvary

I find I like the pudent Greek idea:

you reach the age of sixty,

you throw the little party,

you drink the hemlock

He rarely waffles, this man who will turn 60 next year. Even when the poem stretches out to its prose brother and we get 'Milk' – a crisp and astute study of alcoholics trying to get sober at the local Rehab Centre. The piece pulls you in, entertains, and with a flourish pushes you out the other end.

He swings back to the short and sharp with 'Leo Leo':

A magpie and a hedgehog

witnessed the destruction

of the last lion in England.

An arrow in its neck,

the muscular cat crept into the undergrowth

to bleed and die.

It must have happened, once.

The warm, crestfallen beast

becoming as time passed

no more than the bland device

heraldry perpetuates.

Then as an aside he throws in a one-liner in the poem 'January':

Beaches and cream. If you liked school, you'll love
World War I.

And how's this for insight in 'Analgesia':

The Haz Mat yard sleeps yellowly

and the airport talks to itself,

addresses itself

through a tinny megaphone.

The 64-page book isn't finished when the poems slink away and curl up for the night. No, there's an enthralling Addenda that includes illuminating quotes such as "Art is born of humiliation" (Auden); "Life is a drug that stops working" (Leonard Cohen) and crackers from Allen Ginsberg and Saul Bellow among others.

This inspiring and entertaining collection keeps Cochrane up there with the best of 'em. One day when I grow up I want to be like Geoff Cochrane. I've already got the drinking down pat.

Walking to Africa Jessica Le Bas (Auckland University Press, 2009) 86pp ISBN 978 186040 446 8

Gill Ward

The publication of this volume was assisted by a grant from the Mental Health Foundation of New Zealand. Their money was wisely spent.

If you are a reader of poetry books like me, I would hazard a guess that you will read this in one sitting. It is a fearless and graphic account of how it is to be the mother of a child who rapidly succumbs to the grip of a frightening spiral into mental illness, and the sometimes helplessness of your parentage being taken over by an army of health professionals, doctors, counsellors and well meaning friends who lose sight of your daughter and see the illness before the child.

This is not always so in Jessica's story, because the whole poetic narrative is threaded through with love and hope and sometimes humour. The poet has a sharp eye. She sees into the intentions and psyche of the specialists working to help her beloved daughter. She describes her passage through foreign and sometimes hostile territory,

making it like a travelogue where the participant is more than an observer of the inhabitants but rather lives the life with them. It is a frightening terrain and Le Bas, in her poetry, describes for us her struggle to come to terms with it. She does this in a series of portraits of the people with whom she interacts along the way, accounts of incidents both sad and hopeful and an examination of her own reactions. This is raw writing. It is realistic and Le Bas does not spare either us or herself in the telling of it.

And it is a far off place

this place they call Cure

where the main streets are named Treatment and
Therapy

and wild wind rushes through

If you have a loved one struggling with mental illness, which of course makes it your struggle too, this book will comfort you with the knowledge you are not alone. You will see your emotions and traumas, uncertainty and pain. But sometimes you will smile and nod in agreement. Above all it will help you realise that a person with depression, schizophrenia and other fragile states of mind is still there, is still to be loved and still to be garlanded with hope.

In this compelling narrative of candid verse and prose poems Le Bas takes us with her into the bewildering world of psychiatric hospital wards and home-front distress. Her unselfish personal exposure is to be applauded. She truly shares her talent.

Le Bas runs the gambit of emotion. She touches despair but holds on to hope. Halfway through the book:

On the worst day of your life

her eyes fall slack inside

their sockets spark

plummet past her heart

suckle a dry desperation

cry

Yet look at the last words in the book:

And it is poetry

And it is life

Her wide open plain

her lane of pain and beauty

rain and sunshine.

It was a privilege to review this collection of moving and finely crafted poetry. It deserves a wide readership.

