

**HOLIDAY
POETRY**
*and a few
earlier
efforts.*

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holiday poetry & a few earlier efforts...

CON TENT S

ED's NOTE: lists in no chronological or page order just a very rough guide. You could always pencil the page numbers in to refer to what you like - that's being interactive with the written page...please excuse the typos & grammatical errors, syntax confusion and other mistakes you will find in many of the actual very raw rushed holiday writings the poems especially vary in standard (not that that matters) and results from some whimsical rather enjoyable very quick spontaneous 'automatic' mad crazy zany not-too-much-of-a-care-in-the-world writing while going through a stint of writer's block...etc. etc! p.s. fezites: overcome your darkest fears and mind paralyzes and celebrate the human spirit! This book is dedicated to the great poetic down-to-earth likes of bukowski (especially after reading four of his novels and quite a few of his simple well-crafted poems) and kerouac teach us to just go and have a go!!!#

SOME SURVIVING EARLY EFFORTS circa 1980s-1990s.

the end of the world
a surrealist poem
the crucifixion
an epitaph to some old men
phone call/the atheist
zeus
indonesian howl

EXCERPTS / EXTRACTS/ OBSERVATIONS from a cross-section of early travel short stories etc.

mexico, november 1992 /merida, november 1992
ressurrection sunday, managua /san salvador, october 1992
the resurrection of 'raul', san salvador 1992
nicaragua, october 1992 (*with opening meditation*)
havana, november 1992
phnom penh, january 1990
arcadia diary entry, 'ayos theodrous' cyprus 1982
the killing fields /landmines /leaving ankor wat
on the road to bayon
managua women/bluefields st.jerome's day october 1992
managua october 1992

GUEST PIECE

nikiad by david stark

INTERMISSION

planet of the arabs

EASTER SCHOOL HOLIDAY & ANZAC DAY POEMS 2004 and thereabouts...(many are topical of this period/slice in time...)

insightful questions

animal conference

a little ode to those who spend a lot of time on their own

song writing is a gift

the bold and the beautiful

evil eye

honesty is the best policy/ *the transfiguration

the warning that ulysses provides

political condom

a postscript to all the terror

east timor with friends like these who needs enemies?

intelligence postscript

t.n.i complaint

work for the dole in the s.a.s.

non profit

brighton rock

balmainitis

lust for iraq

a faith-full son's call for divine wrath on a mortal coil

achille's hand

war

test of friendship

a philosophical treatise

nictator

the devil rings me up in newtown

redfern irony

what's there to do?

the great writers

bernie
vanunu is mr. voodoo for mr. israel
lost leaflet
hypocrisy
political whinge
the youngish forty-something anglican minister with the leather
jacket
no marxism in rome
better not to forget all about a.h.
mass of self-destruction
reverse gear
rape is sport
last exit to eternity
gaddafi
the human contradiction
blood on our hands
what's important?
the mainstream is so downstream or better still is a braindrain!
medieval gap
earlwood multiculturalism
rats/whales
déjà vu in reverse
mateship
banana
against all odds
reconciliation
newtown multiculturalism
stuff
make a religion salad that will be good for BUSINESS!!!
stop watch
the year before and this year
bad karma
firm thinking
no turning back/mel & leo & joyce &
ulysses/st.francis/mistakethon/no hope...but.../lost for
words/wolfowitz/dr who poem/non-inferno/constitutional allowance
/battle-axe poetry/happy medium/freedom/chemistry/pulp
t.v./happy ending/brad/position on the table/google/nothing to
hide/life is a surprise/woof-woof/mayday!!!/the russian merchant
kindness of a stranger/salvation in gdansk
storm in a teacup/labyrinth/con/mitsubishi/fair deal?/time travel
the priority of terrorism/dead/all he wants/spirituality/penny-
pinching/fussy/keep the peace/a sign of the times

black comedy
kinky paradise
desolation skull
japan is heartless
dracula knows better than yeltsin about people skills
margaret thatcher's secret sex fantasy
numbers 86/99 where are you?
The brigadier
water resurrection
a rebuff/michelangelo transfer/in the bag/lone wolf
a sobering cliché proverb partner!
chickenhawk/british archaeology gazumped by inspector rex
what do I do?/media watch
dresden
paraphrasing a war widow
the australian resurrection
nauru
island getaway of the absolute inhumane
wildside
life and death
happy people
happy dance
profound
the environmentalist
anzac
forgotten island
stalingrad
channel 31
unions / lost in translation
between the posts
mass
kangaroo anzacs
the celluloid curtain
harry's war
there is a brain machine that can detect racist thoughts
shrek
lolita
shake hands
metromaniac
babies
in chicago on anzac day
takes two to tango

non-saluting skeletons/war atrocity
the mouse that didn't roar
a moral tale
the theory of relativity
unfair artemis
injustice
idealism wins
the alamo
starry night
choice
john laws
disrepute in sport is not on!
what's the point?
marshall plan
war of the worlds
historical irony
poetry

ETCHINGS/ARTWORK EXPLANATIONS & DOCUMENTS

the angel
zorba the greek
luna park
tree of life
winter trees
fiesta
sunning the buddha
nicaraguan boy
nirvana
adam and eve
tree of life
pennies from heaven
anu krakatau is angry
manjustri
sunset. greenpatch, jervis bay
letter to the editor of the new york times (unpublished)
european solution certificate
very rough outline mss synopsis – darkness and light
very rough outline mss synopsis – lisa's world

the end of the world

the world was gone and everyone laughed
they killed their mothers
while death was dying in the dark

scream...
so much for the answer
it was never set free
and parading down the backyard of their brains was
the godot of their dreams
no sense was there in thee?

irrational man
smiles blindly in the sand
engulfs him

and parading down the backyards of their brains
was the godot of their dreams
the result was life in another existence

and someone asked again:
was this the 'creation' of their impersonality?
the sun rose and nothing left for breakfast

A Surrealist Poem

Down from the sky come the four legged arms
To land in a field of yellow machine guns.
Hour by hour come the four legged arms...
To praise and worship the cerebrum of a Broken Doll
Which stands silhouetted upon a prole

Only to be hidden by the epochal second of an echoing atom
bomb.

And so the four legged arms come and go
Still praising the cerebrum of a Broken Doll...

But up above the planet Venus
The moon still hides the sun
Chained by a reference to the plectrums drum

And so the four legged arms come and go
Still praising the cerebrum of a Broken Doll

Come...
For in the seventh second of a disgusting pun
Emerges a hand without no existence
To simply become a pestilence...

And so the four legged arms come and go
Still praising the cerebrum of a Broken Doll

From which are cast a thousand knives
From which are cast into the rock like surface
Of some unclarifiable, unusable thing...
Alas the embodiment
Alas...

...the four legged arms which come and go
WHIZ! BANG! POP! goes the cerebrum of a Broken Doll

Oh...
Alas...the four legged arms and a broken doll
A baby crying from her soul

What of machine guns? What of the BOMB?
AND WHAT OF ECLIPSES UNFINISHED BY GOD?

And so...a baby crying from her soul

Unfinished? POEM

And so the four legged arms still come and go
Still praising the cerebrum of a Broken Doll.

An Epitaph to Some Old Men

Out from the rain
Come the reflections of a happy moment
Masterpieces of some past distant age
Now all useless

For the delusions of old men
Came the moral judgements and their friends
But none could they release them
So the party went on without them

And in the gutter did they lie
Death was upon them
As indifference went by

There was no more living left
All going to die in a nightmare scene
The world ignoring all their pleas
Does this make sense?

And in remembrance to these old men
Was this awful alcoholic stench

The Crucifixion

The hammering went on
as the jeering proceeded
while many thought the whole scene
was of petty insignificance
what was his death's importance?
and staring blankly at the floor
was the mutilation of this form
his blood was spattered with the drizzle
while his bent and protruding bones merged with the woodwork

and so hanged the 'anarchist'
this thing they once called Christus

while far away the celebration proceeded
and the High Priest remarked to Annas:
"the lunatic is dead
let us toast with champagne in his remembrance"
so they shared it with a perfect elegance
what a blasphemous communion service
Pilate was simply not amused
what was his death's importance?

in the distance whimpered God
Death would utter his relief
the rain pattered in peaceful harmony

so drooped his tortured head, a trickle left his eye
and he sighed (with a quiet deliberation):
"it is finished"

and so hanged the anarchist

to 'enjoy' the glory of his death
and lingering in the minds of some
what of his death's importance?

PHONE CALL

I

Sometimes school is like a battlefield
Students screaming in the playground
Their mad sounds travelling via the wind
In the staff room there is the conversations and the negotiations
between teachers
And the gossip and the insinuations
After dealing with the usual frenzy of the classroom politik
Where a teacher can sometimes feel like the doomed dictator
Dealing with the maddening crowd
I madly race from frantic photocopying to make a cup of tea then to
the ever maddening search for some paper on my messy desk
where papers lie sky high like some 3-D readymade collage of a
funeral pyre as I constantly have to prepare
This by then and then and so on like Sisyphus in that Greek Hade
who rolls the stone which rolls back down the hill so e must roll it
back up forever for eternity like I who is always cleaning up his
desk to only find the papers piling up again and again and again
These students need that
This teacher demands this
And
So
On
The noises of the playground filter in through the windows
Like the distant chatter of machine guns
Amidst it all I remember and announce: "Have to make a phone
call!"
Pointing my finger up to the sky like some old Greek philosopher
such as Socrates in that famous painting by David (I think) who
died so stoically and bravely surrounded by his weeping disciples
"I have to make a phone call for my liberty!" I might as well have
said: " – or give me death!"
I dial the number as I watch children screaming
I watch teachers huddled around a small table eating speaking
Other teachers go to and fro talking of reports and assignments
and the organisational implications of preparing this class and that
class with bus passes for work experience

Like field staff who talk of the mechanics of an advance or of an enemy attack
trying to always make sense of the beauracracy of life to have you filled on the Big Picture
While I only try to fill my mind with the regular and concise soothing tone of the dial tone as I return the call-
“Fenwick here...”
“What’s up!” I yell abruptly and rudely down the line as if the frustrations and the demands of the day are contained in the reverberations and the milliseconds of my tired loud voice
“We have to get together,” mutters the calm normal voice ignoring my indiscretion...no need to take it in on a persona level
The noises from the playground are getting louder
I think of the screams of soldiers on Omaha Beach on D-Day whose anniversary had just passed
And I think of myself as a foot soldier who has somehow survived the massacre of the first wave
With the debri of abandoned equipment and the debri of human corpses all around me
I fear for my life and cower behind a concrete steel dragon tooth wearing a black fez
Gritting my teeth like a soldier in one of those famous Robert Capa stills
A phone rings
A dead man beside me with half of his body blown away lies with a field radio tied to his back
“Fenwick here” I listen to the soothing voice which is coming from a Sydney office tower looking over the toytown streets of Sydney’s CBD
There he is Fenwick sitting in his office cubicle looking at the neutral screen of his computer in the silence
There he is Fenwick hovering up so far above the bedlam and the many dramas of the many human events which are occurring on ground level of this single earth
Like a god who is serene
“We must get together. We have to discuss things. The poetry reading...”
I look around me and see not children but a line of men who have all been shot down as they tried to vainly reach the safety of the seawall.
“Yes...” I reply I need to keep things in perspective, “...the poetry reading...of course what is happening to me now is much less important than the Poetry Reading

which is that bedrock of culture
which overcomes the suburban isolation of our lives.
What are the consequences of this day compared to the ongoing
continuance of this human need for community?
Anyway, this realisation has calmed me down. Despite the deadly
chaos which is surmounting all around me I feel grateful - I am still
alive - and more than this I still have the opportunity to
philosophize. 'I think therefore I am...' (Thus said some French
intellectual who lived somewhere far beyond the French shores of
Normandy in 'gay Paree'...ah yes Paris...the Trojan who stole
Helen which caused another beach war). Metaphorically speaking I
look for my metaphorical weather proof plastic satchel containing
my metaphorical tobacco and metaphorical pipe.
"When?" I nonchalantly ask.
"How about next Thursday night at Drummoyne - that is: my
place?" suggests Fenwick.
"Yeah...next Thursday (which will be D-DAY+ the rest of our
lives...) will be fine... *That is...if I still exist*' I surmise. I cannot help
but also consider other perspectives as the world feels to me as if
it is tearing apart like some fragmented Cubist picture. (Yet I think
of the freedom of Braque's printed birds. Yes, freedom).
However, I also cast my mind back into the present
Fenwick's calm controlled voice has given me new insight onto
myself as I consider the over-reaction of my initial outburst.
I resolve I should ring him back some time in the very near future
and apologize and inform him of the self-recognition of my
impropriety
As I continue to deal with the tensions of the day.

II

For what does civilisation ultimately depend on in the end? On
the invasion of a foreign army on a foreign beach head (or on our
head? i.e. all those propoganda war movies which assault our
minds) or on the general civilities we should show to each other
day by day (and to reading?)
So I ask myself the following eternal question a little flippantly
without thinking about it all the way through - as I listen to Audrey
Hepburn sing on the radio Moon River in an evocative way from
that evocative movie Breakfast at Tiffany's - what is life? That
melancholy memory? That realm of past regrets which stay stuck
in our minds for the rest of our lives? Is it recognising them and
acknowledging them to each other which makes us human?

I cast my mind back to the phone call and to Fenwick and to where I'm sitting now on this Queens Birthday in front of a computer screen - that symbol of progress at the end of this century which keeps us all apart

and I think of that other

Queen - Alan Ginsberg because in the house I am minding for a few days lives a woman who knew the man himself and so I am still a gypsy on some never ending road

and so I think of the Beats and to the spontaneous writing of this poem and to the sense (and nonsense?) contained within it and the lack of editing (and obvious structural internal order?) - pardon the rough jolting edges, the brackets, the references to artists, movie stars, songs, Ancient Greek myths and gods and to other apparently obscure derivative sources - so would say the academics and the editors and the busy meandering onto other unrelated topics etcetera, etcetera - and so I dedicate this piece to Keraouc (Hey Jack!) for the potential alcoholic in us all and to those poems of his in Mexico City Blues and all those emotional hues contained within us and to my larger than life brother of whom Fenwick and I spoke about on the phone

III

and so to get back to school I mention in conclusion the fight I ended up breaking up after the bell had rung

for the end of lunch on another day

when there was no playground teacher left on duty with a walkie-talkie to speak with and with no recourse

to another

adult person or to any form of modern communication I looked back feeling isolated at the staffroom filled with the teachers

oblivious to the drama which had just occurred so close to them is this how it is in *this* world? I can't help but think of global politics as I tried to hold onto the sleeve shirts of the two boys which had been beating each other up

[Hey Australia: were we all having barbies while Pol Pot was killing Camodians? Was anyone tuning in to watch SBS? Hey! 'Ms. Ginsberg' - as I have dubbed her - helps the East Timorese. And she's American!

Alan would have been pleased...I don't want to reinforce no stereotype but I think now of all that disguised refugee trauma in

the lives of some of some of the migrants who live out in the western suburbs
Anyhow I had a class of refugees when a WASP told them to go away - yeah...young man go west - (cowboy west - the West - westies -)...I suppose...huh!]
The two boys both ran off and I stood impotent
I recall now how I was later told in a sympathetic way I should be more careful
because those two students I physically manhandled to stop them from destroying themselves could sue me
for assault
I'm not quite sure
if I have finished this mish-mash of a poem but
Yes it is true its enough to drive me crazy all the things that happen in
this crazy wazy hazy modern world - but don't give up as the big band plays there's always hope - oh yeah!

(Queens Birthday. 1999. Glebe. Sydney)

The *Atheist*

Zeus woke up from his drunken slumber
after a heavy night of
carousing
with a boy
or a daughter or
concubine
(or even - perhaps - with his wife)
to simply ask himself: could it
be true
that human beings really do *exist?*

ZEUS

I sometimes envy the family cordiality of the Anglo - American middle classes

when I compare it to the psychological upheavals of my Grecian family history

Which nevertheless goes back to the beginning of time

To the time when Prometheus stole fire for humanity

To the time when chaos was replaced by the universal order of the gods

Who fight and debate amongst themselves

shifting the fates of

both men and women

according to their whims

according to their lusts

according to their jealousies

according to their drunken states

States of mind

States of body

States of soul

and other Aristotelian dichotomies

(tri-chotemies?)

States of divine judgement

States of human error which do not guess correctly the divine moods

To the moods of my father who has the temper of a thunder god

I understand now he is none other than Zeus

I his son

The son of Zeus

Doomed to deal with a god who has the gruffness of a Spartan warrior

(How I envy the apparent civil manners of Anglo-Australian society)

Hey there's Zeus studying the racing form guide

with the discipline of a university academic studying the mysteries of quantum mechanics

Hey there's Zeus picking oranges and lemons from the backyard

Hey there's Zeus taking out the garbage

Hey there's Zeus shouting at everyone in sight

Hey there's Zeus who feeds my mother whose body has totally
been worn down by disease and by the hours of hard work and
emotional pain inflicted upon her over the long years

Hey there's Zeus watching the footie

Watching the share

market

Watching the parliament

debate

Watching endless episodes of American sitcoms

Watching John Wayne kill all those bad men

from out of town

Watching his grandchildren who play in the backyard created from
the life force of his soul which contains enough energy to explode
and tear apart the known universe from the suburbs of Sydney
through to Circular Quay

It is a mystery to me

as I play with my sister's twin three year olds

My nephew

My niece

on the swings

(There I am pushing them to and fro in
time with the rhythm of the universe)

to think of the push and shove and determination of my father who
had his family working for twenty years in the milk bar

I'm still on the swing with my nephew and niece

We are all three silent enjoying the midday sun

In a paradise made from harsh toil

Yes it is still a strange realization to me that from the endurance
tests foisted upon us by life can sometimes come such tranquillity

INDONESIAN HOWL

*(The spirit of Alan Ginsberg travels through Indonesia between
July and November 1996)*

I

I saw the best travellers of my era destroyed by screaming bemo
hustlers,
tricking them to board a crowded rickety bus on the way to
Pandarangdang
ripping them off financially
ripping them off with promises of deluxe luxury
ripping the tops off the backpacks packed untidily on the back of
the jalopy
Sly youthful conductors stealing in the reeling heat some of the
possessions of their flustered customers.
Passing the dirty streets of rundown towns and villages
Indonesia welcomes you Australians!
Indonesia welcomes you Greek Cypriots!
Indonesia welcomes you Lithuanians!
Indonesia welcomes you Germans!
Indonesia welcomes you French!
Indonesia welcomes back the Dutch!
Indonesia welcomes back the Japanese!
INDONESIA!
In the hysterical avenues of
Sulawesi,
Flores,
Bali,
Kalimantan,
Malaccas,
Irian Jaya,
Sumatra,
East Timor
the people
must
welcome the Javanese!
INDONESIA!

Burning bright!
Like a volcano in the night!
Krakatau!
Suharto!
Mandarin of this Underworld!
Lets the bemo lords ransack every highway!
Every road!
I see a generation of travellers left screaming in a congested bus,
squawking with the chickens
under a hot orange sun

II

The streams of people at the airport waited their turn in this
Balinese Gateway to a Balinese Gold Coast to have their passport
stamped under the white hallucinatory glow of the clean airport
strokes
Indonesia welcomes you with its clean crisp photos of beaches
and rainforest
trees and smiling Balinese girls
Bali welcomes you Aussie with Four XXXX pubs and live Rugby
League matches from the SFS and Olympics in Atlanta
Welcome America!
Heaven of the World!
With angels cheering in petite little skirts the sporting heroes of
these noble games while the people in the hells of Jakarta
Bandung Surabaya Ujang Padang look on thei television screens
and cheer on their badminton heroes while the Devil Suharto with
the backing of Heaven spelt A-M-E-R-I-C-A keeps you down in the
dust which you came from which you will live in
and which you will return to
ash
ash covers our eyes
covers your skies
the volcano erupts in the night
the hollow eyed female tourist doesn't understand
She doesn't understand why the customs officer won't let her stay
in Indonesia
Her Australian passport will run out in less than six months
"But I'm only here for ten days!"
Plead woman plead!

Use the logic of the West!
Use the logic of Aristotle on the East!
Say ten days fits into five and something months more than once!
It is my turn to meet the customs man whose eyes meet my
passport which he decides to check out of the many people he has
simply let through he decides to check out my visa-less passport
and off I go to the room
Two of us go off to through the room and see the hollow-eyed
woman plead we show our cash and travellers cheques and credit
cards
money talks to Suharto money talks to the lawgivers of the land
money rises above the ash
money rises above the flashpoints of the sweltering lava which
corrupts this land
which spews from the mouth of Suharto
yes Suharto you are the cicada which ate Five Dock
you are the cicada which eats Bali
you are the cicada which eats the trees of Sulawesi and Sumatra
you are the plague
and the judge
and the abomination all rolled into one
in the heat your larvae spreads
in the night we smell the stench of your corruption in the concrete
of the hotels of Hindu Bali where the priests work overtime with
their tinkering bells to ward off your unquenching appetite
your immoral union with Heaven America yes! Let the badminton
shuttlecock fly!
(Let that spy satellite see your waving arms Indonesia!) Cheer on
Indonesia! Cheer on!

[February 1998].

[POSTSCRIPT:In April, 1997 after travelling overland for nine months through Southeast Asia, China and Russia (most of the way with a friend [Kristina] who had lent me in Indonesia the biography of Alan Ginsberg by Barry Miles) I reached Amsterdam and walked into a bookshop to buy a copy of HOWL. As the book was being given to me the bookseller said in an off the cuff way..."too bad what happened..."

"What...?" I pensively asked as I held HOWL in my hands.

"You don't know?...Alan Ginsberg died just the other day..."

mexico, november, 1992

The flames shimmered in the reflection of the dull duco

The flames spewed from his parched mouth

The head was hidden by a column of fire

Only in the tight muscles of the hand which held the canister did there remain a visible sign to his desperation

The blackness spewed down a star while the morning light sucked up the dew

Their bowed faces were hidden by their broad brims while they swept before the iron mouth

He was from Guadalajara and held up his hand to refuse the offer of reimbursement

In another time another man from the same city boarded a bus in Dallas and looked for my support in Brownsville

I walked through the ruins and rummaged through other memories

In the afternoon heat she silently waited in the long queue holding her black umbrella as a shield

She watched the towering machine which pulled down the dough to manufacture the tortillas she would purchase

He diligently cleaned the machine saw he used to cut the meat he had left outside on hooks for the flies to vomit on

The boy took the ten cent coin and eyed the lyre bird while speaking in slow Spanish, listening patiently to the slow voice

His elderly mother and his elderly father and himself farewelled me when the dusk train arrived

There was no light and an old woman's voice could be heard in the dark carriageway

There were the silhouettes of bodies who paced the night aisle selling their wares and in unison were calling as if in an Ancient Greek Chorus

There was a station where in another time two of us had waited till midnight huddled with the poor as if all together we were refugees escaping from some war

Men are sleeping and other men sing while the man opposite holds his machete and in the morning there are the village huts where people are scantily dressed and the children look unhealthy

The women and their employer speak inside the market and from their stall offer a cool liquid and there is tranquility and there is a Spanish wall near the sea and there is a tranquil breeze

The train arrives at midnight where the sweeping roof of the station is a reminder to Paris Norde

There are two old female indigeneous who no one will help carry their heavy pots from the platform to the station and so the three of us sleep together

Where there had been another time when two of us had slept the first night in the zocola

There are the sleeping shivering homeless men at this tourist destination

Yes

Lets sit at the zocola

Where its fun sitting in these chairs where we can face each other where we can talk to each other where everyone is trying to sell us hammocks, gold chains, panama hats

Those sunglasses

Suit you

Very trendy

Very fifties

I like the pointy bits

At

The end

S

You look so hip

With your short blonde hair

And your shorts

What sort of country is this where people must cover their faces in demonstrations?