Eucalypt 8, edited by Beverley George. PO Box 37, Pearl Beach 2256, NSW, Australia. 2010. 44 pp. editor@eucalypt.info

Patricia Prime

The appearance of a new issue of *Eucalypt* is a significant and much appreciated event. This latest selection is of particular interest because it spans so many tanka from poets around the world: Australia, India, U.S.A., England, New Zealand, Bhutan, Japan, Canada, China, France, South Africa and Croatia. The following tanka from Croatia is by Djurdja Yukelic-Rozic:

under the snow

our magnolia tree,

budding shyly

my granddaughter listens

to footsteps of passers-by

These tanka are by turns humorous, witty, truthful, and tough enough, asserting an undeflectable honesty and a sharpness of perception. Even a prison cell allows a tanka moment as we see in the following poem by Gavin Austin:

lying awake

on a prison bed

in his steel world

mother has not sung

for seven years

Here we are made aware of the prisoner's hard bed and his mother's melancholy at the loss of her son's freedom.

Jo McInerney's tanka,

my finger traces

the lines of your laughter . . .

one day

you will not wake

to smile at me again

has a delicacy, a harmony, that seeks to transcend the act of memory of loss which is its subject.

Many of the tanka beguile us into the worlds of the poets, observing familiar landscapes and feelings with fresh eyes and well-chosen words. Many of us will have experienced the loss of a loved one and in Michael McClintock's fine poem on the loss of his brother he finally releases his brother's ashes into a landscape that perhaps both of them knew:

the day has come
to take my brother's ashes
into the woods –
I know of a waterfall
there, sweet and clear

Tessa Wooldridge's tanka,
lap swimming
on a summer day
beneath my hands
lane markings dissolve
into Rorschach inkblots

gives the simple act of swimming a new meaning with its surprising image of the inkblot. The poem is well made, thoughtful and original.

The gentle filmic precision of Margaret Ruckert's tanka,

rented Bondi flat
voices echo from bare floors
a migrant mother
filled with sun, asks her child
why don't you bring home a friend?

beautifully captures the soft tones of the migrant mother questioning her child about friendship.

Two pages on the theme of war reinforce our dread of the woeful acts of humans against each other. Linda Galloway, Andre Surridge, Dorothy McLaughlin, Shona Bridge and Aubrie Cox write well in the tradition of war poetry with fluent, skilful tanka.

The striking and original characteristics of nature tanka are exemplified in the work of David Terelinck, Elaine Riddell, Barbara Fisher and Giselle Maya. While Rodney A Williams gives us an insight into the system of connection with his humorous tanka,

shimmering
on the desert track
a mirage
her smile radiant
for the man behind me

Eucalypt 8 is not only a salute to the wonderful world of tanka, but a collection of international material, providing the reader with a significant body of worthwhile poetry. These thoughtful poems, often flecked with subtlety and humour, repay many readings.

The Yellow Middle by Neroli Cottam

Gill Ward

This self published book is a collection of the author's poems and artwork. The book is arranged in two sections, the first being a longer selection of poems of the earth and landscape and the poet's response to the world about her. The second section consists of two long poems which came about as a result of Cottam's Walk in Faith studies, a three year course which she completed in 2007. These poems are Lieds, or songs and incorporate biblical texts as well as short literary quotations.

Missing from this book was the 'blurb' about the author. I looked her up and found out that she has an art and craft gallery and organises poetry readings. From the list of acknowledgements it is obvious Cottam has published widely and been associated with many other writers of poetry. I would have liked to know just a little more!

Cottam is a confident writer, and prolific. Poetry must flow from her pen on a daily basis! She is in tune with sky, sea, the birds and the land around her. She writes about it with affection and imbues her poems with a feel of heartland New Zealand. These poems are not urban. They are populated with wildlife and vegetation more than people and buildings. The art work also affirms this mood. The people in the artworks are few but do seem to carry that 'in tune with the land' feeling.

Speaking of the artwork, which is a mixture of paint and crayon and print work – I felt it deserved its own forum. Sometimes I found it distracting as I tried to marry the art up with the poem beside it and I was confused about which medium I was responding to. Although I will say I liked the 'Body Art' illustration that accompanied that poem.

The book itself, technically I found rather long. Perhaps another reason for having the artwork separate. Personally I like to be able to read a poetry collection (by one poet) in a sitting and then be able to reread and consider poems I like. With 184 pages the favourites get lost in the reading. Most of my New Zealand collections are somewhere between sixty and a hundred pages. This makes for a comfortable and uncomplicated read.

Many of Cottam's poems repeat themselves. She says the same thing in several different ways, but it is still the same thing. Therefore I loved the surprises when they came. There was much gentle humour. 'On Holiday' painted a delicious picture of dozing in a deck chair. Her re-rendering of Greek mythology, as in 'Information from the files of Menelaus' and 'The return of Theseus', could not help but bring a laugh and the take on Joseph's coat of many colours was brilliant.

When Cottam went out on her own and gave us poems of life rather than environment she was at her best. These poems uplifted. The poem about eating fish and chips in the street, 'Consider Eating', was tight and light and accessible, as were 'Love' and 'At the Trading Post' (great

last line!). The poem that surprised me the most and that I immediately read three times, was the jolly ‘What was Found on the Ridge of the Rouge’.

There is not space to quote, but an example from ‘Making the Leap’ illustrates how this poet says things you think yourself:

In the space between dreaming and waking
I feel the world in a single heart beat.

How it is

Prisoners penning poetry

*Press Release: Department Of Corrections,
from Scoop, 29 July 2010*

Sonnets and haiku are not something you’d expect to come across inside prisons, but prisoners from Christchurch Men’s, Christchurch Women’s and Rolleston Prisons will be aware of National Poetry Day tomorrow.

Canterbury region prisons librarian Susan Smith says poetry has gained popularity amongst the prisoners. The prisoners at the three Canterbury prisons don’t just read poetry, they also write and publish their own, usually as a result of courses or professional mentoring.

“Much of the value of writing poetry lies in their ability to reflect upon their experience and hopefully address the issues that keep bringing them back here,” says Susan. “We have a prisoner who writes poetry to his daughter each week, another who reads TS Eliot.”

National Poetry Day coordinator, Siobhan Harvey says the events aren’t just for established poets, it’s for people who simply want to give poetry a go. “Poems transport us, and when performed at events they open up worlds and moments in time,” she says.

Efforts to improve literacy and numeracy education for prisoners is one of the main focuses of the Department of Correction’s efforts to rehabilitate offenders and reduce reoffending. There is a high demand for information, learning materials, and self-improvement resources, and prison libraries, in collaboration with other prison programmes, can play a vital role in meeting these needs.

Poetry apart, Christchurch Men’s, Rolleston and Christchurch Women’s all have library stock of up to six thousand titles at each prison and issue around 800, 350 and 150 books a week respectively.

The libraries at Christchurch Men’s, Christchurch Women’s and Rolleston Prisons are pretty exceptional among libraries in New Zealand prisons. Susan and her colleague Judith Wenborn are two of only seven professional and dedicated librarians working in New Zealand prisons, using systems and procedures commonly used by public libraries.

Stocks are funded through community grants and through donations from the community and staff working at the prisons in Christchurch.

“The library is about providing prisoners with learning and information, and that’s respected by the prisoners who come in here.”

American Life in Poetry: Column 292

BY TED KOOSER, U.S. POET LAUREATE, 2004-2006

Here’s our Halloween poem for this year, in the thin dry voice of a ghost, as captured by Katie Cappello who lives in Northern California.

A Ghost Abandons the Haunted

You ignore the way light filters through my cells,
the way I have of fading out—still
there is a constant tug, a stretching,
what is left of me is coming loose. Soon,

I will be only crumbs of popcorn,
a blue ring in the tub, an empty
toilet paper roll, black mold
misted on old sponges,

strands of hair woven into
carpet, a warped door
that won’t open, the soft spot
in an avocado, celery, a pear,

a metallic taste in the beer, a cold sore
on your lip—and when I finally lose my hold
you will hear a rustle and watch me spill
grains of rice across the cracked tile.