There is a poster on the wall: it is the ninth anniversary of the assassination of three Chiapas Indians

In another time there is another poster which denounces police attacks on indigenous

There is a nearby village whee there is a festival where a line of indigenous men walk around the main road playing flutes beating drums visiting houses where families light incense, having their evening meals

The townsmen are playing volleyball in the town square ignoring the rituals performed outside the church

There was a time when two of us had attended a wedding feast and a family had befriended us who now remembered my name

A hand was gently placed on my shoulder during a night walk in a busy street and I turned to see the smiling face of the father from the village

In another village the Mayans are bemused by the foreigner's presence who realises he has entered into a world he does not belong so I leave

They had been close and it is a pity the swell is swirling and he had swam in these waters years ago and I remember the warmth of the Caribbean currents

It is six years to the day I had returned to Sydney and I think of when I will return again and again to territories inside me and not just to this external world

Marilyn and I walk the length of the beach passing an Australian woman wearing a Burning Bridges T-shirt

You have read in *Le Monde* of the Aboriginals death in police custody?

So you think it is a disgrace?

Of course!

Its a shame

It is raining

Lightly

We notice in the restaurant garden of a fishing village that there is above the tables plastic bags of water tied to the posts holding up the lightweight roof. The women say they keep the flies away

In Australia people place plastic bottles filled with water on their front lawn to keep the dogs off them

The sea is warm

I swam in this sea

But not this time

Last time

Its time to return

We walk past

The wooden busy noisy bars

A bus comes every half hour?

You think the video on this bus is racist?

They use the *chicano* actors who live in L.A. ?

You think it makes all Columbians

Look like drug peddlers?

Yes, you wonder

Why there is a market

For

Films

Like

These

In

Latin

American
Countries
Lets
Go
See
Pretty flowers and trees
For the people of South and Central America
Mexico
Guatemala
Belize
El Salvador
Honduras
Nicaragua
Costa Rica
Panama
Columbia
Venezuela
Guyana
Surinam
French Guiana
Brazil
Ecuador
Peru
Bolivia
Paraguay
Uruguay
Chile
Argentina
Do you know
Of
Any
Cheap places
To eat?

There is a bread shop which sells croissants and Marilyn is excited and briefly nostalgic for France

In this exhibition the poses of the revolutionary martyrs are based on positions of Christ from the fifteenth century Renaissance paintings

Yes, I have seen the trees cut down in Paris to make the barricades in '68

Merci for translating at the travel agent's

Yes, I am surprised you can buy food in Cuba

Yes, there is so much propoganda

Yes, lets now look for those batteries in the supermarket
It is time to leave but it is not possible for Marilyn to leave
Yes, when I first met you in the Aero Mexico office I thought you
were...a man who is African in appearance approaches me in the
street
He is speaking French? He is from Paris? He needs a place to
stay?
He can have my room. Hello Mr Castro
Lets walk to the bus. Yes I will tell you everything
I do not mind you two speaking French. I board the bus and as it
leaves Marilyn turns and smiles and waves goodbye as I yell out
my farewell

merida, november, 1992

Marilyn. I was awake. We would meet at the *Louvre*...I lifted my
body...Cafe for breakfast. Names are like icons. Monroe. I walked
towards the escalator. Paris. I descended...

"Oooooooh not Marilyn Monroe!" Marilyn smiled at Mr. Castro.
The hostel proprietor placed two fingers on either side of his
cigarette and lifted it from his mouth. "Your first name is the same."
He smiled cheekily.

"Now you know where I stay." We bided Mr Castro farewell and
walked out onto the sunny street. Marilyn had been to Vietnam. I
had visited Cambodia. I remarked how I had met two French
lawyers at Ankor Wat.

"One of them was returning to the surroundings of his childhood.
His father had been a diplomat. You say in France there is a
fascination with many people to revisit Indochina? You are pleased
with the French defeat? I once met an American who had seen the
crosses at Dien Phen Phu. You crawled through the small VC
tunnels which were dug underneath the American bases? The
guerrillas would slit the throats of sleeping soldiers? You were with
an Australian who shone his torch on the cockroaches which lined
the ceiling of the tunnel. He was naughty! You say?"

"In war everyone is naughty." remarked Marilyn.

"A Vietnamese woman asked you to take a picture of her with her
daughter? You will send the woman a blow-up of the photograph?
She told you her back was burnt by napalm when she was a child?
Yes, it is very tragic the scars on their bodies. Look at that house."

Marilyn eyed the colonial mansion across the road.

“Yes, that one, it reminds me of a similar building in Phnom Penh. You say the Vietnamese told you they preferred the French to the Americans? In Phnom Penh the elder restaurant owners had such polite European manners. They spoke impeccable French. In the restaurants the cuisines were French. I remember one night we had *soufle*. I wonder if the Khmer Rouge would have killed these restaurant owners over *soufle*? You want to learn Esperanto so you can stay with a Vietnamese family? There is a Vietnamese man in Ho Chin Minh City who can speak Esperanto? Esperanto speakers will help other Esperanto speakers? You speak five languages? In Vientiane I met an old Laotian woman who could speak English, French and Russian.”

We came to a large roundabout with a wide circle encompassing a monument which was in the centre and shaped as an arch.

“I have seen something similar in Phnom Penh,” I muttered. “You say the road has been modelled to look like the Champ Elyees? Walking in this city and speaking to you I do feel I am in Paris.”

san salvador, october, 1992

We smile at the *gringo* man - who walks with the *gringo* woman - from our doorways. He smiles! He continues walking...we call over the next men who line up on the footpath waiting for their turn.

They turn the corner and we watch the two *gringos* walk by us as we work on our sewing machines, cobble shoes and repair watches on the footpath.

I serve the *gringo* couple two liquados as I stand in my booth on the pavement.. I stand each day for twelve hours. I methodically cut the fruit and fill the glass mixer with the ingredients. I smile as I give these two a fill up with the milk which is still left after the first serving.

All of us both young and old scream and raise our arms above our pink dresses as we fall to the ground. Our bodies tumble amidst the goods which have fallen out of the *pinanta* hanging above the footpath.

I saw the *gringo* look away from my mutilations and glimpse the lone coin in my upturned hat. Would he give a penny for my peace of mind?

I look in the mirror and see that my black curly hair sits like a ball on top of my late forties face. I rub rouge makeup on my sharp cheekbones. I am all torted up with my revealing blouse revealing

the dumpy belly beneath and I am wearing a tight skirt with heavy mascara around my eyes and jewelry around my thick neck.

It is the afternoon and I stand in front of the *gringo* and quickly poke my tongue out lizard like between my clenched teeth.

It is late at night and I see the *gringo* couple amble into the bar. They order their beer and two meals. They are trying to blend into the scene but they must know we are all watching them.

I was finding it difficult to fully relax in the seedy Saigon atmosphere when one of the bigger beer drinkers on the other tables came over and shook my hand.

I sit my weary ageing body on the wooden chair outside the room I have lived in for fifteen years. The *gringo* woman who is one of the two who arrived in the morning starts speaking to me. I learn from her friendly voice they travel together as friends.

This is our last night in this hostel and the two of us go up onto the flat roof, pretending we can see the lights of Kings Cross and Redfern.

The dark shape of a military helicopter emerges suddenly from the black sky and howls over our bending bodies.

the resurrection of 'raul', san salvador 1992

I have a pizza with the others yet while we idly chat I cannot help staring into space. I am cheerful but so many of these streets hold a memory. I never imagined I would be able to visit.

It is a dream.

I surprise people who thought I had died. Those from the former underground who meet still only know me by my cover name.

nicaragua october 12...

There is a desire to make the pictures in our mind stand before us. There are many expectations which we seek to fulfil, on certain dates and with certain people and in certain places. Memory is based on an overlapping of experiences that gradually shape and reshape who we are and who we will become. Memory is submerged, yet our forgetfulness can influence our surface thoughts and in the end there is a blend between our dreaming and reality. Nevertheless, there is the disappointment of those desires which remain unfulfilled and so we strive to compensate

with reason or with substitute experiences. Yet these efforts may only lead to a melancholy that stretches across our hearts, much like twisted trees which spring up in the dark nights of our discontent. In our imaginings we pretend that what we seek is real or non-real whatever satisfies our haunting, preying illusions and life in its entirety seems rippled by those moments that change the course of our stream...there is the absence of things, the absence of events on certain dates, in certain places and with certain people and nothing we can do can retrieve our sad concerns. We realise how fragile, temporal and unique life is as we go through each passing moment which is always waiting to be experienced and then remembered. We yearn for the fullness of this world and thus we discover a love for the present, this here and now, and discover little wisdoms through little deaths. Thus we reach heaven as peace is found in things that we do not see and our feelings, moods, are a reflection of what we call spiritual things, like our emotions and our dreams, and we conquer those obstacles which try to take away what lies inside of us (whether we call this our soul). We meet people with whom we build up common experiences or histories which last out the remainder of our lives until our generation with its common bond of life's struggles and loves dies along with us, only to be replaced by a new generation of unique desires which are partly shaped by what has died and is reborn from generation to generation.

So I consider my own recent past and think of strange images which stay fresh in my mind and which in other ways are far away in my feelings and in my geography. I wake up from my own thoughts and looking at the past I study maps to discover my travels and to seek to see and cling to words to make the past real and not a dream.

I look out to a new tropical dawn with the future still uncertain. I consider the experiences of my trip, especially my last few weeks across different points of this Latin landscape as far as Managua. There is a circle we travel on and a point we return to and so I think of a quote by T.S. Eliot - shown to me by a friend before I went away - which said we return to a place and see it for the first time. (When then do we reach the point of no return?).

I was walking down a street in Managua looking for a Nicaraguan woman I had met six years ago. Jolanda had owned a grocery shop in the street in which Julie - my girlfriend - and I had been

staying. We had built up a friendship with Jolanda, going to her shop to buy bread, Coca Cola and Jolanda would tell Jane of her difficulties of being a single mother. I could not find Jolanda's shop and I did not know where else to look in a city which did not have street signs and addresses. I continued to walk down the street and unexpectedly saw a plaque which I had first spotted six years ago. The plaque was hanging from a thin pole and it was in memory to a twenty year old man who had died during the revolution. I had read the dates of his birth and of his death and learnt that he died only a few days from his birthday. I had printed an etching of this memorial back in Sydney and called it 'The Birthday Martyr'. I was taken by surprise by this image before me; I also thought of the image in my memory and of the printed image. I stood looking at the memorial thinking my present was the future shaped by my past which also was within the present at the same time. (The past, present, future had become as one: is this what they call eternity?).

There was rubbish in the streets.

Six years ago Jolanda had helped to organise the people of the *barrio* to clean up these streets. I remember the cheerful boys who helped with wheelbarrows and shovels to level out a patch of land...this Sunday I walked by some boys who were playing with their spinning tops on the footpath. They only half-smiled at me when I said hello. These boys would play every day and I felt they were trapped in a country which had lost its way and was haunted by the possibility of returning to a past it had tried for more than ten years to escape. The boys stared at their spinning tops...

resurrection sunday, managua

I am standing in the small courtyard of my *pensione* filling up the dry wash basin from the water drum beside it. There are still two days in each week when each *barrio* in Managua has no water from the taps. Six years ago there were two days in each week with no water from the taps. I assume six years from now there will be no water from the taps. Is the denial of things the remaining constant?

The *barrios* take turns on selected days to lose their water supply. Our *barrio* must go without water on Mondays and Tuesdays. I vaguely remember that in the *barrio* where I had stayed six years ago it was Wednesdays and Thursdays. I assume if I return to Managua in another six years I will be somewhere where there is

no water on Fridays and Saturdays. This leaves only Sunday. Where in Managua would it be denied on *this* day? Would it be denied on Resurrection Sunday?

However, there is silence in the streets and there is no water.

managua women

I look at a woman in her late fifties who organises the other women to collect plates, serve people, fill up jugs, wash and cook. The elderly woman smiles at me and brings over my meal. I look over to the grill where the woman who is turning the meat has her back to us; on the other side are three other women who stand very still and block the light has filtered beneath the canopy. They are young but with strong lines etched along their foreheads and alongside their eyes. They have ordered meals to take home to their families. One woman stands with her hand holding her chin, her frowning face turned sideways and her eyes looking towards the ground. Her other hand is on her hip, as if resting the full weight of her body onto her palm. The next woman has folded her arms and glances at the cooking meat. However, her eyes seem to be looking beyond to some point in her mind. The third woman is weighed down by the bag she holds in her hand, but there is an obvious strength in her shoulders which counterpoints her slightly pensive stance. The matter-of-fact nature of their patient postures combines to bond the three women in a shared sense of their daily struggle. Their stillness and their silence does not suggest any submissiveness, but rather a solid inner strength that has allowed them to bear their present hardships.

I instinctively lift my SLR camera and peer through the eyepiece, then I decide to lower it. I think of the Mexican Indians in Chiapas who believe that taking a picture of them is taking to stealing their souls. Similarly, I feel that photographing these women would betray their dignity. They are human beings, not objects. I turn my attention away from the women, and when I look again towards the grill they are gone.

havana november 1992

I followed the other two up the dark stairwell of a building which looked bombed out in its appearance. The small dark room which we entered was crowded with young Afro-Cubans who danced to a Marley beat and who smiled when they shook my hand and offered me rum and we gave out our Marlboros and I was called brother and I saw the Djs to my left with their record player perched on a window sill and everyone was happy and slowly getting drunk and a female grabbed me by the arm and I drank my rum and looked around at the ragged darkness and I danced with her as she caressed my legs with her knees and caressed my groin and we jived to the beat and the music was fast and I saw the happy quivering figures around me and we were all draped by the dark and behind were the guys sitting on the stairwell rail and offering me more rum and politely asking for another Marlboro and smiling and the woman caressed me harder and the music was getting faster and everyone was dancing in this tiny space and her knees were rubbing faster and her face was near my face and the beat was beating and people were saying be happy do not worry be happy and smiling and drinking and rubbing and everything was easy and the beat and the beat was easing and the female stood still in her stupor and another female took her to another dark space and I saw the crowd come like a circle around the guy with the huge cone and I had a Marlboro while I saw the guy get on his knees and the beat the beat the beat was picking up and the air was hot and the grass was burning and sucking and being passed around the tiny dance floor and a tall guy smiled and I told him from where I was and who I was and who was he and a name was given and the Marlboro was given and the rum was given and the air was hot and I was hot and I wanted to breathe and I said goodbye to Louise and I walked down to the ground to the earth waiting for me and the sea lurching in towards the promenade and the tall guy stood before me with his legs spread apart and his arms outstretched holding a bottle of rum and he smiled at me with his quick white smile and the breeze was sending ripples across his white shirt and he was lingering with the breeze and he called me brother as he covered the width and the breadth of everything I could see with his crisscross posture while I passed him by and went away and go away and disappear away into the darkness of a side-street.

From the indefinable shadows of wherever I walked I could sense the outlines of human beings, sometimes on their own and sometimes huddled together, whispering, speaking with each other and on occasions looking briefly towards me, acknowledging my presence. I reached an open street and came across lines of people standing under the spreading glow of the yellow-orange street lamps. Their bodies were half lit up and half in darkness. These people were waiting in silence and the old buildings behind them were draped in long shadows formed from the artificial hues. Both the people and the buildings look tired from the night. I continued with my walk and went by a display of ornaments of the Revolution: a glass building was surrounded by a Russian tank, a jet and other military paraphernalia. I stopped. I wasn't sure of the way:

"CATH-E-DRAL? CATH-E-DRAL?"

"No se, no se." replied the lone passer-by.

I walked on, cursing my bad Spanish pronunciation. As I approached the narrow streets of Old Havana I came across a large flow of people. I entered the stream and meandered - to my relief - to my desired destination. There was a large crowd which filled up much of the cobble stone square in front of the Cathedral. However, sections of the square were cordoned off and only officials or performers could navigate these spaces. I could hear classical music and stood up onto a railing fence mounted into a small brick wall. In front of the church there was a ballet performance with three male dancers strutting behind a female dancer beside an orchestra. I had a good view of the crowd and down beside me I watched several men dressed inelegant, summery nightclub clothes gracefully holding each other. Families were mingling pass the cafes and the whole scenario reminded me that despite the economic severities ravaging this island the people could find through their culture their dignity and pride. The performance stopped. After the handclapping people moved towards a building at the other end of the square. There was an equally large crowd and I realised as midnight approached the handing over the keys of the city was to be performed. Havana was commemorating her birthday. Midnight passed and people were in good spirits. After the ceremony the crowd dispersed and I met up again with Louise. As we both ambled back to towards the Caribbean Hotel I noticed two men who overtook us. Both men were wearing overcoats and snuggled underneath their left arms were two small violin cases.

“The party finished a minute after you left. The lights went on and everyone just went straight home.”

“Look...” I pointed to the musicians. The silhouettes of the two figures which stood out against the yellow light and framed by the narrow street, seemed to capture the forties feel of Old Havana.

“This is Cuba.” I quietly remarked.

phonm penh, december, 1990

From the sixth floor of the Hotel Sokhali we had a grand view of Phnom Penh. We could see the hills beyond the outside of the city. We looked down onto a shanty house on the roof of the building opposite us. A lone girl, perhaps only four years old, was brushing her teeth. I shut the windows. This cuts out the noise. I walked out onto our small balcony. I was immediately reminded that the Sokhali was on a T-intersection. I looked over at the local cinema which was on the other side of the main road facing the front of the hotel. Large billboards of beautiful Indian women and macho guys adorned the front of the building. Cinema crowds continually swirled in and out of the large entrance from which came sounds that ranged from mystical rhythms to cowboy music. On either side of the cinema were flats and units filled with families. Underneath the units were shops which sold household goods, cigarettes, jewellery, food, bottled water, Russian vodka and where black-market money was also displayed behind counter windows. There were barbers, hairdressers, bakeries, stalls, cafes with televisions, restaurants and photography places with the latest Fuji technology. The one constant sound throughout the length and breadth of Phnom Penh was the blare of horns. These came from the many motor scooters and few cars which raced up and down the main road outside the Sokhali. Mingled in between these vehicles were hundreds of bicycles and cyclos, carrying goods as well as passengers, which were invariably always ringing their bells. N.G.O four wheel drives would wound their way through this traffic. I saw a tourist bus which was to me like a bubble protecting its occupants from the filth and noise of the city. Near dusk the dirt of the city would swirl up and cover everybody as the traffic became heavier and thousands of people left their daily chores to go home. Along the pavements would be children playing games which included French skipping, plastic sword fights, hoola hoops, cards and throwing whirling things into the air. Some children along with

a few women would beg. One -legged soldiers could also be seen limping along the walkways or trying to rush across the roads. The cyclos, when stationary, would gather outside the Sokhali and other hotels. Many people would always be walking about and at the intersections were guard posts manned by traffic police. A lone green figure on top of a stand would direct the traffic to stop and go from the centre of these crossroads. The bicycles and cyclos would strain in neat lines waiting for the hand signal which would allow them to move on. Women wearing Peruvian style hats would cling to their husbands on the back of motor scooters. I saw a truck filled with large blocks of ice. One cyclo had his seat stacked with line after line of Coke bottles in crates. The driver could just peer over them to see where he was going. I saw before me people who were simply getting on with their lives. I had concluded that humanity is the same everywhere. I had concluded that here I Phnom Penh there was the constant spectre that these people were hostages to the machinations of international politics. I considered how there was an underlying sense of fatalism in the scenes before me. I realised these people were not in control of their futures. There was a possibility of a return to power by the Khmer Rouge. Thus I looked at a society which hovered on the fringe of a new hell. Any lingering sense of hope could easily be extinguished in such a foreboding climate. I could faintly comprehend the intrusive influence of the United States of America on the course of this country's history. I could see a comparism with the hard expressions I saw on some people's faces during the day with similar expressions I had seen on other people's faces in other countries such as Guatemala. Such people were puppets. (I contrasted Cambodia's plight with the positive scenes I had witnessed in Nicaragua. This other third world society had organised itself into popular organizations from the grassroots up to created their democracy. Until their spirits were worn down by the long drawn out contra war the Nicaraguans had maintained control of their future course). I could easily imagine a curtain of strings, as dense as the seasonal rains, stretching to the sky over Phnom Penh. The warm air of the hot day shrouded each person as the elongated shadows of the sinking sun connected together to bring in the night. There were no street lights. Light would come from the shops. Light would come from the heads of passing vehicles. The noise permeated on, indifferent to whether the world was light or dark. People's conversations cluttered the night sounds.

the killing fields

A man took me on the back of his scooter to the killing fields. This particular day they were officially closed, however, he knew the local guards. For a small amount of money they undid the lock to the swinging gate. I saw the patchwork of group graves on the bushy plain where hundreds of people had been buried. I gazed at the skulls of fifteen year old children which were encased in a high glass tower of skulls built in memory to the deaths of '75 to '78. I read on an outside notice foreigners were also killed. I saw a photograph of a young bearded man from the N.S.W. south coast. Yet, I had expected to see the gravesites of many thousands.

I saw before me the evidence of an amoral universe. Here, in this land of secrets, where there had been secret bombings and a secret genocide. I was uncertain of the truth of the deaths at my feet. I have no reason not to believe the skeletons in the earth below me were placed there by the Khmer Rouge. However, it has been said amongst the million people killed in the Democratic Kampuchea many had died from unavoidable starvation. It is said tribal groups, which were only within a minimal sphere of influence of the Khmer Rouge leadership, had committed their own revengeful massacres. It has been said lives were saved by the Khmer Rouge by forcing the population to leave the cities to work the rice fields. It has been said the genocide figures in the Democratic Kampuchea were exaggerated by the Americans as evidence to justify their own bloody incursion against communism in Indochina. I feel the present government would use these deaths to justify a prolonged hold on power. Thus, the memory of this genocide is used to the advantage of the main power players. I wonder if only the people who lived through this suffering care what happened?

However, I do believe the Khmer Rouge are murderers.

However, I do believe the American bombing was murderous.