American Life in Poetry is made possible by The Poetry Foundation, publisher of Poetry magazine. It is also supported by the Department of English at the University of Nebraska-Lincoln. Poem copyright ©2009 by Katie Cappello, from her first book of poetry, *Perpetual Care*, Elixir Press, 2009. Reprinted by permission of Katie Cappello and the publisher. Introduction copyright ©2010 by The Poetry Foundation. The introduction’s author, Ted Kooser, served as United States Poet Laureate Consultant in Poetry to the Library of Congress from 2004-2006. We do not accept unsolicited manuscripts.

Mini Competition Poems

There were lots of entries from people wanting to be published in a *fine line*. Thank you to everyone who entered. Some of them made me laugh (which I confess helps) and others were astute observations that I wished I'd made. I said I was going to publish up to three of them, but I couldn't narrow it down that much, and besides I have pages to fill. Here are my final choices.

Choose Me

Even though this is supposed to be
a contemporary sonnet about
Wellington, I'm going to write about me
on the cover of my first book of poetry.
I will have my photograph up front
no need for false modesty, but ask the photographer
to touch me up with Photoshop, get rid of
my spots, my bags, my hair loss, my pale winter skin.
Type my name along the dog-eared collar and
make sure the word poetry is absent. Let them think
they are buying a self-help manual endorsed
by Suzanne Paul's lengthy infomercials on TV.
Published by AUP, VUP, any university, please;
it will be called Put Me On The Cover.

Tim Nees

Designer label clothing stores

Rows of drab clothing
hang from blocks of windows
in streets of colourful buildings

cluttering my view

of the colourful clothing
hanging in rows of windows
in blocks of buildings
on drab streets.

Kees Beentjes

Dying

The sun is giving me
dictation
an azure sky
peering anxiously
over his shoulder
to be sure
I am correct.
I am waiting for the words
- a signal to start.

Sun is already half way up the
sky and the dreaming
page still bare
a clock ticking somewhere
its way to nightfall
yet the page pristine
a white cloud,
and the day
unwritten yet
no trees on it
no birds singing
not an island
nor a smile
still so far to go
on the desert page
pen poised
to score the days
the hours...
and you still here
as they tick away
holding on, holding on
another day to try
to keep you here.

Gill Ward

Lest We Forget

The Island remembers
Fury ferments from roots of Sacred Trees
Rain spews on cracked cobblestones
Lightning kicks rocks
under
a white scarred blue sky

The Island remembers
that fateful day when the fuse blew
Families and friends torn apart
Loyalty questioned
those that yielded. Killed;
those that hid. Murdered;
those that spoke. Slaughtered

The Island remembers how
Courage
Loyalty
Wisdom
fled, culled by tank trucks
but some lived on, to tell the truth

The Island remembers
the elimination of a whole generation
The Island sees
1000 short-range ballistic missiles targeted
Formosa reminds us
lest we forget
Rivers flowing of blood and hate
The Incident of 228.

* The 228 Incident, also known as the 228 Massacre, was an anti-government uprising in Taiwan that began on February 27, 1947. The number "228" refers to the day the massacre began: February 28, or 02-28.

Yin Lin

Beef Stroganoff

On returning the recipe book to the library

A man who eats beef stroganoff is a man indeed,
He has no need for peas or measly salads,
For stroganoff shall sustain him,
And is his creed.

It is not a complicated mix,
For a simple man,
Is a man indeed,
A bit of this and that, throw it in the pan.

The beef self-evident,
But yet, you've got to roll it thin and strip it slender,
Then throw it in there,
And let it go brown and tender.

Put that to one side,
Turn your mind to mushrooms and onions,
Made for one another, marry them together,
Fry them thoroughly, down to the core,
Till they're hanging from a tether.

Add the sour cream, thick and full,
And wine, just a quarter glass, and no more,
I'm already clearly on something,
Pissed as a fart.

The beef, browned and beaten, needs to be added to
the mix,
To complete the brew,
And salt and pepper,
For final kicks.

On a base of fettuccine,
Lay it on there without regret,
Till the cows come home,
Till the last light of day.

Yet remember, no side salad,
For this is man's feed,
And a man who eats stroganoff,
Is a man indeed.

Blair Franklin, guest poet