I turn to the man who brought me here and tell him I find it hard to believe his fellow Khmers could be so cruel. He agrees.

landmines

"I was amazed when the veterinarian on the day we were leaving told me that Phnom Penh had a serious rabies problem. "Every dog has probably got it and nothing's being done...I was working in Nicaragua before coming here and the U.S. are screwing around

here the same way they are over in Central America.” The veterinarian placed his feet up on the seat in front of him. He was also catching the plane to Vientiane and it looked as if it would be a long wait. We had arrived early due to the insistence of the Government Tourist Office who had their guide taking us to the airport first thing this morning. However, unbeknown to him the two college boys and Tes were hitching a ride with us. Unlike the day before when he had conversed with us while waiting for our flight to Ankor Wat our guide left us as soon as he saw we were in the waiting lounge. “The Chinese supply the KR with their military hardware. Have you heard of U.S. AID?”

I shook my head.

“It’s the United States International Development Aid Agency – over here it’s based in Bangkok. If you ring up the Director,” the veterinarian grinned, “he’ll tell you how they supply the KR with their infrastructure through the camps on the Thai border...you know, things like roads, food supplies...it’s all payback on Vietnam.” He mentioned mines... “there’s people who have designed those things which look like toy frogs etc. so when a child picks one up...”

Yesterday I had seen a six year old child, missing a leg, slowly hobbling down the road outside the Sokhali supported by his two crutches. Within two weeks I would become familiar with the term ‘collateral damage.’ Human beings turning into human particles. There is method in the madness.

leaving ankor wat

We were ready for our flight back and T.T. and the other guide were waiting for us outside the hotel. Julia had earlier handed T.T. two American dollars. This was the leftover of the money we had originally budgeted for the photographic payment. Yet as the van drove towards the airport we both felt we could have given T.T. a larger bonus, especially when T.T. showed us the mound wall he would be spending the night.

“The people in the villages live in their houses during the day but if they are scared of attacks they come back to the town at dusk. The people are safe because the government offices in the town are the main targets for the Khmer Rouge.”

“These people are so downtrodden.” sighs Julia.

We reached the airport and as we sat in the waiting room I walked over to a window and called out to T.T. who was sitting beside the van on the far side of the road. I eventually caught his attention and T.T. walked quickly towards me and passed the guard standing near the window. I shook T.T's hand and he smiled and said thank you as I slipped him the extra money.

on the road to bayon

During the morning drive to Bayon I had also been struck by the sight of a large army truck. The vehicle was overflowing with government soldiers which also had a heavy machine-gun nestled on top of the cabin. It was a classic image which reminded me we were experiencing a pleasant tourist day in a war zone. Those men could have been going to their deaths but such a thought, in the relative comfort of our spacious van, seemed too unreal to take seriously.

arcadia diary entry cyprus 1982*

*based on my father's village ayos theodoros which is in the vicinity of Lanarca

'I go up to the cafe to watch the old guys play *tavli* or backgammon as we know this game in Australia; they move their counters across the board so quickly and with such knowledge as to defy fate. At night these same will men herd inside the *kafenion* to watch the news or watch a cowboy video. Westerns are a real favourite and it helps me to understand my father's pre-occupation with John Wayne and Bonanza. I saw in the early afternoon the priest with his long black beard and black robes framed by the door of the grocery shop...a barber cuts a man's hair amidst the orange twilight...nearby there is a red telephone booth which is the only connection to the outside world...I look back at the open green doors of the barber shop which provide a Matisse contrast of colour to the white sandstone building. I meandered through the narrow streets, amidst the eerily cast shadows of buildings, to see women preparing dinner in their houses; in a small front room of another house there were two young men practising in spectacular fashion a dance routine whereby their right feet rose quickly way up to their waists. Other young men were going to the cafe dressed in their most expensive clothes as if going to a nightclub. I also saw a small group of old men keeping warm around a

charcoal fire. On a distant hill an old shepherd was with his goat herd; I could hear the bells around their necks tinkering delicately together. I thought of visiting my elderly aunt who I often laugh with; enjoying her sardonic humour and wry wisdom, always making a point about her matriarchal authority in the pecking order of the family 'despite what the men might think'. I went towards her small sandstone house with the large kitchen which - like so many houses in the village - had a solar panel on its flat roof. I saw the rays of the setting sun glinting on all of them...on the way I passed the cafe where there were still a few elder men grouped together playing cards, talking seriously about family life, politics or catching up on village gossip. As I came closer to my aunt's house I was greeted by 'The American'; an elderly Cypriot man who has returned from his a life in New York to spend the last few years of his life in the village of his birth. He greeted me from the top of his donkey with whom he had been collecting firewood. Yes I will visit him tomorrow for lunch and see again his Brooklyn wife who in her old age was finding this village life too hard to adjust too; the people were too narrow-minded 'very parochial! they treat me as if I was a witch!' and she would caustically complain that the Greek kitchens were so big that you needed roller skates to get from end from end. I farewelled the American who has asked me to give his greetings to my elderly uncle and 'congratulations to the birth of the lamb in the morning.' I assured the American that to celebrate I would be drinking much red farm wine with my uncle tonight. I greeted my aunt, I smelled the fresh bread just prepared in the outside clay oven. I shall have some village red wine, *doumakais* fresh bread and *haloumi*...oh yes this is the life...'

bluefields st.jerome's day october 1992

'...devils were running down the muddy street. The heavy rain was not deterring them. Intrigued by the gradually increasing numbers of demons I walked down to the main intersection of Bluefields. Many young men were dressed as old women wearing dresses that came down to their feet and sprawling over large behinds. These men were also wearing colourful face masks and carrying long sticks in their hands. From the intersection the road inclined gradually until it reached the market sheds which were beside the wharves. To the right on this last stretch of the road was a restaurant bar which was filled with 'old women' and blaring Carib

music. A crowd of spectators was building up and hovering over Bluefields was a grey sky spitting water drops. I stood beside the women selling bread on a corner and watched the 'old women' who were coming out of the shop. They were running up to the young girls in the crowd and hitting them with their sticks. Amongst these 'old women' was the one wearing the dress of the U.S. flag. The crowd, filled with trumpeters, drummers and men shooting off skyrockets which they were holding in their hands, started to venture down past the wooden buildings of the main street of Bluefields. I looked over from where I stood beside the restaurant bar and noticed the lone 'old woman' who was tightly gripping his stick and standing to one side of the large stone warehouse which was behind him. Along the front of the warehouse was the name SOMOZA with the part of where the Z of the stone lettering broken away. I thought of the ex-dictator, of the past contra war and of the old woman whose body was covered by the United States flag and who had resumed striking several spectators...'

managua october 1992

I

Finishing our meal we cross the road and wait outside a bingo hall to catch the bus. I looked back towards where we had eaten and thought how my camera was like a weapon invading the cultural space of the societies I visited. I felt the weight of my camera in my hand and considered how this sophisticated toy symbolized privilege and accentuated the barriers which existed between myself and those I photographed.

I eyed the closed hall which was behind me and recalled the night before when we had looked through the large open doorways and sighted two huge electronic number boards against a large white back wall. Women attendants had been walking up and down aisles where hundreds of people had been sitting behind rows of tables, penning in their bingo cards. There was a constant mutter of noise and bright light which stood in stark contrast to the greys of the streets. There was a smudge of life in this scene as people took the chance to gain a little victory.

We had just walked from a small shopping centre, positioned beside a large roundabout half a mile up a gradual incline from the street-side restaurant. Heavy traffic laboured up and down this hill

where there was an assortment of houses and businesses lined on both sides of a wide road.

Walking up the hill towards a fountain which was situated in the centre of the roundabout my eyes gazed into the interior of a barber shop which was four shopfronts long. I examined the serious facial expressions of the male customers which displayed the high value they placed on their machismo haircuts. When we reached the shops I felt I had been there before and remembered eating pizza with several people at this shopping centre six years ago. A series of steps led to the top of the fountain from where we sat and saw a huge mannequin walking past the shops. She wore a long flowing blue dress and walked on stilts. Several children had surrounded the female giant who was now negotiating the traffic which sped into the roundabout. Drivers honked their horns as they sighted the mannequin who finally disappeared into the silent darkness of another street.

Down at the base of the fountain a showman had set up a shooting gallery. The tall curly haired man had a loudhailer to encourage passers-by to test their shooting skills. He would hand his show rifle to the boys who emerged from the forming crowd. They would have a shot at one of the many plastic toy soldiers which stood in several rows of a large, square wooden frame. On display were prizes such as Chinese face fans and small shampoo bottles. The small crowd cheered when the only girl who had a go shot down a soldier three straight times. The noise from the cars, the loud hailer and the conversations from the people walking about the fountain and shops were putting life into this Saturday night. Further on, by the pizza shops and ice cream parlour, were two mariachi bands competing for the attention of those sitting around the outside tables of a restaurant. An audience was leaving a movie house to our far left which was showing American action films. While men with Polaroid cameras walked the steps of the fountain offering their services to the families who were sitting along the top. Children held balloons and licked ice creams.

People had the company of each other and were making their own worlds within a world which offered them very little. We go down by the University of Central America. The UCA is a Jesuit university and across the road from its barren grounds and barrack-like buildings there is a carnival. There are dodgem cars, a variety of shooting galleries and a large ferris wheel. Next to the carnival is a huge dance hall where crowds of young people are jockeying to go inside. The music blares out each time the door is opened. We watch these people as the bus comes to take us to the *pensione*.

There is no reference to Columbus Day as people envelop their dreams in the vibrant swirling colours of the carnival or the swirling sounds of the crowded dance floor.

When we reached our home the two of us sat out in the courtyard and watched the full moon. I brought out my dictaphone which I was using to tape the sounds of the world around me and played the soundtrack to 'Paris Texas.' We each smoked a 'roll your own' and listened in silence to the haunting sounds.

II

Luis who works at the *pensione* walked around with a hose filling up containers with water. He was stripped down to the waist and wearing green military pants. I guessed his age to be somewhere in the late twenties...Luis walked over and sat down beside me. He was intrigued by the non-filter cigarette I was smoking.

I showed him the Drum pouch. "*Cigarillos para Norte Americano.*" I remarked.

I rolled a cigarette for Luis who started to cough after his first drag.

"*Fuete.*" Luis said no more. He knew the limits of my poor Spanish. The tobacco was very strong for him. Luis rubbed his leg. He stood up, kicked the air, then rubbed his leg again. Luis explained to me he had hurt it at his kickboxing class. I turned the tape around as Luis sat back down.

"*Americano music.*" I stated.

Luis listened with interest and then made a favourable remark when *Cancion Mixteca* came on.

I tried to explain to him this was my second visit to Nicaragua: "*Siete anos...ago...*" I did a backflip with my palm... "*Sandinista muy fuerte...very strong...*" I referred to the past.

Luis did not say anything. He stood up and left the courtyard. I listened to the lingering serenade and smoked the last of my rollie. I wondered if I had offended Luis.

THE NIKIAD

(Orpheus and the Underworld)

by
David Stark

(A guest appearance, the poet would wish me to note that this is a work-in-progress...I haven't given him the chance yet to finalize his draft).

*So tell me, dear Orpheus
Did you brave the Underworld
Surrounded by the sons of Aeolus
Mighty demi-gods of talk, words
And empty winds
Unleashed from leather bags
Clutched to expansive
Borea's chest
On a 423 bus
Now leaving for Homer Street"*

*Ah, holy fool!
We, having met
In some pleasant resting place
On Glebe. We having
Looked in at the errant daughters of Sappho
And seen the face of Alcaeus
Who is H.G. Nelson.
This thing having been done
And the epistles having been sent
By winged Hermes,
God of messengers
Who scooped out tortoise flesh
To make Golden Helios his lyre.
We, the noble son of Cyprus
And the battered Hibernian
Did enter the mouth of Hell
Where, outride glimpses of
Elysian fields of Lansdowne
Where weak men
Overcome by sleep inducing nectar
Dream of stronger limbs*

*Which they never used (or even had)
On fields of competition
For the Glory of Aries or Mars
As he is called
By the Roman sons of noble Brutus.
We two did enter that
Dread chariot
I paid my obol to Charon
The ferryman who let me on his blessed bark
Thou however, oh deceptive child
Of the Agean race
Who did, through cunning Ulysess
Favourite hero of the noble Dubh-lin bard
Of glinting, unseeing spectacles
Who told of faithless women
Whose infidelity makes them
The more enticing and appealing.
Thou, oh son of all-seeing
Thunderbolt hurling Zeus,
Didn't thou not fumble for that
Cursed wallet which you had secreted
In thy unholy bag in which lay
The serpent-wreathed,
Snake-headed loveliness and horror
Of stoney-eyed Medusa?
Producing the ferryman's coin
We sat at the door, hesitant
While the truly dead
Sought crowded passage
On the angry old man's boat.
I, unwilling to proceed further,
Thou however, determined to renew
Old acquaintance with your
Beloved source of inspiration
Lovely Eurydice
Did urge me to press forward
To the darker parts
Of subterranean gloom
Wherein we encountered
Oh, 'lack a day
Dreaded Cerberus,
Three-headed savage
Gatekeeper of Hades*

*Lurking against a cavern wall.
 Thou, wisely spying, the unholy thrice-headed canine
 While I, the gullible Hibernian
 Did sit beside this strange beast
 More weird than the creation
 Of miscegeneating Minos,
 Cretan progenitor of Teutonic Frankenstein
 Conceived by a handmaiden, Mary
 Sired by the Shelleys, whose liquor
 Thy thunderous father, the horse whisperer
 Did once sell in the streets of
 The blind and noble bard.
 Did I not read thy little book?
 Did I not offer opinion,
 Tell thee how the noble youth, Arion
 Who, astride a dolphin
 Was carried to fair Atlantis
 Called Terra Nullius
 By the Philistine hordes of Londinium
 Who didst murder and rape
 Its indigenous people
 As they likewise dealt cruelly with
 The noble sons and daughters
 Of Hibernia and Scotia
 And also fair Cambria
 Called Cymru, by the Western bards?
 Did not golden, Arion, like unto
 Famed Milo, he of enormous strength,
 The wrestler, take the world's laurel
 With famed atomic drop,
 Dispatching all, its broken body
 To the wastelands of one wheat-belted
 Trojan plains?
 Sing, oh broken lyred muse
 How our warrior's talk
 Did disturb unhappy Cerberus
 The ghostly offspring
 Of cursed Typhaon and Echidna?
 And did not this thrice-headed
 Monster make much moan
 Of our noble conversation?
 did he not tempt thee
 To the very inner sanctum*

*Of lowest Hades
Wherein thou should encounter
Thrones of stolen Persephone
And Hades (Dis) himself
Arrayed in all his
Fiendish fury?
Didst thou go?
Didst thou go to dine
Oh baked funeral meats
Of long dead poets
Of messengers, heirs of
Fleet-footed Hermes?
I fear golden voiced
Sappho was not there
Nor were any of the fair
Daughters of Lesbos
Did he Aeolian harp
Play out its sweet
Yet doleful song
To the wine-inbibing
Exhaltations of journalists.
I think not.
Did you return to the noble
Bard-named home of thy
Much be loved, honoured parents
And didst then even once, turn thy
Weary traveller's head and glimpse
Eurydice?*

PLANET OF THE ARABS

Yes Charlton Heston
You escape from a village
Filled with kebabs
Falafels
Women underneath a thousand cloaks and facemasks
To venture into a desert
By a sea
Chased by old men with turbans
And young men with Kalashnikovs
To stumble upon
That eroded Statue of Liberty
You hear that old sahib laughing
In your head
Everything he said is true
The infidel lost to Allah
Charlton on his knees
In the surf
Washing off that garlic stench
Weeping for apple pie
“You maniacs!”

Animal Conference

My father once told me its best to let a person think you are stupid
so you can always be one step ahead

I often wonder if the whole animal kingdom has taken heed of his
advice

After all, who is it who is paying taxes, working nine to five,
committing daily acts of atrocities?

The animals will get together one day
To have the last laugh

I know what one orang-utang will be saying: “You should see
these humans! They all stand ankle deep in water while I eat all
their bananas! They do that to keep me away because they think I
hate water! You think I’d ever ‘manhandle’ one of them when they
come everyday to see me and give me a free feed! These human
beings are *so stupid!* Pass me another cigar!”

I know he will say this because one day it was me who was there.
Orang-utangs are suppose to be shy, scared of us. Yet I’ve never

before seen someone scamper so fast to meet me as well as everyone else on that Sumatra tour group. (Except my nephew and niece, children with their still untainted primal spirit also know a sucker when they see one...).

Next time a scientist says we are the most developed species on the planet maybe we should be more forthright and just ask him to pull the other one...

I know the monkeys are pulling their tails in absolute joy. I can hear one of them howling now: "Hear that guys! Them humans think they're smarter than us! No wonder we always look so dumbfounded when we see one of them guys with a mike and video camera whisper this while lying in all that smelly slimy muck at the bottom of the trees! Lets go back to the jungle (while it's still there...) and mooch around while those humans go honk their horns in another one of their goddam traffic jams! Why don't they shut up with their infernal racket so we can all get some sleep?"

Why indeed!

Test Of Friendship

We parked the car
And saw this guy across the road
At night getting out of his car
And thought it maybe Charles Bukowski
However it wasn't the great writer
Who took in stray cats
It turned out we met another stray
Fenwick
Straying late to get to the Ashfield flat
Where we were all waiting for him
He said he had lost his way
He said he didn't know the doorway was around the side
And not up front
We all agreed
Over wine and cheese and candle lights
Things are never simple in the BIG city
He said that he would like to go away for a couple of days
Perhaps around Christmas time
Say to the Southern Highlands
On his own
Pencil in the days in his diary
And knock back all invites

On that day
And the day after
That day
I thought if I were getting married on one of those days
Would he not then come to the wedding?
Even if I asked him to be best man?
So he could proceed
To enjoy his profound sense of solitude
in nature?
Indeed!
I wonder...yes I wondered-
But I didn't say anything
I didn't want to spoil Fenwick's thunder
As we were all amused
By his musing.
(Phew!
This little mental
Testing is over!)

'Newtown Multiculturalism'

(to all those fine inner-city people I present a cynic's point-of-view...)

Oh!
Look there's a new Moroccan recipe
In the Good Weekend!
Yes we'll make it tonight but
first
Lets go up to El Basha's
for a coffee!
Tonight we will see some Italian acapella!
Then go to the Roman Forum for pizza!
Tomorrow we'll be really adventurous
and drive all the way out to Cabramatta for a laksa!
I wont forget to tape the late night French movie
on SBS!
Hurry on then!
Time to go to yoga!
Time to go to flamenco dancing!
Time to go to tai-chi!

Time to go to the Asian cooking class!
Time to listen to some Indian music!
Time to listen to Arabic Music!
Time to drink some Greek coffee!
Time to drink some green Chinese tea!
Time to go to buy those bongo drums!
Time to go have our hair done in African braids!
Time to go to the Dendy to catch the latest Iranian film!
Time to go to buy some milk off the old Greek man up the road!
Time to buy our croissants and bread rolls off the young
Vietnamese woman!
Time to go to Canterbury-Bankstown's football match and watch
another goal scored by El Masri!
Time to go to Chinatown!
Time to go to the outside Asian food stalls at the Botanical
Gardens!
Time to have some tantric sex!
Time to buy some curry from the Fijian Market!
Time to buy a new incense stick holders from Eastern Flair!
Time to buy a new sari!
Time to go to the Labor 'do' at the Cyprus Club to see the election
results!
Time to make a complaint to the Daily Telegraph for their latest
'cultural stereotype' article!
Time to go have some Thai for lunch!
Time to buy Japanese sushi!
Hey!
STOP THE PRESS!
Just for something REALLY different
why don't we
get ourselves
some
meat
pies
filled with really big fat chunky grizzly bits
then have a big t-bone steak
then go buy some french fries
and a big bottle of Coke
and have some big greasy sausages for tomorrow's breakfast
with lot's of butter and full fat milk in our Weetbix as a second
course and then
watch the Footy Show tomorrow night or Australia's Funniest
Videos on Saturday night and the The Block on Sunday night and

watch the Channel Nine News and Current Affair for the whole week and Friends and Blue Heelers and go to the Cold Chisel farewell tour?

Lets!!!

(But don't tell anyone...)

Stuff

Watchout that the stuff in your head isn't straw from another Parallel Universe you'd rather avoid if you really knew where your head was at...

By the way

An excursion into what you

Think is the Real World

May mean escaping

From what you think

Is an Alternative Universe

Filled with 'culture stuff'

Or 'sport stuff'

Or 'money stuff'

Or 'politics stuff'

Or 'religious stuff'

Or 'family stuff'

Or 'sex stuff'

Or 'race stuff'

Or 'tv stuff'

Or 'environment stuff'

Or 'war stuff'

Or 'health stuff'

Or 'school stuff'

Or 'work stuff'

Or 'death stuff'

Or 'love stuff'

Or 'lonely stuff'

Or 'war stuff'

Or 'happy stuff'

Or 'sad stuff'

Or 'nature stuff'

Or 'shallow stuff'

Or 'deep stuff'

Or 'party stuff'

Or 'dinner talk stuff'

Or 'reading stuff'
Or 'mind stuff'
Or 'universe stuff'
Or 'travel stuff'
Or 'atheist stuff'
How
Much stuff
Is out
There?
A
Lot more
Than
You and
Me
Will
Ever
Know...

Make A Religion Salad That Will Be Good For BUSINESS!!!

The Buddhists!
The Muslims!
The Orthodox!
The Coptics!
The Hindus!
The Jews!
The Pentacostals!

All have such absorbing religious customs which we can absorb into our point-of-view so we can USE a bit of each of THE BEST BITS for OUR BENEFIT & WE'LL KNOW IT'S GOOD WHEN WE SEE THAT WE'RE BLESSED WITH HAVING MORE MONEY! JUST KISS OUR BIG BIG BIG WALLETS! Take a bit of Shiva
with Allah
with Moses
with John the Baptist
with Mary Magdalene
with Mother Teresa
with the Rainbow Serpent
and with a dose of New Age spirituality
or really loud tongue-speaking

and be really CALM inside
when we finish our meditation tape and LOOK AT OUR BIG BANK
ACCOUNTS because our cleared heads helped us to make
REALLY GOOD BUSINESS DECISIONS!

And remember we can give a few cents to a charity because it's
TAX EXEMPT and we can kid ourselves and everyone else that
we are really GOOD PEOPLE !!!

Also we can be real FREE THINKERS because if we don't like the
recipe we can just change it until we find something we're happy
with until WE FEEL REAL GOOD!!!

Followers of a ME ME ME religion

Should be burnt at the stake

A little bloodthirsty

Cruel

Barbaric

You say?

But

After all

Those who live by a narrow-minded way should die by a narrow
minded way

That's what fundamentalists preach (as they swing their verbal and
sometimes real swords!)

So they should be happy to practise their own teachings

Filled with selfish ambitions

They should pay for their selfishness

With their lives

SO SAYETH THE LORD!

Political Condom

(A not so nice sensitive ode to September 11...)

Uncle Sam

Screwing around

in the Middle East

Asia

the Pacific

Latin America

Africa

Why even over in gay *Paree*

and Germany!

Hey Uncle Sam don't you know
you shouldn't let yourself
be exposed to so much disease?
Or as the U.S. Secretary General of Health also warns and
complains:
giving off disease!
Be a responsible citizen!
Think before act!
That's what's suppose to make us different from the
Cro-Magnan
Even though he had no Magnum...
(H.I.V.
Syphillus
Malaria
Starvation
Exploitation
Racism
Cultural Misunderstanding
Total ignorance
Sex Tourism
Military Terror
Genocide
Political Manipulation
Anti-American Protest
Flag Burning
Anti-Democratic Hypocrisies
Hostage taking
Oil taking
Ground Zero
Just to name a few bad, unhealthy things...)
You should look out for these symptoms
After all look what happened to you
when you got caught
with your pants down
without
proper protection!

A Postscript to all the Terror

I
Really
Pity the three thousand victims
Who died when the towers crashed
And the thousands
That have died after them...
It's all just a sheer waste of life
(Like it's always been in wars for thousands upon thousands of
years and will be for the thousands of years that are yet to
come...)
Why don't all the bad people in this world just leave the good
people alone?
(I think you know what I mean...)

Lust for Iraq

Here they come
The Great Whore
Is dropping all her little whores
Over the biblical cities
Unzip
Their flimsy suits
Spread their legs
In the streets
Of
Baghdad
Felujjah
Najaf
Kufa
Basra
Covering their heads
To respect local customs
And a religion in middle age crisis
"There's no need no more
To blow yourself into smithereens
Over all the marines!
Come and get it boys!
The tab's on Uncle Sam!
We're all virgins!"

A knowing wink
Peace comes
All
Over
The
Land

Insightful Questions

Does paper come from trees?
Does blood flow in our arteries and veins?
Does the moon go around the earth?
Does the sun rise at dawn and go down at nightfall?
Does the government lie to keep in power?

A Little Ode To Those Who Spend A Lot Of Time On Their Own

I read the title to the Charles Bukowski book of poems:
You Get So Alone At Times That It Just Makes Sense
I read that title before I went over to see my mum
Who spends her days in her chair because of the MS
I cheer her up

Songwriting is a Gift

I listened a lot to Nick Cave today
Listened to the songs he gave to all of us
Especially to the Weeping Song and Shipping Song
They kinda go hand in hand together
Because the shamans say we travel in a boat to the other world
when we die
And it's at the end of our days we may want to weep or others may
want to weep for us
Like at the funeral for instance
but we may have a lot of joy before that day and maybe even on
that day
anyhow it doesn't hurt to live that way

Hey!
With this thought in tow
I wrote a lot of poems
this day...

p.s. just write it as it is...

Stop Watch

Did someone die today?
My watch stopped working while I was half-heartedly watching
some daytime show about an accident-prone anthropologist guy
trying to find about a busload of child ghosts
moving cars off an old railway track
near some small spooky out-of-town town
eight kids died when the bus got stuck there one day
when the guy went into town the people were really strange
No one would talk to him
All like zombies
But they weren't
One of them beat him up
a visit to prison to meet
the maintenance guy who didn't do a good job on the bus that
caused the accident: "...that bus stopped dead on the tracks the
train comes...you know the rest of the story..."
wanted to spend the rest of his life in jail
not just the fifteen years the judge gave him
he asked for more
but the judge wouldn't give it to him
this guy's son died that day
I turned the t.v. off
it's sad to watch bad daytime melodrama
trying to haphazardly play with your feelings
especially
on a sunny Autumn day
where the glow of the sun is not haphazard
shining all over your body
making the skin tingle
making you feel glad to be alive
only looking at it after watching the news to see about the hostage
crisis in Iraq

that Italian guy died a hero
he looked his executioner in the eye
when that bullet drilled it's way into the head
and when he said before this terrible thing happened: "I'll show you
how an Italian can die!"

At least the Australian aid worker was freed
her faceless captors said they were good guys
from mouths that moved underneath their scarfs
(Where do you think all these Iraqi freedom fighters get all those
rocket grenade launchers?)

Anyhow lots of other gun totin' men are the bad guys
yes

I
went outside to take in the sun
read my book

Alejo Carpenter's The Chase
Sat down

I turned the page to read about a guy whose watch had stopped
hey a coincidence...

anyhow in the story no point in this guy getting it started again
today

he had just been sentenced to death in some nice colonial room
by thugs, revolutionaries, police...don't know...(does it matter?
sometimes in those Latin countries there's no difference
then again go and ask Bjelke-Peterson's police force)
anyhow no need for a man who is about to die to know the time
time stopped for him by a bullet in the neck underneath a big tree
it was night

talk about ghosts

feels funny to walk around the house without my watch
on my wrist

I have no idea of the time
not good if you have to go somewhere
hey I wonder: did someone die today?

(A bit of a gumby ending but that's

The way it is sometimes

Unless you want to do something about it or suggest something
constructive...)

East Timor With Friends Like These Who Needs Enemies?

Sorry East Timor for giving you your freedom but stealing your oil,
hey we're much bigger than you so we need more of it you jobless,
starving twirps! Don't bully us around!

So 'sorry east timor' for lying about the numbers killed

And who killed them

but we had good reason

to keep the TNI on side

after all we trained them

(with our very own S.A.S.

but that's supposed to be

a top secret)

there our friends

and its always been the australian way to stay loyal

what's that you say?

you were loyal to us when over forty thousand east timorese died

helping out a handful of Australian guerillas in the second world

war

against the Japanese who now happen to be our biggest trading

partner who are now keeping the Australian way of life afloat?

Hey we helped you out didn't we?

stopped more killing even though we could have stopped it all

together

bit slow off the mark but only did it when things started to look a bit

embarrassing

sorry about december 1975

but hey we were just as bad on our own who died on the border

we didn't give a stuff about those five journos

what were they doing there trying to find out about the truth?

didn't they know we left the truth to jakarta?

sorry again,sincerely,

but hey there was that coup in Canberra

and that other thing called the Cold War

what were you compared to keeping the shipping lanes open to

the Indian Ocean for all those american carriers, submarines and

destroyers?

Sorry about the massacres but you'll get over it

We have.

Intelligence Postscript

Hey East Timor
You again?
Listen I'll tell you now:
We even vilified those intelligence officers
Who tried to expose our intelligence faults
And the true extent of the massacres
They hurt our feelings
(What a downer...)

Work for the Dole in the S.A.S.

Yeah that's right !
What Ica said at his b.b.q
If those S.A.S guys can't do their job in 100 days like the work-for-dole people then they should have their defence funding cut
Just like everyone else who has to meet their deadlines!
That's fair isn't?

The Bold and the Beautiful

After watching the Bold and the Beautiful
The Greek gods and goddesses
Look at each other
Confused
Zeus,
(That look-a-like Mosimo),
equally bewildered,
looking thoughtful,
why even philosophical:
with bushy eyebrows raised
stroking a stiffened bushy beard
decides he
as the king executive of Mt.Olympus
must speak:
"After all the adultery,
violent petulance, lust,
shallow sentimentality,
mindless childishness,
greed, hatred, vanity, malice,

vileness, ruthlessness,
treachery
and moral banality
that we've gotten
up too
who could imagine
that things
could get
as worse
as this?"
(However,
these divine philanderers
all stay glued
to the
oracle set).

Evil Eye

Sheila,
That so called evil woman in B&B,
(Who, by the way, has never received any hate mail)
Influencing the lives and fates
Of the vain likes
Of Ridge, Brooke
And also humble Taylor (oh Taylor you were the one good person
with a pure heart, be felled by 'pure evil')
looks back at her audience on Mt. Olympus
"Why they've all got sly pretty eyes just like me!"
She looks especially bemused when she glances a glint in the eye
of Artemis, a vindictive deadly
godly
virgin
moonlight
huntress who can count the likes of the hunter Orion as one of her
many hunted down male victims. Yes, she above all appreciates
the mad power of Sheila's psychotic rationalizations: "I've been so
hurt by all of you, when I wanted to help all of you, I've been so
self-sacrificing only to suffer so much pain!"
Yes, Artemis and the vengeful likes of other goddesses such as
Hera, (that fed-up wife of a womanizing Zeus) appreciate Sheila
viewing her 'suffering altruism' via the barrel of her gun!

Honesty is the Best Policy

‘BANG! BANG!’

“You’re dead!” laughs Sheila. “Oh sorry got the wrong person! Sorry about that! Didn’t mean no harm! I was just bluffing! It was just meant to be a little joke! I promise not to do it again! Give you some money for the clean up! Just give me one more chance! I really do try to think what’s best for everybody and not just FOR MYSELF! Give back the world, yes to ALL of you it’s Garden of Eden...How could you be so mean! So vindictive towards me! After all I’ve done! How hurtful! It’s not fair! I’ll get you all for this!”

Sheila, you

Symbol of infamy,

(From the land of imperial boldness and beauty...)

America should have a giant bronze cast done of you holding up a gun, With a mad-dog look in your eyes, smiling,

To replace the Statue of Liberty,

Get rid of all that welcoming the homeless of the world hocus pocus

Have Sheila’s gun pointed at the United Nations

It would at least be a more honest statement

of the state of your

nation

(Where’s my bullet proof vest?)

The Warning that Ulysses Provides

America,

Seeing you are turning more and more into a one-eyed bigot,

Have you ever thought of renaming Washington: Polyphemus?

At least then you might recall that this Cyclops was blinded

By the likes of a ‘nobody’ such as Ulysses

Hey America, watch out, you might still be brought down!

After all there’s a lot of nobodies out there!

Balmaitis

(Lest we forget says the Great Cynic)

Hey let's sit around
And play hippie songs
On our guitars
Then go off
And
Smoke a joint
We're so cool
So free
So 'radical'...
As
long as we forget
the fact that we
spend the week
working for some
multinational company
screwing people
in some third world country
or for some accounting
firm configuring the figures
for some local factory
laying off more workers
Hey we're young, get lots of money
And think really 'cool' things
Wear really 'cool' clothes
Live in really 'cool' expensive places
What's wrong with that?

Non Profit

When is a prophet not a prophet?
When he is a socket
In some pocket
Of the machinery
Of
Power
Hey smarty-pants!

Don't think about the money!
Don't be like that!
Don't be a non-prophet!
With no go zones
in the head!
With only go zones
in the wallet!
Don't hock your integrity!
Sock it to them!

Brighton Rock

When I think of all those macho European guys
in those cafes
At Brighton
I wonder if they swam
At the bay beach
across the road
When they were kids
just like I did
when my uncle
took us there
All the migrants did the same
because there was no surf
Some of those kids
Grown up
Still do...

A Faith-full Son's Call for Divine Wrath on a Mortal Coil...

(No love song here Mr. Eliot...)

My spiritual father is Zeus,
My spiritual mother is Athena,
I will petition to them,
My divine protectors,
To make sure that you understand that you are
Only a puny mortal
Who will make sure

for that reason
That you will never forget
That you are no better
Than a worm...
Yes
Beware the Greek
Outside Troy's walls
Who feels betrayed by cruel fate
And its seemingly impossible aims and demands upon him
(Yes watch out for those Three Fates
Those 'violent *femmes*'
Who desire only
To determine,
and
size up - i.e. the length
and breadth -
of
each
human life)
For one thing it is certain
The Greek's 'gift'
(Yes...as history tells us:
That Trojan horse on hand...
That offer to resolve uncertain war
With certain peace
To find human satisfaction
with no hard feelings...)
Will have
Unsatisfaction guaranteed
With no life on offer back
to the one that will be taken
Oh gods!
(To your irrational divine vengeance):
Hallelujah!
Hallelujah!
Hallelujah!

**This poem was initially written in response to the following e-mail from David Fenwick: Nic, I apologise for causing this disclaimer. How ever now the chicks know you are a politically incorrect anti-insensitive-new-age-guy. You have been outed. You have been exposed as the same as the rest of us. You are Ica's beast of burden, his leering hunchback, his maladrous slave. You are outside the city wall. The Femmes have disowned you.*

Achilles' Hand

Maradona!
Maradona!
I saw you from the foyer of the International Hotel in Managua
While the Sandinistas were still in power
When there was still a chance
Of success for the modern Davids against the great Goliath
When you
Not a David but not a Goliath either
Rather more like an Achilles
scored that famous
glorious
dramatic
divine
fantastic
brilliant
miraculous
stupendous
victorious
goal
Against the English
GOAL!!

The boorish English fan
Opposite me was not pleased
“Bloody Argie!”
(I really wondered what he was doing in this country)
Yet
You
Maradona
The very hand of God
(Not just the hand itself)
Which had not been so poetic
Since the start of the Creation
That BIG BANG
For Argentina!
Had provided a magnificent victory
(Much like the hands of Jesus had fed the five thousand
Yet you in one masterly
Single stroke
Fed much more!)
Millions had eyed

The visual feast
Millions who felt for one single moment
The bliss of heaven
The happy eternity of that paradise
Captured on replay
After replay
After replay
(Italian hot blooded Beatrice from her Emyrean
Smiled her joy down at you
The first South American saint
Since the great Pele)
A great comeback
For your country
After that malicious silly war exploited by the Iron Maiden
Why! I was there outside the football ground
after Westham played Sunderland
for a one all draw
To see the English huddled around a single transistor
(Including this aggrieved looking burly policeman)
And everyone was surprised
Even horrified
That the Argies
had sunk the H.M.S. Sheffield
in 'their' so
so
English Falklands
The Maldives
A group of South Atlantic Islands
With English sheep
And English farmhouses
And English farmers
And English flags
Reflecting misplaced English pride
Yes a bunch of specks of rock in a great ocean
Was
Previously unheard of
That U.S. Marine on holiday I met on a slow Spanish train informed
me that England was at war
"That we should kick ass like the British!"
I asked him who they were fighting
"Argentina!"
I was dumbfounded
struck silent

I still ask myself after all these years: was I dreaming?
Yet there were no dreams left for the men of the Sheffield
(The French must have been pleased
It was done with one of their Exocets)
The English herd asks:
How could it be possible that an English ship had sunk?
Damn all that resurrected jingoism
Didn't these people learn anything from World War One?
I met a British Falklands veteran while hitchhiking in the English
countryside
Who had only terrible things to say
Of being wounded
Of seeing young Argentinean conscripts
Unprepared
Who died like flies
This human waste
Unjustly, expediently forced to fight
By a dictatorship
Who
Like that Iron Bitch
Also sought a foreign distraction
To keep all eyes off
Domestic economic and social bedlams
Yet only greater bedlams arose
Disturbed sleeps
It was only confirmed that war *is* wasteful
and
terrible
Leaving only as a legacy a life time of bad dreams
Only nightmares too for the doomed men of the Belgrano
Unjustly torpedoed
While leaving the
200 mile free zone
Maradona!
Maradona!
You restored a nation's pride
In 1986
With a bang
At least it can be said that soccer jingoism is not so deadly
(Unless you are a Columbian player who lets in own goals)
Sport compared to war can even be considered
A noble past time
Yet look at you now

Diego,
In the 2000s:
All bloated like a soccer ball
Almost as fat as that other Diego:
Riviera the great mural painter
(Frida Kahlo had to put up with that ego)
It's not all soccer in Latin America
There's also magic realism in the writing and another sort of magic
realism in all those U.S. coups)
Maradona
You the great former magic realist
On the soccer field
A shadow of your former self
Although not kicked around
And still blindly admired
Are yet waiting to be pricked
Deflated
By your own vices
To self destruct
To die not from cocaine, obesity
But from a too inflated pride
Yes watch out the human ego
(Far more vulnerable than any undipped heel)
Which can
get too
big
for its
own
soccer boots
And leave this creation
Frizzled up
Like football streamers buried in the mud
After everyone has left the field
not even
your whimper
will be heard
In the end there is only the loneliness
After the adulation
Has departed
At least Maradona
You had a short glorious life
On the playing field
If not so glorious in your lingering time

off it...

War

Talking of war

I was once picked up by one of England's highest judges in the land while hitch hiking in that unfair land between rich and poor
(The green south is so much 'fairer' than the grimy north)

He had returned from India

And was making a bee line to a little country pub near where the Battle of Hastings was fought

He showed me the battlefield

And that's what it was: a field

But it was nice and green,

No cows mulching on it though...

The beer was dark and thick,

Like Guinness

But it was not Guinness

I told him in the car that I was Australian but my parents were from Cyprus

He told me that he was in Cyprus in '74 when the Turks invaded

When the Americans with their Sixth Fleet intimated to the Greeks to let the Turkish missiles go to the keeper

(These two young Cypriots who used to be in the army told me so...)

We don't want NATO ally fighting NATO ally

We don't want the Soviets taking advantage of such a strategically catastrophic situation by invading U.S. nuclear missile bases on the other side of their border in Turkey

And start World War III

Even countries like Egypt had put their armies and air forces and navies on red alert

We don't want the Greek Cypriot Communist Party to survive or get its way

Those peace lovin' Americans

Always willing to sacrifice the little guys in these little poxy nations for the big picture

The judge claimed that Archbishop Makarios that wily resistance fighter against the English

(They never knew that this Orthodox black clothed man, this religious leader, political leader also led EOKA,

my father said once he didn't like him...probably just didn't totally trust him, Greek trusting Greek would be a strange thing)
Yes the Great Cypriot
tried to have my articulate driver assassinated
He also told me two fighter jets blew up his villa
(My memory fails me now as to if these two comments are directly related but could be...)
Anyhow he fought in the Second World War
A high ranking commander
A colonel or such such thing
Said men's lives were treated cheaply
Thrown into battle
Without a care
"Human life was cheap." He said with humane regret,
He was a fair man
He had been fighting
in the scourging dusty deserts of North Africa,
Parachuted into Normandy on D-Day on the night before this momentous day
He says
These days
whenever he comes back from overseas he always goes straight to this pub for this special local beer
So said the silver haired man of court
A look of satisfaction
After the first sip
On the lean, wrinkled, rosy cheeked face of this High Judge
Over men and women
But - legally speaking - mostly of men's lives
In those terrible days that have gone by
(yet it has to be said:
Which may still return to Europe – despite of NATO and the European Union - in still unimaginable ways)
Which did return to the Balkans
To tip the historical scales back to the start in Sarajevo
To level out the sense of a century of mass suffering over a whole continent
That nice judge of all people would know justice can be blind).

A Philosophical Treatise

I have had two friends
While on a drive
Outside Sydney
Laugh at me when I described
a tree as:
a big plant
Why do they scoff at this empirical suggestion?
Is not a tree a plant?
Is it not big?
If it is not a big plant
What is it?
This is the question
Somewhere out there someone
Tell me the answer
I'm willing to listen.
Trust me -
I will.

For as one of my two smiling friends said: I'm one in a million
(There we have it another scientific observation...)
Galileo
Trust me when I say there's people out there who know how you
were feeling
When no one believed you or damned you or simply thought that
you were a fool
(About the planets and the stars
Those fiery big round bits of rock and red hot glowing yellow, red
and orange round gas furnaces and all those other things in the
night sky
Round or otherwise
Going around in the cosmos
Going around the Sun
That fire we all know
That makes all our flora
Fondly grow-)
We know the earth is not flat
That space-time exists on some curved dimension of the universe
which we may never understand (except for maybe the big
thinkers) but what we do understand is: that all plants - big and
small - need regular watering, love, care and tender affection and
that's what matters-
Touche!

The Devil Rings Me Up In Newtown

I was in the second hand bookshop late morning
I had in my hand William Styron's *The Long March* which is about U.S. Marines in boot camp at the time of the Korean War and which one character Captain Mannix who in his tough belligerent way tries to rebel against the inflexible domineering ways of the army a rebel in 'a generation of conformists' (I got that off the back flap) and who was to me like some modern Achilles (or even an Ajax)

Meaghan Delahunt's *In The Blue House* that is about Diego Rivera and Frida Kahlo's place in Coyacan which is in Mexico City and where Leon Trotsky spent some time in his forlorn attempt to escape Stalin's vindictive paranoid endless murderous psychotic mad treacherous cowardly lustful bureaucratic irrational methodical genocidal sleepless callous evil heartless brutish banal cruelty and

The Greek Experiment Imperialism and Social Conflict 800-400 BC by Robert J. Littman who argues that the city-state always in a state of disunity was a failure and who also claims that Socrates like his most famous pupil Plato believed that government should be left to the experts and not to the people (this was a surprise to me)

I also had a little book about an English soldier's experiences at El Alemain which I did not buy but I deduced had ended up at a place called Zimm Zimm (no it was Zem Zem) in Tunis at the end of the North African campaign and amongst the many things he saw was a ghostly graveyard of destroyed tanks such is the waste of war
When my phone rang

It stopped ringing by the time I got it out of my jean pocket
(Don't you hate that?!)

I checked the Call Info to see that the number that had attempted to contact me was 666

Maybe the Devil wanted to know a little bit more about the books I had picked

He could've been after some tips

He didn't ring back

(The know-all!)

Nictator

I rarely watch those morning news shows
Due to a preference to listening to News Radio
To keep up-to-date on the latest tragedy while having a
wholesome breakfast

Yet while I was staying over at my mother's place as my father had
gone away to Melbourne

(She wanted someone to stay overnight so she wouldn't feel so
vulnerable being in the house alone due to her inability to move
her limbs in bed)

I turned on the tv while making a cup of tea

(A change of place can so easily change our habits)

On the Today Show I saw her

Talking from New York for Time magazine

she was

working in the entertainment department

being asked questions about the top one hundred influential
people in the world

(Nicole and Mel were the only two Australians who made the
grade...)

She was asked what is the difference between the powerful and
the influential

After a moment's hesitation it was remarked that those 'behind-the-
scenes' people like tv producers and high ranking company execs
could be considered very powerful while not being known to the
general public

(Sort of controlling the influential people that we know as influential
who only have any influence because the powerful people let them
or because they cannot stop them)

She helped me and another friend to organise that benefit to
advertise Vanunu's situation

A very influential individual who was whiling the years in solitary
confinement

(in prison for his efforts for peace)

It is ironic that he is being released this very week

She dubbed me the 'Nictator'

As I told people what needed what to be done and what to do

Yes

I wasn't a performer

I left that up to the likes of Mario and Bill and Roslyn and Dr
Glonkenspiel + band

Who entertained the small audience
They were influential
I was one of the 'behind-the-scenes' people
Helping to dictate what happened on the night
Being powerful
Expressing power
Trying to attempt to influence the people with real power
I was a tin-pot Nictator
(yet with a pot of tea

I had no tin-pot but I like the expression...)

Compared to those powerful behind-the-scenes people who had replaced their tin-pots with nuclear silos

The most powerful behind the scenes people in the world are those two guys who look like eager beavers in some missile bunker deep

deep

deep

deep

deep in the ground holding those two keys they have to twist together to make the world a really ghastly place

Now if I could nictate them

that would be influential...hey guys give me a call if you're reading this!

Now where are my house and car keys?

Redfern Irony

While Redfern was living up to the first part of its name with some of it's residents making the grotty grey filthy streets glow with the red of fire an Aboriginal preacher man who preaches peace and joy and love to this lost generation was on the Compass show on the ABC at the same time it seemed to be an unfortunate coincidence but then again this strange juxtaposition of the kind preacher on one tv channel and the molotov cocktails being thrown at that thin blue line of modern medieval lawmen on another tv channel could make a person think that maybe all is not lost if you encourage the elders of peace and dissuade the propagators of a sad fatalism and bitterness and authoritarianism – on both sides – there maybe hope yet at least we can help the young to listen to those elderly Aboriginal women who in the middle of the night tried to reason with people to stop the violence and go home which was

better than that guy I saw on the tele telling young kids to risk being badly hurt by resisting the police I hope the preacher man can help resolve things for the good and keep the dogs of war at bay on both sides even though the police do have community liaison officers there still seems to be a steady flow of reports of intimidation maybe its all sour grapes but whether it is or isn't what's at issue is that people could learn that even sour grapes can be miraculously turned into good wine and where there is good wine there is joy and peace and harmony hey all you wise Aboriginal elders I hope you get your due...good luck! P.S. Those streets could do with some ferns.

What's there to do?

Read books

Write one

Write some poems

Do some art

See some

Art

Visit friends

Friends visit you

Visit nature

Travel to and fro...

Work-

What's that?

Oh you mean when you get paid?

(That's 'right'

After all,

What you do that you really enjoy: that's not 'real work...')

Yeah well

You now how *that* is...

At times

When you only do an activity

For the money

It just feels like: 'a necessary evil...'

The Great Writers

I wanted to be like the great alcoholic rundown American poets of our generation:

Kerouac

Bukowski

Though I don't think they were alcoholics

Just a couple of writers who could drink a lot

Anyhow I drank a lot of gin

One night

To get some holy inspiration

I'm no great writer that's for sure

Why's that you say?

All I got for my troubles

Was no awe inspiring visit from any muse

But

A

Good

Sleep

On

My

Couch...

What

A

Failure!

Bernie

'Who's this?' asks Gary whose staying overnight at my place after coming down from the mountains whose perusing the photos on the mantel above the fireplace

'That's Bernie,' I whimsically reply,

'I got the postcard sent to me by a lovely German friend

She lives in Bielefeld

Which is a north German town

Where she used to live in a retired circus van-'

Bernie was standing naked like a statue

on a statue stand in a park

I saw Bernie in the first five minutes that I arrived at Bielefeld railway station

Bernie who looks fifty something
and is gym muscly fit was riding his bicycle naked
(I was told by my Bielefeld friends that I was very lucky to see
Bernie so soon
I felt very lucky that after seeing so many exotic things that this
world has to offer that I was rather bemusingly surprised to see
what could be considered exotic in a place where such a magic
realist human being would not be expected to be seen...where I
thought the only thing that could be guaranteed would be to taste
the high quality
of
the
pure
German beer...)
Bernie says he likes to be naked
think Bernie is shocking
Or a lunatic
I'm sure Bernie has been to court
Bernie does what Bernie does
There's joy
in his gentle
urbane
manner
He gives us a laugh
At no one's expense
He definitely means no harm
and
so
he
certainly
doesn't
mean
to
be
offensive
In fact:
He stimulates our logic
He stimulates our moral sensibilities
He stimulates our sense of what it means to live democratically
He stimulates the townscape
He stimulates the mindscape
Do what the good Lord says if Bernie offends thee:
Turn the other cheek

To glorify the naked glory of the nude
Which after all is what Michelangelo did with his David
Half the town likes Bernie
I guess the other half
Which will then make you look the other way from whatever
direction Bernie is coming from (both physically and
metaphysically),
My only query is: does Bernie ride his bicycle nude in the heart of
winter to
match
his
good heart?
Bbbrrrrrrrrrrrr!!!!
(I hope at that very cold time
of year
he at least
wears a beanie!)

Vanunu is Mr Voodoo for Mr Israel

Yes you can't keep a good prophet quiet
I saw him leave an Israeli prison yesterday
(on t.v. and I don't think it was Ashkelon prison where he spent
quite some time in solitary confinement)
After eighteen years in prison
With twelve spent in a solitary
private hell
You would have expected to see a wreck of a man
But instead it was the other way around
It was the State that looked the wreck
With it's cruelty and hypocrisy exposed to the world for it's
behaviour on this man
Well, I'll leave all that rhetoric alone
for now
And consider what I heard many years ago
When after a benefit for Vanunu
(I helped to organise)
An American poet told me
one year later
that after reading out his salutary poem
about the prophet

he went outside for some fresh air
At this little ol' benefit
at the little ol' church hall
and was accosted by two men with thick American accents
but they were no friends
They asked the poet about his Vietnam past
The poet was in the military but he got out of the military
but the poet was surprised that these two guys knew anything
about him at all
He was accused of referring to this and that in his salutary poem
about the prophet and warned him that he should mind his own
business it dawned on him that these two fellows were Israelis and
that they must have tapped my phone to know who he was and
that he would be performing tonight as this was only decided last
night
(A rather paranoid assumption you may see but it does help to give
this story a heightened dramatic tension)
with another poet friend this bewildered poet ended his night by
going off to have a few drinks at the Cross to have a wild night to
get over this wild interrogation-
Voodoo is everywhere

Lost Leaflet

Pity I can't find my yellow vananu benefit leaflet with the nicaraguan solentiname picture on the front which is by one of the nicaraguan women who do a colourful naïve style of painting of village life and on the back a list of all the performers and quotes like how we should care what happens to the individual because the next person they take their human rights from could be you and displaying all those sort of figures which state that more money is spent in an hour on weapons and military hardware in the u.s.a in five minutes than the world spends on health, education and housing in a year and so forth and the world can be blown up in half hour which gives us all just enough time to watch our favourite sitcom that's a small mercy

Hypocrisy

Stuart McGill's decision not to go and play cricket in Zimbabwe where that sick headed Mugabe is giving more than cricket a bad name was hailed by the sick headed Howard as a man who was nobly acting on his convictions a brave thing to do I agree but why is it that last week that the Australian woman who is putting her money where her mouth is by helping the people of Iraq is irresponsible for risking life and limb being already captured once by the terrorists who maybe captured again
Yet shouldn't she be hailed as a hero who is also acting on her convictions?
Yet her politics doesn't suit the moral cowardice of this government
It's the case we have two heroes but one hero is deemed better than the other by the cowards

Political Whinge

when you think of:
children overboard
stealing east timor oil
downsizing intelligent officer whistleblowers
why is it that the tories are always the one eroding democracy?
as well as that over-riding Australian sense of a fair go?
Equality was a major characteristic immortalized by the Anzacs
The Anzac spirit is being betrayed by the conservatives
Did those ordinary blokes die for that to happen?
I don't think so

The Youngish Forty-Something Anglican Minister with the Leather Jacket

I saw him in his leather jacket
being interviewed in Tel Aviv (or was it Jerusalem?) on the
television on the ABC news
on Channel 2
the 7.00 o'clock bulletin
about having to fulfill the promise
to the prophet
to be there at the prison gates on his release
that momentous day will be sort of reminiscent of the day Mandela
was released but perhaps not as historical but history may tell us
something different when in the years to come it will consider the
history of nations
(though on the day it did seem a bit like a circus
those bigots protesting against the defiant prophet did their point-
of-view - that he is a traitor - no favours
the defiant prodigal son did not fear to speak his mind as his
brother tried to calm him fearing the authorities who would never
show any forgiveness would relish the chance to lash out more
some more vindictive punishment)
I think of past halcyon days
Of friendships not kept up
I feel a little melancholy
Even a little guilty
I admire the prophet's stamina
and respect that his true friends have stood by him to this end

No Marxism in Rome

'No! No! Not MARX! Mars Bars! I like MARS BARS!'
Corrected the Neo-Nazi major with long straggly hair
And leather coat
And who looked thirty-something
And who spoke good English
And who was thin and German
I was sharing a room with this neo-nazi in a *pensione* in Rome
He said he was in Rome on 'private business'
He said the Turks in West Germany were the new Jews

They would be vilified in the cause of uniting the two Germanys
He showed me a prized photo of Hitler in a street parade taken by
his grandfather
He told me and the two Canadian girls with me that he would stab
a blade between the shoulder blades of any person who stole this
photo
Two German women shared the room one night and one of them
kept saying NAAAAZZZZZZZZIIIIIII! All night to insult this crazy
guy
After all having some red *vino* to drink
He laughed
He said German girls were fiesty
He wasn't surprised that gypsies may have tried to pickpocket me
in the big Rome markets
He said he liked Australians he thought they were very resourceful
I displayed my resourcefulness
by leaving this *pensione*
Leaving Rome all together
I didn't want to
outdo my luck

Better Not To Forget All About A.H.

By the way last Tuesday
- I just found out -
was Adolf Hitler's birthday
I agree
it's not worth celebrating
though what he did should not be forgotten

Mass of Self-Destruction

It's Saddam's Birthday
On April 29
Hip! Hip! Hooray!
Not really celebrating – just joking
You mass of
Self-destruction
You maniac

Reverse Gear

I've heard that Tony Blair says he once had or still has no reverse gear

Just like Hitler's war tactics
And Charles Bukowski's car
None of them seemed
to get far

Thankfully Bukowski had the good sense to get a new car when he got famous and got a bit of money
For his well-earned efforts

Hitler should have stayed a painter
Even if it meant being a bad one

But he wasn't good as a dictator although he sure did get to paint a lot of towns and cities and countries a very bright red before they all charred on him while with Blair maybe he should try a bit of poetry too or better still be a spin bowler he sure gets in enough practice with his spinning in parliament and in all those media conferences he gives sharing the podium with George W. Bush too bad his natural game is baseball because they could have been a good bowling pair yet it can be said that he sure does seem to share Tony Blair's inconvenience of having no reverse gear too pity the parking hassles especially the parking hassles all those burning American armoured cars are having in Baghdad at the moment one good thing about having no effective local police force is they ain't no parking tickets that's if you are still lucky enough to be alive to appreciate getting away with not paying a fine

Feeling fine today Mr. Blair or are you worried that the election ticket you get next time to let you be a candidate will be your last one? You can sure sound eloquent with your empty rhetoric I guess your head is so much filled with straw you should be grateful that you didn't live in the old days when they would have burnt you on top of a bonfire but in your case you would have gone up in a whiff of smoke like your ideas very quickly-

Rape is Sport

Those Belmore boys get away with rape?

Don't you get it that sport is above the law?

Rape is a sport too and if the victim who gets tackled in this sport should have known to pass the ball quicker but I guess if there's no support players like natural justice or putting more faith in the victim's story then what is the poor woman supposed to do other than just take the hit? No proper DNA evidence and conflicting witness statements or not recalling the faces of the tacklers while your squinting in a vicious tackle sure does make you lose trust in all those camera angles in your head as you replay again and again what you think happened and the replays to everyone else - well they also all seem inconclusive and can't be relied on AND IF YOU CAN'T TRUST WHAT YOU SEE HOW ARE YOU GOING TO DENY THE TRY TO THOSE EMOTIONALLY POOR HARD WORKING PLAYERS AND HAND OUT A PENALTY TO THEM INSTEAD LUV? YOU THINK THEY SHOULD BE DENIED THEIR GOOD CHEER FOR YOUR SAKE? BY THE WAY LOOK AT ALL THOSE SPUNKY CHEER GIRLS! (HOT DOGGIES! JUST LET THOSE DOGS OUT ONTO THEM! LOOK AT ALL THOSE HIGH TESTERONE CRUDE DISGUSTING SLEAZY HORRIBLY UNATTRACTIVE MALE FANS! WHAT A GAME!) YEAH SPORT CAN BE UNFAIR AND SO YOU JUST GOT TO TAKE IT ON THE CHIN AND ON YOUR BODY! THE REFEREE HAS TO GIVE THE BENEFIT OF THE DOUBT WHEN THE VIDEO REFEREE HANDS THE FINAL DECISION BACK TO HIM TOO BAD LUV BUT ON THE SPORTING FIELD THERE'S NO ROOM FOR JUSTICE AND UNFORTUNATELY IN THE DRESSING ROOM NO ONE CAN HEAR YOU SCREAM I blame it on Super League and Canterbury has been going downhill ever since they got involved in it

moral corruption knows no end-

big business hypocrisy

can teach you

a

thing or two

about

that

LAST EXIT TO ETERNITY

What a shame
Hubert Selby died today
Hope he found his way to that last exit
in Brooklyn
and made his way
to a calm sea
for his
eternity
all the lost souls he wrote about so starkly
deserve the same chance
to journey
to the
same
stars
in the same
cosmic ocean
which will take him
pleasant floating Mr. Selby
you wise good
down to earth
learned
sailor

The Human Contradiction

Thorpy gets away with it!
He fell into the water but he can now do his dream swim!
The next news sport item shows that those Bulldoggies got away
with what they did
After they fell
into a pool
too!
They too can live their dream to try and win the premiership and in
the way of the human contradiction depending on what moral
context in which the human spirit is placed in we see bad become
good in both outcomes but we sense a moral absurdity was
originally in place in Thorpy's case and a moral absurdity which
leaves the taste of bitter ash in the mouths of some has resulted in
the latter case but THE LAW IS THE LAW in both cases and
there's no contradiction in that or is there?

GADDAFI

Gaddafi is a good guy now
It's amazing what a barrel of oil can buy you
Like respectability
When last week you were a murderer
Now the West are murderers
Too

Because that is what you are if you betray the victims and become an accessory anyhow I still wonder if it was some shady Syrian who blew up that ill-fated Pan Am jet over Lockerbie but who cares now except the poor relatives of the murdered victims who still live with their nightmares if Gaddafi is happy to sell his oil to buy our souls

What's important?

Justice be damned
What's more important is keeping
The cars on the road
(and that includes *your* car)
And the planes in the air
Even though one plane
And all it's passengers and it's crew
Fell out of the sky
Because of the unhappy
Mood of one oil-supplier
Small price to pay
After all these years
When all is said and done
And not done
Think the politicians
Seeing they weren't on it
You have to be realistic this world is based on dirty politics and too many people with undeserved power are happy to kid themselves by keeping their hands clean like Pilate kept his hands clean over the judgement of Christ's crucifixion
Look at Gaddafi wash his hands in the same wash basin as Blair to baptise his celebrated blasphemous political resurrection
Yet look at Bashir: Bashir! Bashir! You vile Indonesian smiling murdering cleric if Gaddafi isn't going to get retribution you should

get it and stay in prison where you deserve to be...pity the dead innocents everywhere...

Blood on our Hands

At least Lady MacBeth
Kept seeing the blood on her hands
When she tried to clean them
(At least I think that was the case in the Kurasawa's version
Of MacBeth as I have not seen the original Shakespeare
A horrific but honest image though and we must be honest with
ourselves when it comes to the horrors of our times which are
often horribly inflicted or self-inflicted because we choose to turn a
blind eye
for our expedient advantage
Cyclops the one-eyed narrow minded human blood lust giant still
rules okay at least Goya had wished otherwise and tried to open
our eyes but to no avail...the disasters of war continue...and will
continue *ad infinitum* it seems)

THE MAINSTREAM IS SO DOWNSTREAM! OR BETTER STILL IS A BRAIN DRAIN!

I saw Ridge from The Bold & The Beautiful
On Australia's Funniest Home Video Show!
He was so FUNNY holding up those idiot cards
to promote his September song tour!
So vain and spunky hunky!
I'm sure all the girls were over the moon!
Silly billy willy moo-moo goo-goo cows and ducks and pigs and
dogs and little boys and girls and hope-to-be Evil Knievels and
wedding couples all falling over themselves making us all LAUGH!
Who says I don't appreciate mainstream culture?

Medieval Gap

I read
in
the
Saturday paper
there's a couple in the country
who joust with each other to pass the time
I think it's time we got mediaval jousting into the Olympics
It be a lot more interesting than a lot of other sports
and having something
from
the
Middle Ages
would
connect
the
Ancient
to
the
Modern
Just like the Arabs did for us all those centuries ago by keeping
copies of treatises of all that Greek Mathematics which let the
Europeans in the end to have their Renaissance

Earlwood Multiculturalism

I just read in the paper that the Prime Minister's grandfather and
father shook hands on the Western Front
The paper says it was a one and a million chance
It was interesting what the son wrote about the savage fighting
around some French town in the months of March and May in
1918: 'Very warm corner'
Short and sweet to come to terms with all
that bloody sacrifice
When you think of this sort of family history
You can see why Mr. Howard wants
the sort of Australia of those war years
that noble age of Anglo-Saxon ascendancy
My Greek Cypriot mother remembers when Mr. Howard

as a teenager would come to the milk bar every Monday afternoon
at 4.00 o'clock to buy a chocolate milkshake
(whether true or not it has past into popular myth)
his life is like boring clockwork - that is the perception at least -
but the man has had the determination to reach the top
and the determination to dismantle
that well known Australian mythological human principle
of the fair go
to replace it with a penny pinching
sweep-anything-inconvenient-under the carpet middle-class
morality
Oh yes we can clearly oh so vividly see that my sympathies do not
lie with the P.M.
I do not admire him but it is curious to read that his schooling at the
local primary school and at Canterbury Boy's High was the same
as mine
but would not have been the same
as I shared the day with other Greeks, Italians, Asians, Lebanese
and Yugoslavs and not just with the so called 'Australians'
(No big deal this little racial fact but it's a big deal to the Prime
Minister to have so many 'new Australians' in his land which isn't
his land anyway but that's another poem for another day and I
would prefer it to a celebratory poem about the Tories withdrawing
all their racial land policies but that will be the day when Jesus will
come down from heaven for his Second Coming but he would still
need to come down a third time to catch up with this PM in terms
of resurrections...whose says life after death is a good things? It's
not in the case in this PM who will need a stake or silver bullet to
finish off his repulsive heart to have it stop pumping forever)
However, when I think of the new Australia I think how on this
Anzac Day as we commemorate that mishap with the Turk I see
that Cyprus still has to deal with the occupation of the north - by
the Turk - so what is ancient history to many is still living history to
some
Gallipoli
the diggers
I respect
I watch the March like my parents watch the march who in 1988
went to the Bicentennial Celebrations
(while I went to the Aboriginal rally)
I realised it did matter to them to belong to this country

while I think what is happening in the old country it is for me an interesting psychology to balance the strange national juxtapositions which can exist within my very human mind
I am Australian and observe Anzac Day
I am Cypriot and observe what is happening in the land of my parents
Anyhow I cope quite well with both the Turk and Mr. Howard
Yet
No guesses to who I see as the greater enemy to my liberty and to the liberty of the socially oppressed -

Rats

I watched the Desert Rats of Tobruks on the afternoon of the One Day of The Year with James Mason as Rommel with Richard Burton as a defiant battle-hardened English officer with Charles Tingwell as the caring Australian officer and Chips Rafferty as the Eternal Digger sergeant an old black & white movie which reminded me of those times when as a kid while living behind the milk bar I would watch the black & white series of the Australians and War which would show diving Stukas over the Australian Desert Rats at Tobruk and the deserts of North Africa and of the Battle of El Alemain if my memory serves me correctly this Anzac show was sandwiched between Controversy Corner with that football legend Frank Hyde and arguing with Ron Casey and switching to Channel 7 to see Rex Mossop the Moose that Manly Warringah stalwart while back on Channel 9 after the war footage would be World Championship Wrestling with the likes of Mario Milano and Spiros Arion (or such name) and lastly I still have childhood memories of my parents watching the Anzac Day march probably entranced by the concept of the Australians fighting the Turkish and when I think of rats these days I think of a few interesting encounters in Indonesia and of Jet and Sapphire the rather timid pleasant pet rats of my nephew and niece pity I did not see them at the end of the Channel Nine when they were showing the first rat competition at the Royal Easter Show I believe Sapphire was being shown on Imojen's shoulder just makes me think compared to all our adult dramas childhood innocence is still a very good thing more saner anyway and
hey!
have a good day! Don't be like King Rat in that Japanese P.O.W camp you may get successful but it means selling out on people

and we leave that to the rats in big business who we despise don't we?

At least the Diggers dug their own holes
And helped each other
The pillars of a true society
Those defiant Desert Rats
Of Tobruk
So don't let any siege get you down-

Whales

A friend went whale watching off Iceland but wasn't told it wasn't out-of-season for whales and maybe we should make whale watching out of season because all our ship noise gets in the way of their communication no wonder jonah should make a return trip from nineveh to teach us to give whales a go and the gay whales too and don't be too upset next time moby dick smashes up your ship if you are having a raging harbour cruise in the middle of the south atlantic after all there should be a party curfew in the sea too then whales too and other sea animals can get some sleep and by the way what's the big fuss about finding living life in outer space that won't make any difference to me what makes a difference is to discover that there are fish which swim vertically to be disguised like seaweed which is smarter than swimming horizontally that's impressive-

Déjà vu in Reverse

On Anzac Day I started reading Arthur M. Schlesinger Junior's The Bitter Heritage Vietnam & American Democracy 1941-1966 considering the state of the Americans these days it was all like déjà vu but backwards
Won't people ever learn?
Yes
We never seem to take heed of our mistakes
The American Empire is not in tatters
But it looks in tatters in Iraq

Mateship

Yeah you Fuhrer
Heard about one of your Gestapo mates in Bielefeld
He asked a Jewish kid if he wanted some chewing gum
The boy said yes
(of course he did)
Your mate stuck a pistol
into
the
poor
innocent's
mouth
Coolly squeezed the trigger of his gun
Blew the kid's brains out
Your mate laughed

Banana

(Hey Big World Why Do You Keep Slipping On Banana Skins?
Why Not Wear Them For Pyjamas Like All The Sensible Children
Do?)
I get home and the orangutans
are all sitting around
the big wooden coffee table
in the living room
"Where you been?
We've started the discussion without you!
We've been comparing Dostoevsky with Tolstoy
And Pasaak
Can you shed any more light to us on the tragic characterization of
the
Karamazovs, Kareninas and Zhivagos
of this world?
One orangutan is holding a novel over his head
While another screams
as he reads
about the Great Inquisitor
"I dunno you know about them as well as me"
I slump onto a spare stool and join the gang
Around the table

Like some tired night
Returning to a beleaguered Camelot
I'm feeling peckish
After tolerating the traffic,
The news of more terrorist
death on the radio
Driving back from Bunnings
Buying a grevillia
And drill bits for the drill
"I'll put the hammock up for you guys tomorrow..."
I look around at this scholarly crew
I think they think I'm a Philistine and then I say:
"Hey I don't feel up to dealing with any great literature,
I'm a simple man,
Right now I just want a banana
And a lie down
Or even a panadol
Why not put these books away go up the road
And get a video
"What do you want to watch?" muses one of my learned friends,
"King Kong
or Planet of the Apes!" They chortle
"That ain't such a bad idea!" I suggest.
"Better to watch some fake primal horror
rather than some of that real primal horror like September 11
Hey why don't we ask that big beast Kong
That King of all that is dark in the darkest jungle:
What is it with planes and skyscrapers in New York?
"Good question," comes a orangutan's reply, "We could consider
that issue in a moment
But best now to get back to Crime and Punishment
It's the way of the world I yawn
And with that the others look on
As I peel and scoff my fruit
Oh what a hoot!

The Year Before and this Year

Last year I rang out of money on my phone card
Friends were contacting me to go for birthday drinks
But I couldn't reply until I got a new card
I was with another friend
Who was down from the mountains
I was with the same friend
On the same birthday
When the phone card
Ran out again
The same friend as last year was trying to contact me
Fortunately
This time
she rang me up on the landline
No I didn't get her text
To catch up
In the afternoon
Anyway
She had just come back from overseas and her mobile phone was
still connected to the U.K. so I guess the message got lost along
the way (It wasn't my phone's fault as it turned out)
Anyhow
I
made
sure
I
got
a
new phone
card
straight away
that very day
no dramas
after that
howz
all
that
for
a
bit
of

r
h
y
m
l
n
g
?

Bad Karma

She told me there was a special on T.V.s at Bankstown
One guy tried to greedily get two and when he did one of his two tv
boxes dropped onto the floor (must have been the wind...)
That's natural justice for pushing in and not caring for anybody else
Sometimes you don't have to act out any form of retribution
Some kind god or angel or twist of fate will carry out the judgement
for you

Firm Thinking

Be patient
Before you feel you must act
Be sure there is definitely
no
other choice
It's not appeasement
Just wisdom
Because when you go in
Go for the knockout

No Turning Back

It's a pity
Some people
Wait too late to say sorry

Mistakenthon

A mistakenthon says the footie commentator about the performance of the Souths and Canterbury teams playing against each other

Dropping the ball handing over possession

Sounds like a lot of tries are getting butchered from what I can hear over the radio

In the game of life one's whole existence can feel like a mistakenthon

All human history could be viewed as a mistakenthon

The Persians must have felt that when they tried to invade Greece again

after

losing

at

Marathon

Yet if you hang in there

At the end of any long march

There must be some sense of accomplishment

To have achieved something that is worthwhile

Like in medicine or philosophy or ethics or in terms of human respect and self-respect

Admit to our mistakes

and

move

on

It's

our

only

hope

No Hope...but...

Bob Hope dies

Made us laugh

Now he's gone

Thank goodness for videos and re-runs

We can see him again and again in celluloid resurrection along with the Three Stooges

The Marx Brothers

The Goodies

Ma & Pa Kettle
Jerry Lewis and Dean Martin
Steve Martin
Elizabeth Montgomery in Bewitched
I Dream of Jeannie
My Favourite Martian
Car 54 Where are You?
The Beverly Hillbillies
McHales Navy
M*A*S*H
Fawlty Towers
MontyPython
I Love Lucie
Gilligan's Island
Mel Brook's The Producers
The Blues Brothers
Laurel & Hardie
Seinfeld
Archie Bunker
Abbott & Costello
Yes Minister
And Charlie Chaplin
Etcetera...laugh
LAUGH!
LAUGH IN!
Psychedelic floorshow for the go-go girls!
Elvis Presley hiping away
We have comedy
Though as evidence of our heightened evolutionary human
intelligence
Many would like to HOPE so
That this is true
WOO WOO! WEE WEE!
Mr Ed.
A talking horse?
Of course! Of course!
Everything is possible when you are mad
Including the invention of MAD COMICS
And of a M.A.D. nuclear war policy
When you go mad
There is no hope
That is
for sure

certain!

(It seems comedy needs tragedy as it's counterpoint which explains those happy sad ancient theatre masks that you most commonly see-)

More human happiness please

Pretty please!

With lots of sugar on top of the latest genocidal victims!

Change the tv channel quick!

You've got to be careful when you turn the tele on and make sure if you catch the latest news be quick to switch over to the Simpsons!

I've lost the plot but so has the United Nations and if Bob Hope was alive now he'd have to go over and do more concerts for U.S. soldiers in theatres of war like Afghanistan and Iraq and be a morale booster as they get all immoralised and demoralised like in Vietnam and the Lebanon and Somalia and one thing which can be said for comedy it's a great safety valve and laughter helps to extend your life for as T.S. Eliot wrote humanity can only stand so much reality-AAAAAAAAAAGGGGGGGGGGGHHHHHHH!!!!!!!!!!!!

St. Francis

I can see that when St. Francis in his rags

Stands beside the well clothed in their fine garments

I can sense how his life is full

His full spirituality giving him a full life

Getting beyond the physical world's appearances

I like it how I live in Francis St.

I like it how I have been to Assisi

Shook the Pope's hand

Even though

I am

not Catholic

Even though he wears fine clothes

Even though I often do not agree with him

I liked it when that doggie came through my house

And a cat which basks all the time in the sun in the backyard

And the birds that come to my grevillas

Yes St. Francis's reputation with animals is wonderful

Kazantzakis wrote a great about you and I read it in Vietnam especially on that long uncomfortable humid hot train ride

Mel & Leo & Joyce & Ulysses

It was pointed out to me that Mel Brooks had a main character in what I consider to be his best comedy The Producers who he cleverly named Leo Bloom that less than Joycean heroic figure based on that greatest heroic figure Ulysses but a shadow of this great man to make us realise that this is our reality the mythologies of the Greeks made them aspire to be heroes in some perfect Arcadia when the reality is that human despondency can reduce us to the gutter thank goodness for love that can lift us out

Lost for Words

She asked me what I meant by Russia being a wild place
How do I explain that still vivid image in my head of Nevsky-Prospect
During the time of that nation's severe economic crisis
When people walked up and down that grand wind-swept street on a cloudy day feeling ominous looking ominous wondering about a future that seemed so uncertain?
Sometimes you have to be at a place to capture a mood
Especially to the untrained unhistorical eye
It looks as if nothing much is happening
On the surface
While in that underworld of people's minds
Great cataclysms are brewing
simmering
Waiting for the day they will explode
To break through the crust
And destroy
And make
anew the known world with the unknown
for better or worse
(a new wild thought in me
which also is right now is also hard to express in words-especially with the written word)

Wolfowitz

Beware of the sweating furious fever of neo-con wolves who in fact really look like gargoyles and bleat their mad ravings in a calm smiling reasonable smooth softly spoken voice...(no moral failsafe here...)

Dr Who poem

Dr Who you are so ahead of the times by so many light years
Why in the seventies you had already worked it out about parallel
universes
especially in that show the
Inferno
in another
parallel universe Dante may even may have watched you
he was ahead of his time too

Non-Inferno

By the way In Inferno Dr Who you deal with people who become
fascists who are not fascists in this world imagine if there was a
parallel universe if the fascists in *this* world gave people their
humanity and freedom and political liberty and peace and
prosperity and all this human bliss went on to the generations to
come? Could you arrange that Dr Who?

Who knows?

I like those people in the other universe who have been working
for a totalitarian regime but believe the doctor is a space-time
traveller and wants to save the other Earth. They show valour in
their attempts to help him get the Tartus working so he can return
knowing their lives cannot be saved and that the doctor cannot
take them. Oh noble souls the world salutes you and I feel
comforted by such humanity amidst tragedy.

Gender Bender

The young Asian transvestite on the late night SBS movie says
he/her no longer wants to live a lie
but to live life out according to his/her true sexuality
that's nice
to be true to yourself
because as Jesus Christ implied
live by the truth
because the truth will set you free
that is the truth
and nothing but the truth

brings liberty
Amen to that
Keep the Peace

Arsenal you gunners!
Undeclared winning the competition
Lots of Cypriots
live in North London
they'll be happy
seeing their island is going to stay divided
Hey why should the Greek Cypriots be chastised for voting no to
that U.N. peace plan?
Didn't think expressing your democratic right should lead to a big
stick being wielded at you
They were the ones defeated
All those years ago
No harm intended to the Turkish Cypriots
but in this extra time of occupation
there should be a chance now
for a really proper resolution
Anyway at least Arsenal
is giving some people something to smile about
from this weekend

A Sign of the Times

Hey Howard!
you go to Baghdad
on Anzac Day...
Hey big daddy!
You think
it
is
a
political
morale-boosting
happy time
attention seeking
masterstroke
to do that?

Did the Australian troops put down the sign: 'vote for Mr. Latham so we can go home'

just

before

the

Prime Minister

arrived?

(I've heard a rumour that such a sign exists)

Did the Prime Minister get the idea off

George W. Bush to visit

who did the same stunt last Thanksgiving?

(Day)

Why didn't they both go pay Saddam a visit and pull a funny face or ask him for some astute political advice seeing they all share the same level of political morality

Shake his hand and share a few jokes about the jokes pulled on their respective populations

You think I'm being too harsh?

I don't think so

(Go ask what the populations of Latin America think of the U.S.A and go ask what the East Timorese think of Howard and Downer at the moment or all the refugees Howard Reith and Ruddock have incarcerated)

While I'm at it why haven't CNN gone and done an exclusive interview with Saddam yet?

If anything South Park should

Who the hell is Saddam's media agent?

Or can't he have one under the Geneva Convention?

Now that is a denial of human rights which has been overlooked

after all ruthless dictators are people too

and they help lots of news groups have something to bleat about so sponsors can be in the ad bits and so human misery is good for the ratings and for the financial accounts you need good tyrants kept happy for that sort of high bidding finance! Did you ever think of that Amnesty International? No you didn't! Political torture is good for the media business! Although to keep up the balance you can free some tortured people some of the time but not all of the time unless it's prime time

The Prime Minister knows the

best time for a feel good story is at

election time

is that why he hopes for peace and goodwill will come all over the world by November?

Check the popularity polls for that

Yes

the appearance of having the quality of a benelovent political altruism makes good copy if it can give you a few more votes because a vote is the most valuable human right you can bestow on a political leader and he or she will protect your human right to give him or her your vote and that also is a sign of the times and anyway Jerry Springer and his peep and kiss and tell after you split up show is as good a barometer of democracy as anything go on Jerry put Saddam on your show with the Germans the French the Americans the Russians the British and the U.N. Chief Inspectors yes all on your show with lots of those beefy bodyguards and just watch those ratings climb up and skyrocket through the roof now that would keep the sponsors and the advocates of democracy by the people for the people and the advertisors very very very happy! Yeah and remember you can't outsmart the people all the time and even though they take Jerry Springer off the daytime air during the school holidays kids tape it when they are school anyway! So remember that pollsters and dictators and human rights advocates and news media moguls and all of you and especially the adults of the world who should be teaching their kids to develop their critical faculties from an early age and why are you reading this anyway if I were you I'd rather be reading Hemingway-

Black Comedy

Pizza

That kooky German traveller

South Park

Mr. Hell

sure is some peculiar comedy on SBS

Although the funniest show to watch is World News

The sciptwriters sure are masters at black comedy

They are so good at it

people just don't seem

to get enough

The thing is haven't they heard you can get too much of a good thing?

The people of

Sudan

Burma

Iraq

Pakistan
Afghanistan
Haiti
Tibet
Uzbekistan
Palm Island
Iran Jaya
Kosovo
just to name a few target audiences
obviously have not

Desolation Skull

(An ode to the late American author J. H. Hatfield)

You exposed the President's business ineptitude before he was a President you exposed his blood lust to execute those who did not deserve to be executed while he was Governor of Texas but deserved a stay of their treacherous executions I imagine that Governor would sure have been a burning bush the way he sure happy would have been happy to fry his death row inmates he the instrument the messenger the good Lord sanctifying the non-registration of black prisoners in Florida in the last election which was won for him in Florida and in being the word of God in Iraq but making the words of God become obscene as you the exposor of bush's malpractice showed us his obscenities and so they took your books off the shelves they exposed your past sins even though you served your time soft skull press displayed the courage to publish your words against all odds in defiance to all those thick skulls but sadly in the end it was all too much for you and you took your own life for sticking to your integrity you are a true American hero

Japan is Heartless

I was deeply shocked when I saw the blindfolded Japanese Three with knife blades to their throats
I thought the world had gone totally mad
Was totally uncivilised like some truly frightful sci-fi film
Free the Japanese Three! I thought
These hostages were in Iraq to do good for the people

Some Islam clerics brokered their release
What a relief
However there was no welcome mat for them when they got back
to Japan
They were accused for being so selfish
going into harm's way to do acts of kindness to people so far
worse off than the consumers of Nippon
The government has sent these three each a six thousand dollar
bill for flying them back to Japan
Now these three ex-hostages feel more stressed and ashamed
than when they had those knives to their throats
They were so selfish like Mother Teresa
Ghandi
Jesus Christ
Nelson Mandela
selfish like that Japanese consular man in Vilnius Lithuania who
during 1939 gave heaps of transit visas to lots of Jews before the
Nazis invaded
All of you very self-centred types would not stand a chance in
modern-day Japan with it's present self-righteous attitude
Godzilla I hope you have another chance to give Tokyo a good
roasting!
Or better still go and join the Red Cross in Baghdad to put Japan
to real shame
if Godzilla became a hostage and then released would he better
off then asking to stay in Iraq for political asylum so he wouldn't
face the abuse waiting for him if he went back to Japan?
Take my advice Godzilla go to Surfers Paradise instead and start a
new life being a lifesaver on the Gold Coast and being an
interpreter to help save the lives of Japanese tourists who need to
learn to swim between the flags
They should also learn to swim between those two flags:
Compassion and Understanding in relation to the totally
traumatised Japanese Three
Come on Mr. Japanese Prime Minister get a heart! I'm sure
Japan's GNP can afford it!

Dracula knows better than Boris Yeltsin about people skills

Oh Boris Yeltsin!
I saw him on cable television in Germany

He had to answer questions in a media conference about his policies
You could see that all this answering to the people was leaving him confused
You can't expect poor Boris to really deal with democracy? That is so unfair
Leave being fair to the likes of Boris Pasternak or even Boris Karloff would stand a better chance

Margaret Thatcher's Secret Sex Fantasy

Oh Darleks
You can exterminate me anytime!
Big boys with your toys!
Love that prod from the top of your squizzy heads!
Davros I can teach you a thing or two about evil
I can really give you a kinky time!
Just ask the Argies and the miners
and Arthur Scargill and the I.R.A and President Reagan and the
Greater Council of London
for a guarantee on that
Except I've saved myself for you Davros!
I'm all yours pussy-cat!
Meow! Meow! And the Darleks can all watch!
After all I've done it wouldn't be that obscene
oh
Kinky! Winky!
My favourite heartless valentine-
Ooooh! Oh that's goooooood!

Numbers 86/99 where are you two?

Have you noticed that the Brigadier in Dr Who has a moustache like the zany Inspector Clouseau played by Peter Sellers in Pink Panther?
Too bad the Pink Panther is not around nor Peter Sellers nor Get Smart
updated (as Don Adams is still around...)
along with 99 and the Chief
to
save the world

from all it's present
chaos
(Kaos wouldn't last the distance these days with all these far more
nasty
dastardly
woes
that's
for
sure...I wonder if Osama watches Get Smart or James Bond to get
some of his ideas
or did
the Americans
show him
these movies
in the first place...huh?
Then again maybe George W. Bush
did
Hail the Chief!
A taxi!
Take him to the Cone of Silence so we'll have some peace get Bin
Laden with him and maybe then with these two arguing with
themselves instead of all us caught in the global crossfire maybe
just maybe the world will have some peace too turn down the
volume completely and all those loud bangs may become as
outdated as silent movies although I don't think so-

The Brigadier

Why don't the Americans get the Brigadier from Unit
to take care of Al-Qeda?
He'll sort them out
Bin Laden would be really confused
if he saw
Dr Who's police booth
in the Afghan mountains
Osama wouldn't know what to do about this secret weapon
Would sue for peace with the promise of time travelling to all those
vestal virgins

Water Resurrection

When Ian Thorpe fell into the pool it was Australian swimming's
September 11
Thank goodness for Craig Stephens who followed his heart and
stood down from swimming in the four hundred metres to give Ian
the chance to compete
to win another gold medal
to find resurrection
from the water
so the nation
can breathe easy
because the whole psychology of the Australian sporting fan
relies on staying bouyant
by such race wins
Cathy Freeman knows that
Ian Thorpe is a lifebouy
to many people's peace of mind
who couldn't handle any such bitter mental ground zero if he
couldn't swim
The sponsors must be very happy too
for a ratings win is the best remedy
to overcome any ground zero
especially on a reality show like the Olympic games
By the way you deserve the money Craig
because they usually
pay
you
too
little
and
too
late
anyway!
And for those people who worry about compromising the Olympic
spirit I think money has sullied the games
a
long
long
time ago
you
idiots!

A Rebuff

Mr Eliot
(the one with the T.S.)
I like your poems
But if I met you I reckon
you would really bore me
William Carlos Williams did not like your wasteland
Sometimes I see his point of view
Sometimes you have so many notes and sources quoted at the
end of your poems I wonder if you are not so much an original
thinker but just a popularist a sort of high brow shockjock for the
upper-classes or am I being too cruel? After all I'm no literature
expert. I just read lots of books and I really do like your poems you
bore even though I think you are a plagiarist at times who is too
derivative and who gets away with it because you are famous and
when I'm derivative that's considered bad writing because I'm not
famous! Oh to be famous and write what I I want! (Which I'm doing
now anyway...)

Media Watch

Oh Alan Jones Media Watch picking on you again? You and
Telstra and cash for comments as if we really expected you to
really have any integrity in the first place I still laugh how you tried
to win the seat of Earlwood in a by-election for the state Liberals
and you asked my father with that whiny voice of yours that if you
would get the Greek vote and my father humoured you by saying
you would and it was really humorous when the State Opposition
Liberal leader drove up in his chauffeured driven government
limousine to thank my father the milk bar owner for his advise who
was only hoping for a backhander or political favour if you won Mr
Jones but you didn't did you and thankfully Media Watch is
catching you out and are you the Mr Jones that Bob Dylan sings
about?

I don't think so I don't think Mr Dylan would give you a second
thought except to use you as fodder for a cynical protest song
about greed and the moral sickness that exists in our society and
that is encouraged by the vile likes of you Mr Jones with your
bloated repugnant weasel ego

Do you know what I mean Mr Jones or do you keep the blinkers on in your pea-brain so you don't have to know how disgusting you really are?

You should have kept to rugby you silly billy Mr Jones...yawn...
you are boring
aren't you...?

Dresden

War is the ultimate madness says the air force rear gunner veteran and the vietnam vet says that the vietnam war had no morality and it was all so surreal going from saigon bars to then patrol the jungles filled with the viet cong it is surreal what human beings can do to other human beings then go and have a cup of tea and listen to classical music and in between plan the bombing of Dresden which had no military value and a lot of cultural value but it had the value that it would be very easy to deliberately kill hundreds of thousands of civilians by stoking up a firestorm in this city Vonnegut as an American P.O.W was in Dresden and he wrote Slaughterhouse 5 out of it recognising and exposing humanity's terrible inhumanity to humanity and so Europe was in total war and along with the concentration camps and the charred cities and the mass slaughters on the Russian front Churchill and Bomber Harris did their bit to make sure you knew it was total war by secretly and deliberately planning the wholesale massacre of the German civilian population war is a perfect crime for those who win it isn't it Mr Churchill? Stalin I imagine liked you.

Paraphrasing a War Widow

those anzacs coming out of the sea to cross those wet sands
showing wreckless valour the anzac myth is a collective myth their
courage can inspire us

to
also
be
courageous
against
the
odds

The Australian Resurrection

We all watched Stuart Diver when he was pulled out of that black hole in Thredbo a life saved when it was thought that death had had the final say
one small victory
against
the great victor

Nauru

A legal-less
gulag for the Canberra Taliban
to bully the victims
of the Kabul Taliban

Island Getaway of the Absolute Inhumane

The salty sea spray of human power corrupts the ambitious ruthless human heart to further erode defenceless human hearts exposed to this heartless evil to rust away to have refugee human souls become damaged goods on the island of Nauru

Wildside

All that shaking camera stuff in wildside with all those wild street kids and wild car chases and wild policemen and wild drug addicts and wild streets and wild deaths and wild doctors and wild female detectives and wild EVERYTHING make you think isn't it good to be calm and boring and live in the suburbs and just worry about the gardening?

Life after Death

This Greek father
can be such a patriarch
who feels he has such
authority
divvying his property
to whoever in his family he wishes
expecting his every wish
to be treated as commands
that he has a natural belief

that it is possible for him
to continue:
'ruling
from
the grave'
which my brother-in-law quipped
(I can see it now: family dinners
in the cemetery
showing
full respect
to a headstone
and to the muffled
but booming voice
underneath it)

Happy People

Oh Mr. Kim
Glorious Leader Of North Korea!
I saw your dancing troops
clapping hands with each other
all in circle formations
on a large town square
people so happy
in your happy state!

Happy Dance

We should by like these
African village people
I once saw on Global Village
who all danced around in a circle
in a living room
of a mud-brick house
at the end of the day
grateful to the day
providing it's good
they look healthy
we should all do a happy
dance
and
be happy!

Profound

You want something profound?

Why don't you read Homer (I always do...)

Or watch the African Queen with Humphrey Bogart and Katherine Hepburn or the Thomas Crown Affair with Steve McQueen (which I did watching both these movies on daytime t.v. because I really enjoyed them and didn't want to do anything else)

No one's ordering you

to read me

I am even reading the African Queen who was written by some guy called Forester (I think) anyway I was really pleased that he wrote about Hornblower and I think the tv series is really good and that is profound too in it's own enjoyable light-easy on the brain way but so maybe not as profound as thinking will I be thinking of the movies I saw or the books I read on the day of my certain death?

The Environmentalist

I was in El Salvador and heard the environmentalist speak about the water problems occurring in his country

they were very bad

he said he once spoke in front of a military audience

Who were impressed by what he said

After all soldiers need water to fill up their canteens while they hunt down those dirty godless communist guerillas (who are really only trying to keep their families fed, protecting their women from being raped and fighting back after whole villages have been massacred)

An officer came up to the environmentalist after his talk and kindly suggested that he could organise a death squad to shoot down the businessmen who won't keep their factories clean who don't care if all of the rivers get poisoned

"Tell us who they are *senor* and we'll kill the uncaring *bastardos!*"

"No thank you but thank you for your deep sincere concern ..." so with that the environmentalist declined this offer of 'kindness' for the environment. I guess it is true what is sometimes said: sometimes the thought alone does count.

Anzac

Sometimes when I think of Anzac Day I think of the time I saw the VB cans on the backseat of the taxis which were taking those veterans too old or weary to march to the Cenotaph

I also think of that time at Gallipoli when this Turkish guy at one of the many cafes where they played backgammon had beaten the four other travellers I was with

It was my turn to play him

On the last roll I had to get what I wanted as it was my last and only chance to win

in a very close game

I won! Anzac's Revenge!

(I had to keep it quiet that I was by blood: Greek Cypriot) I ran up a hill at Anzac Cove thinking I would be reaching the top but when I got to the top of that hill my body was fully exposed by the other hills and cliffs that were behind I understood then how a lot of men would have been killed

Back home I have recently gone to the Dawn Service with Starky one time and with Fenwick another time (and seeing and learning the same acquaintance had gone there as well both times)

(Stark's grandfather who fought in the trenches was able to convince the Australian recruiting officers that his surname wasn't German)

You can catch a bus on Homer Street which passes through on Anzac eve one time a year at 3.20 a.m and if you are a veteran it is for free

a little privilege

gained for risking your life

(I guess it's the small liberties that count)

Seeing all the old men wearing their medals on the bus or train is interesting: you take note of the nostalgia in their cow eyes

My Greek Cypriot parent's were intrigued by Anzac Day

Watching The March

on a black & white t.v. in the sixties and the seventies

Seeing the Australians marching

Commemorating the old enemy of the Achaeans

Who was so far away from this ancient continent but so acutely recalled as if it was only across the sea

A true curiosity

I have seen The One Day Of The Year and thought it was a good play and think it is still relevant to this day as sons will also

questions fathers and fathers will always question sons I also think of Dave Warner singing 'we march our march and drink our beer' and of that line 'he was only nineteen' by Redgum there was that woman manager at the Three Weeds Hotel at Rozelle who shouted everyone a free beer including my mate Ica and I when she won a two-up game as it was the first time she had won anything in her life

(Ica's grandfather fought in the trenches we saw - in the family house which he built after the war - his war diary once where he wrote 'Bill died today' - Bill was his best mate)

However when I think of two-up I think of those old wizened veterans wearing their medals and ill fitting suits at the Hero of Waterloo down by the Rocks using an old blanket taking the game seriously with beer in hand and thinking of their deceased mates seriously

I think of other things which

I associate with Anzac Day

but that's enough for now - what do you think?

It's best to remember

Lest We Forget

Forgotten Island

On the eve of Anzac Day

In far away Cyprus

the Cypriots are having a referendum

to determine the island's destiny

the Turkish occupation

has lasted so many years

Let's not forget...

Stalingrad

We watched that movie

Enemy At the Gates

Saw all that vicious fighting in the Tractor Factory

My friend imagined herself as a Russian soldier in this factory

It was in a dream on the same night of seeing the film

She said - the next time I saw - that she was behind a big plot plant that covered her

from the

deadly German

sniper fire -
that saved her life -
resourceful
brave
woman

Channel 31

It really has been that sort of week
I've just discovered that Channel 31
has been taken off the air
I was really enjoying the Wednesday night Indian hour with all
those Bollywood dance clips
A hundred ecstatic
colourfully
dressed
dancers
giving you true joy
I liked that Italian-American extreme left political guy on Sunday
night who was a microphone of fun
(Who only looked extreme
because the mainstream is so shallow)
Sticking it into capitalism
Telling us how the Americans encouraged the breakup
of Yugoslavia with a seedy use of their foreign aid
Theories of Everything was also becoming a favourite show as that
bearded bloke stared down the camera for half an hour and
informed me about parallel universes
multiverses
black holes
space time dimensions
now television's sixth channel has been taken off our celluloid
multiverse and that's a real shame
I look at a blue screen where Channel 31 used to be
and consider those shaky views of refugee rallies I had first seen
on community tv the Croatian cooking classes the comedy skits
the alternative music scenes the Chinese news the Arabic song
show the drawing classes with the old guy the small business ads
the spokespeople for prisoners and the indigenous and really
wonder whatever has happened to television democracy for the
little guy?
Where everyone can have a go?

I believe the switchboard at the ABA suffered from meltdown when people rang up to complain about the closure of 31's transmission and that this had rarely happened before but it was all to no avail
(Oh Big Brother!
You win *again!*)

Unions

First there was the Soviet Union and then the
European Union
those East Europe countries have escaped from
one to join the other
I guess
that's
what
you
call
being independent

Lost In Translation

All those new countries in the land of the E.U. you are going to have to get translations done for this tower of babel you will be taking a long time to get something from Maltese translated to Lithuanian it seems English sure has the jump start on everyone else and so get your diplomats businesspeople and tourists E.U off to India where there is a lateral Indian Professor guy who claims he can teach English grammar in one hour with verbs and irregular verbs and all those other sorts of things sure will be useful in the growing national cosmology of the populations of Europe and for the rest of the world for that matter do you dig all this gibberish daddio....? Oh oh a go go get me bat fink...I'm sure his fight against evil is understood by everyone...and the fight for truth and glory and peace and prosperity is WHAT'S IT'S ALL ABOUT oh do the hokey pokey everyone in the world! We can all move our limbs the same way and that is understood because WE ARE ALL HUMAN BENGSI!!! In the next battle don't blow up the mosques or synagogues or churches or temples...did you know that a mosque is not a sacred space in Islam that Allah says the whole world is a mosque and a mosque is a place of refuge we have the mosque

union in this world and remember we will all be mulch at the end of the day anyway...then the darkness beyond will give us the ultimate eternal sense if the end of this paragraph has become nonsense to you immortal relief is at hand...all those translators at all those meetings in the E.U. but we need to keep small languages like Slovenian because democracy is about protecting the rights of the minority by a protecting majority people forget that languages die out over the thousands of years and the less languages that die out than better...why is Catalan not an official language but Danish is and Franco was a bad man to ban Catalan what price to keep a language and what price to keep the spiritual essence of being a human being?

Between the Posts

Perry Keyes is playing at the Warren View Hotel on Saturday night
Oh yeah!
Remember those days when he in his band the Stolen Holds played regularly at the Broadway Hotel on a Friday night or at the Bat & Ball one Saturday arvo?
I still think his Johnny Sattler song is still his best
(I'm a traditionalist)
Oh yeah!
Kicking the ball for South Sydney straight between the posts! (Sure made Frank Hyde happy!)
That song is a true expression of a community spirit
which I fear may be getting lost these days
Where people don't seem to mind that everything is getting more sanitized-
Oh well...
Chow!

Mass

When you think of 'mass' what do you think?
Church mass
critical mass
mass graves
the human mass
the dark mass within the universe or of the dark mass in our minds
or

perhaps there's
the masses of
masses of particles
of physical existence
which makes our huge populations able to wonder about God
while looking at the stars and also wonder about God after looking
at
a
massacre
consider the
increase
in
mass
of
a
falling
object
when
that
falling object
is
a
human
being
who
has
become
a
victim
of
a
falling morality

Kangaroo Anzacs

On the late night television news a surreal news item comes up whereby a kangaroo is given the highest bravery award by the r.s.p.c.a it barked like a dog and his master was saved! Bravo this kangaroo that talked like a dog I just wonder if the scales of history would have tipped away if kangaroos instead of human beings had invaded those beaches of Gallipoli?

The Celluloid Curtain

I thought I'd seen everything when in Harvey Krumpet the family t.v has a curtain which is pulled back to watch the tele then when I turn off the little portable tv I bought for my mum I watch it turn itself off by the screen pulling in on both sides like a black curtain until the whole screen is totally black like a soothing night and like our eyelids close like curtains to take us inwards into that theatre of dreams

Harry's War

harry's war is one of those remarkable short films about a brave aboriginal man fighting in WWII in the jungles of new guinea fighting and dying for his country and with the hope that his country would recognise and respect his people as human beings and I remember seeing this movie at paramatta's roxy theatre a fine building from the thirties and of seeing bob masey in the forum of this theatre of this indigenous short film night who was a very fine human being for his people and a fine actor

There is a brain machine that can detect racist thoughts

After a title like that
what's there
to say?
The Thought Police must be happy.

Shrek

That sheep which had it's huge fleece shorn after evading his owners for so many years reminds of the golden fleece of jason and argonauts fame I learnt that prospectors in the carpathian mountains would use sheep fleeces to catch gold dust in mountain streams behind many myths there is some truth or fact which gets it going

Lolita

It seems there is an earlier version of Lolita an obscure short story by an unknown German writer who even now remains nameless to me but Nabakov the Russian made the story into something profound but then again the desire of ageing men to desire feminine youth and all it's entailing beauty is really a very old story is it not? Just ask Zeus that lecher who will square you up on this sexual ledger

Shake Hands

Maybe bush blair howard and all those neo-con crazies (with the fever of the Lord!) would like to shake saddam's hand for giving them an excuse to be crazy and liberate the world the way it should be liberated whether the world likes it or not we know what's best for you world and we're only pointing this gun at you for your own good

Metromaniac

A metromaniac says wordwatch on newsradio is a person who is obsessed with writing poems
Yes that has been me recently
When will it all end?
It's been enjoyable though
And hopefully also a little insightful and having insights is what we should be crazy about

Babies

I saw two lots of friends yesterday
As I have been made aware of previously
To be like some priest making pastoral visits
I enjoyed my Anzac muffins
A nice change from the Anzac cookies
I saw the child smile while I held her
Babies can look so wise and gentle
At the other house
Another child

A few weeks old a boy
I held him the other day
Also smiling
Pleased with himself
Already curious about life as the other little one was also curious
and hungry
(I guess mothers know how much babies get hungry and both
parents know how much babies like to wake up)
This other baby is a girl who is nearly a year old
To see such young life
Makes you realise how precious life is
Of it's fragility
Of it's purity
Bless the child and as William Blake once said where children are
that is where Heaven is as well

In Chicago on Anzac Day

I was in the blues den that Muddy Waters played
When I met these two drunk businessmen
Who adopted me as their buddy
They said Reagan was making their country great again
After all that Iran hostage stuff
They were proud to be American
And that Aussies were their buddies

Takes Two to Tango

We could kick ass together
Even though Australia kicked
America's ass in the America's Cup
Yet no hard feelings
As long as we go out together to kick ass
in the Middle East
Even though I've found out that when Menzies asked the
Americans to come and help under the ANZUS pact to possibly
fight the Indonesians during the Communist Emergency in Malaya
during the sixties the Americans wouldn't come

Non-Saluting Skeletons

There's one thing I don't understand
How come Australians always go on

About the Anzacs not saluting the English officers
Which they are proud of
And it's good to see that the Anzacs irritated the English officers
but when the English officers told the Anzacs to to over the top to
die like flies in their thousands they did so though I do have faith
that all not all of the Anzacs listened to the orders a few fed up
ones mutineered towards the end which is good to see and it really
irritated the English officers that they couldn't excute these Anzacs
because they were volunteers but the English officers did a pretty
good job giving lots of other Anzacs the chop-chop

War Arocity

I remember a wizened smiling guy at a party
telling me that Australians were noted for committing war atrocities
on the Western Front
(I've read the same about some of the Canadians...
He said it so that I would know that at the end of the day all of us
can be cruel in war not just the enemy who is always perverted to
be inhuman)
The only thing I know is I met a craggy veteran of the Vietnam War
at another party who said his patrol used to string up a Viet Cong
from the groin so his mates would come and help him and then
they would shoot all of them
"Someone had to do it
It was a good way of getting 'em..." the veteran looked sad
I wonder if it was remorse or because his stubbie was empty
I dunno

The Mouse That Didn't Roar

To finish off her debrief
Of her visit overseas to Belgrade
to England
to Egypt
to Valencia
she needed to check her e-mail
but my computer mouse wouldn't work
it's one of the few times this had happened and this was one of
those times when it was a real inconvenience as the storage space
on her hotmail was at 98% a very critical position!
In percentage terms it is the little hassles like this

that can make you think life is unfair
it can be upsetting
but the whole little drama was taken in it's stride
'as just one of those things'
no matter really
it's just that I sometimes think one little thing on top of another little
thing can add up to one big thing especially when it comes to
computers or car engines
I mean what would happen if the computer mouse that needs to
stop the order for World War III suddenly didn't work? (Oh Dr
Strangelove!).
I'll leave any other nemesis scenario to you because to everyone
one person's big issue is to someone else a storm in a tea cup and
visa versa
this mouse was just a ripple in a teacup
but
I'm
glad
a friend
of mine offered me his spare mouse
which
I used
to replace
mine
so
I won't
have that problem again! An end to all trivial annoyances and
nuisances and keep our eyes on the big picture!

A Moral Tale

Oh no! In the noon movie Mosquito Squadron the squadron has to
bomb it's target when there will be prisoners in the chatel where
underneath it the Germans are carrying out their secret weopan
making but thankfully the French Resistance can help out and
thankfully it will be Sunday morning when they do it so all the
prisoners will be together at church when the attack begins so the
chance of the success of the prisoners living and being freed will
be increased oh thank God for that! It was all David McCallum's
idea as a Mosqiouto Squadron leader and who can forget him from
the Man from U.N.C.L.E? In this WWII movie he must have been
serving his apprenticeship as being a good guy against evil!

Oh no! Air Command says the bombers can't let the bombers drop a bomb to blow up a prison wall to give the prisoners a chance to escape until the main bombing mission has to be done but the prisoners might die! Davod McCallum and his mates who are the ones risking their lives anyway are not happy but hey guys don't you know?

Evil! Evil is EVERYWHERE!

Oh no a German officer has killed a French Catholic Priest! That is evil!

The Mosqiutos have to drop their bouncing bombs down a tunnel! A stoic British officer crashes his burning plane with a bomb at the tunnel! Such a sacrifice! Such nobility! The prison wall is breached by another bomb by another plane! This plane crashes the French Resistance even saves them ans the chatel is bombed hurting the Germans but the escape means the lives of the prisoners have been saved! Oh no a German tank is killing the prisoners! A British officer with amnesia whose lover in England thinks he's dead blows the tank up with a bazooka but he dies as well! David McCallum who knows the wife gets the girl in the end anyway!

Her name is Beth and thankfully Beth didn't know her husband was ever alive! A successful mission says the British officers!

What about the officers who died? asks McCallum.

We can replace the officers! The Germans will remember what happened to them FOREVER! They're won't be another secret weapon site but we can have another squadron! Yes in war life is expendable

replaceable

too bad if you are one of those who needs replacing...

The Theory of Relativity

They say that the Americans spent
a million dollars
to research
to
design
and make
a pen
which would
work
in

outer space
while the Russians
saved their
money
and took
a
pencil

Unfair Artemis

Maybe NASA should be
NLTH?

Which stands for No Lateral Thinking Here
except that is a little unfair because there was some lateral thinking
to get Apollo 13 out of the icy hell it got into up there in the cold of
space with all that freezing death around down the back of the
moon Artemis sure did have her fun that cold bitch!

Injustice

I'll never forget
as South Africa celebrates the overthrow of apartheid ten years
ago
the young black South African woman I met in Athens many years
ago like in the early eighties who said that even she too was
restricted in where she could go travelling in the world on her
South African passport just like as if she was white you'd think
governments would be more sensible

Idealism Wins

Who would have thought while looking at that little scruffy band of
daily protesters with their board in Trafalgar Square which told you
how many days Nelson Mandela was in jail that one day they
would have cause to celebrate?

The Alamo

What a pity that Alistair Cooke
died at the same time as Peter Ustinov
as this man of letters to America would surely have given us some
insightful insight to this man both comedian and humanitarian
however Jim Lehrer in his Newshour show gives us one insight

when he states after showing a clip of Ustinov as an eccentric Quixotic but very nationally proud Mexican commander heading into modern-day Texas to reclaim the Alamo with his little company of Mexican troopers and with the guy I know as Gomez from the Adams family as his most loyal sergeant I discover that Jim Lehrer wrote the novel on which this quirky movie is based well well Jim Lehrer I didn't realise you had such a magnificently special sense of humour

Starry Night

The most memorable thing I have heard all year is to hear on space stuff that there is a starry halo out there that looks like a star from Van Gogh's starry night how wonderful

Van Gogh once said that it takes death to reach a star and so when I go I hope I go towards *this* star...I remember the time now when I met a young very chirpy witty Hollywood screenwriter at a birthday dinner in a Cuban restaurant in L.A. who said he wanted to do a film piece based on a spaceship travelling through the vacuum of outer space fuelled by metaphors

very imaginative! (and perhaps we should fuel our lives with metaphors and with superlatives to each other as well...)

Choice

Dr Who tells us we have free choice that there are an infinity number of choices in an infinity of eternities especially when you travel sideways in time and space rather than going forwards or backwards in time and space

(so no need to be totally fatalistic about fate for this may prove to be fatal...)

John Laws

Loved all your poems Lawsie
Haven't forgotten that poetry night
in Emads when we
listened
to your words
in reverence
and wry

mockery
and a
little bit of fright
that so many
take you seriously at least you done good many years ago to help
people who would ring you up feeling suicidal and now you are
trying to expose Jonesy's corrupting influence over the PM there
was Jonesy trying to hold him to ransom if he didn't get his
threatening not to endorse sly dishonest John like Jonesy is
dishonest it's interesting that the Howard has no recollection let's
hope that maybe the truth may be outed despite the convenient
amnesia and all that cash for comment fiasco for the powers-that-
be oh! There's Gaddafi on tv with his female guards and tent being
feted in Europe
Wow!
Wonders never cease! There's some cash for comment in a BIG
BIG way!

Disrepute in Sport is NOT ON!

Benny Elias
Les Murray and
Damien Lovelock
from the Celibate Rifles and soccer and gridiron aficionado and
who I liked that night at the Annandale talked about his wild
amateur soccer days and the rest of the SBS sports team all speak
their minds don't they on matters of sport and they do have astute
minds and Les looked astute adroitly smoking his cigarette in La
Vina having a night out with a football team

What's the Point?

Hey! The Broncos lose two points for replacing a player while an
injured player is still on the field what's the point in that? I wanna
know could people who run the Big Show the Big Circus the Big
Superpowers the Big Businesses be so stupid and is that why life
feels so absurd sometime and they are always taking away our two
points when we're down or made minor infringements to the law or
are they afraid that if they give us an inch we'll take a mile or even
demand a maritime boundary at the halfway point? What's the
point of saving East Timor if you are going to unsave it by robbing
it of a fair share of resource and keeping it poor? What's the point

of everything and anything and give people their two points when they're due and deserve them – THAT'S ALL!!!

Marshall Plan

When they talk about a Marshall Plan in Iraq after all you have to destroy the village to save it as some marine officer wit said in the Vietnam war I just think of the martians in the mars hall who lived in marshall street in surry hills and I think the americans must think that people who live in the middle east are aliens anyway and it would be more feasible to have the marshall plan on mars as long as the microbes were happy with that and didn't fight back what da ya think even if it meant initiating a pre-emptive strike on mars as it may still take the microbes to develop into beings capable of interplanetary space travel and to read h.g. wells war of the worlds and invade earth so we better go and invade them now while we still have the chance don't you think and hasn't this been a good argument against appeasement and maybe there is no really intelligent life in the universe or even here on earth?

Historical Irony

It's historically ironic that in the spell check on the computer that it suggests I change Ica to CIA and it was also historically ironic when in St. Petersburg I saw German sailors on a goodwill NATO visit from their ship the Schwesig-Holstein that was the name of the German ship which shelled Danzig in 1939 to start off world war 2 which would lead to the death of twenty million Russians at least I wonder if on that day in Russia I was the only one that noticed this historical irony...or maybe the vagabond neptune by the Peter of the Great statue did that guy who held a paper trident and had on a blue party hat some fallen seagod without an underworld now that Stalinism was now really all over and there was this beggar god and watching the man dance his bear to the wedding party yes I wonder what the great founder of modern Russia thought about all that and at least culture was alive and well in the siege when Shostokovich the great composer composed a symphony of liberation and inspiration to fight the Wehrmacht while the siege itself kept them free from their own tyrant now is not that too a historical irony?

Poetry

All of life is a poem

is

it

not?

Let's

hope it

to

be

a

very

lovely

long

and

pretty

joyous

enriching

life enhancing

beautiful memory filled

compassionate

wonderfully loving

awe inspiring

of

life

poem!

THE MIRACLE OF THE APPEARANCE OF THE EXTRA WHITE BACKGAMMON PIECE

This work fits better in the tradition of early Renaissance painting rather than in the Byzantine icon tradition. The mountain landscape and sky scene in the background creates a sense of spatial depth not usual in icons. However, the Byzantine tradition is more or less followed in the sense that this image captures the eternal moment when both saints have realised that an extra white counter has materialised in the backgammon set. St. Kristina holds the piece in her hand and which appeared at the end of playing their last game. (The game was played in an inner-city cafe in Sydney). By the knee of St. Nicholas are the dice with the numbers three and one. Three and One are both divine numbers often dealing in the Christian tradition of the Trinity of the Godhead and One with the concept of Unity with the Eternal. The apparition of the white counter brings up suggestions of unity between the opposite but connected realms of the Godhead and the Creation. This promotes the idea of a Final Synthesis between the Physical and Spiritual to ring about a Total Unity in All Known and Unknown Reality. There is also a sense of the Eternal in the gold backgammon board. Thus the game represents human intelligence involving itself in the Finite and Infinite processes of dealing with Fate; and the interconnecting effect of divine action and human decision in affecting courses of our own life and to a resolution to the ultimate issue between life and death and to the realisation that such a resolution brings us into contact with the Infinite Eternal which we as Finite Beings mostly desire. Our saints discourse with their Human Intelligence (which we must remember was created from the Divine) with the Eternal and Fate every time they play backgammon. In the immediate background it is the scene of a Grecian cafe bringing up connotations of a Mediterranean point of view towards life (this attitude is best summed up in the writings of Mediterraneans such as Nikos Kazantzakis and Marcus Aurelius). Whilst beyond the arch which serves almost as a window to the Eternal there is the mountain landscape which surrounds the Tibetan town of Xiahe in western China. In Xiahe our two protagonists experienced the Tibetan New Year (which was like walking into the colourful unconscious realms of a Kandinsky painting and into the divine glory of any Blake work) in their travels and which was a reminder of the issues between Human and Divine Fate discussed here. Lastly, we note on the backgammon

board the maps of Cyprus and Lithuania which is a point of reference to the human heritage of our two saints. Here in ends a summary of this image.

(Please note that St. Ch/Kristina day is December 5 and St. Nicholas Day is December 6).

'The Angel.'

Etching. Sepia on cream paper. 6" X 4" Copperplate.

This angel is based on one of the three heavenly figures of Andrey Rublyov's *'The Trinity'* (c. 1411). Rublyov was Russia's master iconographer. His icons have an inner spiritual *psyche* which strongly appeals to my Greek Orthodox sensibilities.

Icons are not seen as works of art but rather as religious objects for holy worship. Icons are perceived as open 'windows to eternity'; thus the spectator meditates on 'heaven' so as to allow one's soul to transcend the mortal dimensions of this physically bound world. Hopefully, an inner revelation of the 'Divine Love' shall occur.

At the Tretyakov Gallery in Moscow I had the good fortune to see Rublyov's *'The Trinity.'* Yet, it was in St. Petersburg - at the Hermitage - I was especially intrigued to see a young well-heeled woman meditate and pray in front of another Rublyov icon. I found such mystical reverence quite moving and further emphasised, for me, the sublime spirituality of these beautiful religious images.

It is my hope I may have also been able to convey this same sense of a 'divine serenity' with this particular image. I should also mention that angels are seen as messengers from God. Thank you.

MORE ETCHINGS

ZORBA THE GREEK

This image is based on an evening with friends who used to live at Balmain in Llewellyn Street. I was driving over to the house one September on a Saturday night many years ago and I heard Zorba the Greek on the radio. At the house one of my friends mentioned Zorba the Greek and it was decided to play this tune and other folk songs from around the world. It is hard to explain but there was a dream like quality to the evening for me as we absorbed ourselves in dancing to these songs. The house had a rustic feeling to it and the magical overtone of the night

was accentuated by dancing in the near dark - I think there was only a lamp lighting the room. The work itself displays the living room of this old house and the composition of the dancing figures - which includes myself and three other female friends - is based on Henri Matisse's *The Dance*.

LUNA PARK

This smiling Buddhist face is based on a stone carved image at the temple complex at Siem Reap known as 'Bayon.' These temples are in the same area as Ankor Wat - one of the marvels of Khmer architecture. When I first saw this smiling Buddha I was immediately reminded of the smiling face of Luna Park and consequently on either side of the face are the towers which can be found on the facade of Luna Park.

TREE OF LIFE

This image shows an Indonesian puppet theatre. On the left side of the theatre there are rows of the wooden puppets which are used during the play. The large leaf in the middle of the stage is known as the tree of life and is displayed before a play begins and also at the end of the play to signal to the audience that it is finished.

WINTER TREES

This etching is based on a sketch I did of some winter trees in the Lithuanian forest. Druskininkai is a town in southern Lithuania where the national icon of Lithuania - the mystical painter and composer M.K. Ciurlionis (1875 - 1911) - spent his childhood. I could feel the spiritual

sense of nature which Ciurlionis himself would have experienced while walking through these beautiful woods.

FIESTA

This image is based on an outdoor fiesta the people of an El Salvadorean village put on for an Australian human rights delegation of which I was a member. While we were dancing a 'cloud' of fireflies descended upon us and created a typically remarkable scene of Latino magic realism. I should acknowledge the dancing couple are directly based on an image by the famous Mexican artist Diego Rivera.

Sunning the Buddha

This work bears the influence of Ian Fairweather who in turn was influenced by Aboriginal bark painting and Chinese calligraphy; thus the light strokes on a dark background. In this 'experimental work' the Buddha hovers above a row of pilgrims. The image is based on a scene I witnessed in Xiahe - a Tibetan monastery town in the Chinese province of Gansu. (This province is actually a part of Greater Tibet and can be considered as territory occupied by the Chinese). The placing of a large *thanka* on a mountain side is one of four major events of Tibetan New Year. It is incredibly cold in the morning when the *thanka* is unravelled as Tibetan New Year is in early March at the tail end of the North Asia winter. However, thousands of Tibetan pilgrims patiently wait for this ritual to occur. The *thanka* has a design of a Buddha woven upon it and is only left out for a couple of hours before it is rolled up again for another year. This event is called 'Sunning the Buddha' for the obvious reason that this Buddha is revealed outdoors for the one and only time outside at the time of the new year. It is remarkable that this long awaited event only lasts a couple of hours. The image of the Buddha for me lingers in the mind due to the rare opportunity of seeing it for such a short time.

Nicaraguan Boy

This image is based on a common scene which I saw during my second visit to Nicaragua: the beggar child selling chewing gum, cigarette lighters or other such small product. Having been to Nicaragua in 1986 when the Sandinistas were at the zenith of their power you could sense the empowerment of a whole nation which had overcome the Somoza dictatorship. Though the contra war was taking a great toll on human life there was a sense that this bloody trial would be overcome and an everlasting peace would soon be achieved. In 1992 a peace of sorts had been achieved but it had come at the cost of a war weary population voting out the Sandinistas in order to end a conflict which had taken the lives of 10,000 innocent people. However, Nicaraguans were no longer in control of their lives having to face up once more to the usual ills of third world impoverishment. This is a melancholy portrait of a young boy struggling through his day; yet I hope - through the iconoclastic quality which I have given the work - that I have instilled him with a sense of dignity which he and his people deserve.

Guatemalan Couple

This is a work based on a picture in a cheap hostel in Guatemala City which I and my travel companion realised that - for purely monetary reasons - also doubled up as a brothel. Despite it's somewhat 'seamy side' it was a cosy, cheerful place.

Indonesian archipelego series

Nirvana

Sepia. 6x4". Copper plate.

Mt. Merapi which you can see here hovering above a blanket of mist is in Java and is an active volcano.* I and another friend spent a night walking up Mt. Merapi with the hope of seeing its red lava at its summit just before sunrise. We did not manage to see any lava but the view of seeing the blanket of white cloud over the surrounding landscape made me feel we had reached nirvana. This experience was accentuated by the feeling that as we climbed this steep mountain through a windy rainy night I felt we were akin to the spirits of Virgil and Dante travelling through the Underworld. In the morning we had passed from the cold darkness of hades to the warm dawn light of paradise. I should also note Mt. Merapi is the volcanic mountain on which the grand Buddhist complex of Borobudur is based upon. The top of this divine temple is meant to resemble nirvana itself ; seeing Mt. Merapi at dawn and its mystical surrounding environ I can well understand how it was from here that the ancient architects of Borobudur gained their original inspiration.

* However, I must state that I am not 100 per cent sure if this is Mt. Merapi itself or a neighbouring mountain. As the photo upon which this work is based upon was taken either while we were near the summit of Mt. Merapi or when we were walking back; my memory fails me at this moment but at the risk of sounding very pretentious: what does it really matter - for what is human memory compared to considering the mysteries and pleasures of a Celestial Vision?

Adam and Eve

Travelling through the islands of the Indonesian archipelago can be a real trial filled with many days of tedious waiting for ferries which had broken down or for buses which only come once a day and so forth. However, there is the occasional magnificent day which makes it all worthwhile. Six of us travelled on a rickety boat to the island of Rinca near Flores to see the Komodo dragons. There is a sense of pre-history amidst the Indonesian islands which can make one feel that you have gone back to the dawn of time. We had a great day looking for the dragons and walking around Rinca and on the way back to Flores on the boat we saw one of those picture postcard sunsets that take your breath away. Amidst us six were a lovely Australian couple; here they are as Adam and Eve on the boat enjoying paradise.

Tree of Life

This scene shows the tree of life which is the big leaf in the middle of the stage. The tree of life in this position is used by the puppet master to signify to his audience the end of the play. Wooden puppets are being used in this particular play which we saw in the daytime. You can see the puppets in rows on either side of the stage. However, the shadow puppet plays which can be seen at night are perhaps more spectacular.

Pennies from Heaven

Leaving the island of Flores to go to Sulawesi we caught one of the large PELNI ferries which cruise the whole of the Indonesian archipelago. They travel throughout the islands usually following a two week course. The PELNI ferries stop at different ports for about two hours giving just enough time to disembark and board their human cargo. These large passenger boats which can hold up to 1,000 people impeccably keep to their timetable. Sometimes there is a carnival atmosphere at the wharf when the PELNI ferry comes in as people wait to meet visiting relatives or farewell departing ones. While we waited for the PELNI to leave Flores several canoes approached the large white boat. The boys upon them called out to the passengers to drop down coins by which they would dive into the water to collect them. Thus looking down at them from the high vantage point of the top decks one felt like a god as you dropped your coins to the boys; hence the title of this image.

Anu Krakatau is Angry

Sepia. 6 x 4" Copper plate.

Anu Krakatau is the child of Krakatau which blew up in the late 1800s and which caused the death of thousands. Turner's famous sunsets are made more brilliant by the dust of Krakatau being reflected in the North European sky. One guidebook stated that the sound of the eruption could be heard in Alice Springs. Thus we payed homage to this ancient power of nature by going out on a small fishing boat to visit this new emerging transformation of itself. The foredeck of this small boat can be seen in the foreground of the etching. There was a boy on the craft who could speak some English and was our guide. The volcanic island was erupting large plumes of black dust into the sky every ten minutes and thus he informed us that on this day Anu Krakatau was angry. We spent about half an hour on the island where we continued to view the blasts of Anu's temper. Furthermore, it seemed as we touched the warm black sandy soil that we had connected with the centre of the earth itself. The trip to a nearby island - where we going to stay overnight before heading back to the Javanese coast - was very wild as the sky suddenly became grey and which was accompanied by a strong tempest. I feared as the boat steeply oscillated in the stormy seas there was a good chance we would capsize. However, we safely reached the sanctuary of the next island which along with several others was probably a remnant of the previous Krakatau; during the night we watched Anu Krakatau continue its tantrums - which regularly appeared as small orange glows on the dark horizon. Our eventful sojourn to this volcanic island was another highlight having the same sense of journeying into a world which preceded human time which compared

favourably to our much earlier visit to Rinca. To finish on a 'technical note' I should add that the sky was devised by simply scratching steel wool over the wax which was on the copper plate.

'Manjustri.'

Bodhivista of Transcendental Wisdom'.

Etching. Sepia. 6"X4". Copperplate.

Firstly, I would like to state that a *bodhivista* is an enlightened divine being. A *bodhivista* serves to lead others to enlightenment in their progression towards nirvana. *Manjustri* is a *bodhivista* who is depicted here as young prince. The flaming sword in the top left hand corner of the etching is used to cut through human illusion. *Manjustri* holds this flaming double-edged sword with his right hand while in his left hand this

diety holds a stem which eventually leads to a blooming lotus of wisdom. *Manjustri* is portrayed as a young man to point out the Buddhist notion that wisdom does not necessarily result from the mere experience of living many years. Wisdom - which is seen in Buddhism as the Mother of all Buddhas - can result from a perceptive intellect which can see right through to the foundations of all reality. Why is this mental power known as wisdom so cherished? Because wisdom is seen as the major virtue which can lead a pilgrim to the sort of total freedom needed to emancipate us from human suffering and human desire. These mortal virtues impede us from reaching nirvana. Thus this Buddhist diety is one of the most pre-eminent in the Buddhist cosmos.

I have an interest in iconography thus I was attracted to the notion of portraying an Eastern divinity. It seems appropriate to etch *Manjustri* for it surely appears to me to be a worthwhile goal in this life - which many times seems like 'looking through a glass darkly' - to seek out the wisdom of the gods. This *Manjustri* is a detail of an eastern Tibetan image possibly painted in the early nineteenth century. It is entitled the '*Pure Land of Manjustri.*'

My interest in Tibetan Buddhism comes from experiencing Tibetan New Year in the Tibetan monastery town of Xiahe in Gansu province, western China. I was impressed by the many rituals which I saw as well as by the cheekiness of the Tibetan people; they portray an incredible human resilience which defies both the adversities of nature and the harsh political obstacles which are presently being placed before them. Ignorant of much that I saw I am naturally curious to find out the meaning of these new year rituals. Thus, along the way, to discover such a *bodhivista* as *Manjustri* has been enriching.

Sunset.Greenpatch. Jervis Bay.

Greenpatch is a popular spot at Jervis Bay and it was wondrous looking at the water at sunset as the sun's rays glided over the smooth water of the inlet. I ave always liked the south coast - especially in winter - due to its wild quality but on this night it was the serenity of nature which inspired me to also consider the enormous beauty of this coast line. The dark sky whose movement contrasts with the stillness of the sea was done by streaking steel wool over the wax on the zinc plate.

Letter to the Editor of the New York Times

To the many art buffs out there I remember reading a first hand account of a survivor who vividly describes his journey down the stairwells of a fiery smoke filled tower I was struck by the image of Marcel Duchamp's *Nude Descending a Staircase* which I happened to be looking at in an art book to those listeners who do not know this revolutionary Cubist work it caused much controversy in the 1913 Armory Show in New York however due to its Futurist tendency towards the showing of so much movement it may perhaps be regarded as a Cubo-Futurist work such is its uniqueness more specifically however staircases in a way can be seen as the modern version of those ancient ladders which were used as symbols connecting heaven to earth such as in Jacob's Dream in the case of this trapped in this towering inferno it was rather the case of the innocents in an underworld nightmare travelling downwards to a far more ghastly inferno where there was no heaven and for many there would be no earth Marcel Duchamp's works his Readymades his anti-art critiques have changed forever the conceptual underpinnings of western art Duchamp went one step further than the Cubists who challenged the way European culture had seen the world through the multi-view fragmentation of its subject matter for Duchamp eventually went even beyond these visual fragments to dispel the very picture

plane which these fragmented people musical instruments and vases were painted on Duchamp's *The Looking Glass* also titled *The Bride Stripped By Her Own Bachelors - Even 1915-1923 A Work In Progress* with its oil and lead machine-like images between two large planes of glass led art out of the defined space of the canvas rectangle wars atrocities massacres pieces of human beings have already become terrifyingly commonplace in the last hundred years and Picasso's *Guernica* 1937 has already strikingly captured for humanity our abhorrence of defenceless civilians being massacred from the air yet much of this inconceivable brutality still occurred within the parameters of well defined war zones even most terrorist attacks would still give their victims a few minutes grace by way of a warning phone call to escape the atrocity which was to come yet what we saw last week was a conceptual shift in what we loosely define as the rules of war it was as if those planes emerged from cyberspace without warning in peacetime in which those people on those aircraft in the target buildings had absolutely no chance of surviving the doom which awaited them the civilians of the blitz of Dresden of Hanoi at least had a daily expectation of the possibility of such an unfair death and knew that through the air raid siren they would at least be given a slim opportunity to live yet this has now all changed the Vietnam War destroyed the notion of a frontline but at least we understood that the playing board of this deadly war game was Indochina the playing pieces i.e. the soldiers the guerrilla fighters were still under the authority of nation states or hierarchical nationalist movements suddenly the playing field is the whole world while the playing pieces have become an authority unto themselves the international interconnect ness of the terrorist bacillus and its targets make this modern city or other on a particular mainland continent a war zone today and anywhere else in the world tomorrow thus a superpower attempts to linguistically draw this conflict back within some sort of geographical definition which we can comprehend by saying a suspected enemy is encamped in this particular third world country when this enemy is also in a flat in Hamburg or in Los Angeles or in even in Jerusalem the bride is being raped and the bachelors she has enamoured come from all points of her world in 1913 there was aptly in New York a final prophetic dissolution to the Renaissance concept of perspectival artistic space which has radically shifted the parameters of western culture in 2001 on a sunny Manhattan day the deadly principles of world diplomacy and war which found some definition in Macchiavello's *The Prince* have also ultimately

reached some murky borderless political and military unknown the heart of our princely world has been pierced and we anxiously wonder how much blood will be spilt and for how long before we can return to more comfortable familiar geo-political and psychological territories of human conflict unfortunately in this new post-modern 21st century nightmare whereupon we have witnessed the use of passenger planes as the ultimate found objects as ready-mades of terror the hammered social psyches of our industrial societies have finally caught up with Mistah Kurtz's final remark as we look at more live television images of twisted steel and photos of the missing on the outside of the very Armoury building used for the 1913 show we repeat those words which he uttered at the moment of death from the cruellest point of his own heart from within the worst darkness of his own colonial realm the horror the horror...

EUROPEAN SOLUTION CERTIFICATE

It is hereby declared that:

SUSANA SOKCEVIC & NICHOLAS NICOLA

will summarily face the 'European Solution' if they go back into temporary/casual employment from the beginning of 2003 onwards till the end of time at the so called educational institution known as Fairfield High School. (More commonly referred to as The Village). The sentence on these two mere criminal casuals will occur by the creek situated on the far side of the back oval. There shall be no reprieve. No appeal. No complaints. They will smile. Their last utterance shall be: "We love Big Barry." Thus this 'solution' to this 'problem' will be carried out *immediately* as soon as either of the above mentioned break their exile. Furthermore, their gypsy spirits forthwith will eternally reside in the corridor and rooms of M BLOCK. In the interests of public health all their scholarly possessions will also be burnt. They will not pollute this world in any way! For this major reason the sentence will be executed outside as far away as possible from The Village's good citizens. Remember, no one must question The Village. All must love The Village. The two accused do question! They do not love The Village with whole hearts! The Village demands blind obedience! Blind purity! Civilisation must be defended! Thus, I Barry The Gnome, the Head Teacher of the E.S.L Department, with great zeal, lovingly sanction the carrying out of this wholesome, righteous

sentence. I am the official witness of this edict.* Below are the signatures of the two damned 'non-teachers':

We the two accused have read the above and under no duress agree and support what has been said and thus of our own free will sign forthwith:

Susana Sokcevic

Nicholas Nicola

*Please note that this document is dated at the stroke of midnight of the days 5/6 of the month of December of the year 2002 A.D. (Year Zero G.T. Gnome Time).
[Thus here ends the contents of this certificate which is granted full authority by the laws contained within The Village Welfare Policy. A projectile levy inclusive of the G.S.T will be paid by next of kin. P.S. This is not a text message].

MSS SYNOPSIS - DARKNESS AND LIGHT a modern political allegory

(written march 2003)

A man falls into a closed underground cavern occupied by warring industrial societies. He is captured by the leaders of Ashur who present this special intruder as a messiah figure to the world. The charismatic stranger convinces many nations to fight with Ashur against the other 'superpower' of this underworld – Snetha. Ashur wishes to dominate this cavern world. However, Snetha is not defeated and a plan is devised to make a surprise attack on Snetha's main stronghold. The 'messiah' - who is Machiavellian and wants to secure not only his own survival but also his own

personal quest for power - convinces his captors that he should go with this task force; this is because that the task force will be going up to the stranger's `cavern world' from which he fell. (The people of this cavern world have no comprehension of the earth's surface and its open sky). The messiah states he can take the task force to the wells which it can descend to attack Snetha from above. The messiah goes with the task force but when it reaches the surface it has a skirmish with WWII Rumanian partisans. A captured partisan by the name of Stephen - a German deserter -will - against his will - take the task force to the wells. However, the task force is finally surrounded at the wells and defeated by superior German and Rumanian military forces. The `messiah' falls down a well to complete a `circle'. Stephen is amongst the captured prisoners of the task force. Many of these men die in the concentration camp of which Stephen was a guard. Stephen meets an **old man** in his hut with whom he enters into several philosophical conversations dealing - for example - with the issue of the personal sacrifice which can occur in upholding principles such as justice, human integrity and freedom in a tyranny. Stephen completes his `circle' whereby as a former guard who has rejected the mass genocide policy of his political masters he too becomes another victim of

such state horror. i.e. the book ends with his death in a gas chamber. [Word Count (including Glossary and Appendix One) 32,508]

MSS SYNOPSIS - LISA'S WORLD

(written october 2003)

Lisa and her young daughter Melissa are both dying of AIDS. The plot functions around circumstances dealing with Lisa and her death. Melissa is a Downes Syndrome child and is still alive at the end of the novel. The novel is broken up into three parts

I. NIGHT – The Heart of the Beast. (70,000 words).

II. DAY – The Sanctuary of the Subconscious. (60,000 words).

III. ETERNITY – The Motion of the Stars. (approximately 40,000 words – nearing revision).*

* this will probably increase towards 60,000...

(Thus the approximate word count of the whole MSS: 170,000 words).

I. NIGHT entails Michael a Greek Cypriot-Australian friend of Lisa's, who visits her on the NSW north coast. While at her place he remembers meeting Lisa in inner-city Sydney one night in which Lisa is distraught: she is splitting up with her boyfriend Dan. Lisa is

pregnant and Dan does not want the child. Michael and Lisa attend a fire show which is held outside the Supreme Courts in Darlinghurst. Lisa reminisces about a previous split-up with a boyfriend named Timothy who was bi-sexual. It is from this relationship that Lisa contracted A.I.D.S. (A deadly disease which is passed on through an act of love). Lisa is very emotional and ends up sleeping in Michael's old Holden. Michael leaves her there and ends up bumping into Dan at the Hopetoun Hotel in Surry Hills. Virgil – a friend of Dan's - takes them on a night excursion through Oxford Street. It should be pointed out that the three-part schema of the novel loosely follows Dante's Divine Comedy. NIGHT in a general way relates to the Inferno. This first part leads back to the north coast and to people such as Margaret, an older woman, who will support Lisa and Melissa through their illness. Michael learns of Lisa's medical condition on the north coast (where she lives as a single mother) and of her need to move back to Sydney for medical reasons.

II. DAY – this second section revolves around Melissa's christening. This act initiated by Lisa is meant to be seen as an act of defiance to Melissa's and her own death. Purgatory is time waiting and we learn of Lisa's time in Sydney as she 'waits' for her death. When Lisa moves back to Sydney she first stays with Cat – a 'musician friend' of Michael's who has just returned from North America. He is a self-styled, drunken street prophet who rightly perceives the U.S.A as a grand imperial power. He sees Lisa as a marginalised person in terms that relate her predicament to a wider macro-level which deals with the powerful and the powerless. Those on the margins are methodically kept there by those who maintain their strong position in the centre. The general theme of human mortality is also 'discussed' especially in relation to the idea that all physical mortality seems so certain and inevitable that a structure as immense as the universe also faces death. A possible alternative point of view which provides some notion of hope is given by the elderly minister at the christening who notes that medieval pilgrims who recognised how earthly power crucified the saint placed their faith in the 'Eternal Rose' i.e. those on the earthly margin who place their faith in a divine love may enter into a divine centre. (The basic premise is that the spiritual will outlast the physical). It is the same point made by Dante. It should be noted that allusions to life as a life-sapping labyrinth are made throughout the novel (such as references to the Minotaur). The minister provides a positive alternative 'mandala' to this negative view.

III. ETERNITY – For Lisa it is through a cultural response she arrives at ‘eternity.’ She paints a cloth which will be presented at her funeral. It is based on an Aboriginal design thus recognising the original spirituality of this continent. Significantly, it is those who live on Australia’s social circumference who provide the cultural opportunity for Lisa to be ‘centred.’ Like the christening, Lisa finds a sort of resolution, ‘victory’, a personal spiritual renewal or ‘birth’ over her tragic demise through this cultural act which is a conscious attempt to ‘contact eternity’ and which allows her to maintain a sense of self-respect, dignity and ‘life-worth’ in the face of death.

MICHAEL

Michael who is Greek-Australian is the main person who helps Lisa out and introduces to Lisa other helpers such as Margaret (elder woman who lives with daughter & family on the north coast) and Cat (innercity character who is interested in music, philosophy and has a cowboy persona which is accentuated by a recent trip to the Great Whore America). Personal tensions in Michael's life are also mentioned as a major counterpoint such as ending of his relationship with his girlfriend Belle who has gone overseas and has met a new boyfriend.

SETTING

DANTE & HOMER

The novel is set mainly in innercity Sydney and the north coast of NSW. The book's structure, ideas and characterization is linked loosely to Dante's Divine Comedy and images and ideas refer to this medieval text. There is also an exploration of the notion of the Labrynh from classical times such as the Cretan legend and references to the Oddysey and Greek myths such as Promestheus are also explored.

