



VOLUME II
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WATER²

HEAR THE MUSIC

The files are all mp3 format, so either burn to CD and play through stereo, PC or DVD. Or transfer files to iPod or mobile. Listen to separately from reading the poems, or simultaneously. Neither are created or curated with each other in mind, but you never know from what gap a synapse might leap, so knock yourself out.

VIEW THE POEMS

Burn the PDF to CD and view it on your DVD player or computer screen. Or, upload the PDF to your iPhone/BlackBerry. Or, print it, read it.

Electro-magnetic rain

The beginning-of-the-universe
 – an un-matched frequency –
 fizzed and hummed onto the tv
 set; both things were getting ready to be
 something, connected by
 the bendy bit known as time.
 The tv, not knowing the universe
 had made it – the universe
 largely indifferent. With her
 nightie tucked over her toes,
 she sits on the floor and watches
 the TV static, enthralled.

Carol Jenkins

River

Hating her parents for grounding her
 she scrambled through the bedroom window,
 falling clumsily onto the driveway.
 Three streets away the river's shore
 was ti-tree, wattle and tangled grass.
 She followed the foreshore's casual fringe
 of broken shells, lazed in a deluge
 of white summer light. Poisoned arrows
 hissed through trees, hooping bird calls
 encircled her body, scrubland shade
 weighted her eyes. Hours later
 she traipsed back to recriminations,
 to sit in a bath and dab at sunburn
 with calamine lotion and a flannel,
 drips snailpacing down her face.
 A dagger wound reddened her arm.
 Her parents argued, accompanied by
 the lounge room's clattery fan, addressing
 the topics of money and dissatisfaction
 as the rectangle of a prison window
 darkened in remote Samarkand.

Paul Hetherington

Crunch

Syringes are not scattered
on doorsteps or in gutters
the disaffected in this city
are on methamphetamine.

Or p - which is the pure form
a cruel and unusual lotusland
a species of euphoric violence
invincible lack of consequence.

Junkies nod off. In the fortress
of a fix. They drop their fits from
nerveless hands - you can track
the users through the streets. But

heroin has the Mahatma effect.
And those with darkened eyes
the amok-runners with a kris
the beserkers of the Norse

who ritualised bog myrtle for
their trance of fury have their
descendants here - and now
seek to transcend deep shame.

Jennifer Compton

This Only

She rode to the abandoned house,
and getting up good speed,
she flirted with butterflies,
forgot about her hair.
Here, she would roll up her sleeves
and make an Eden for them both;
only this time
they would get it right.
So, when she had fought
the damp and the dodgy wiring,
and started on the mural in his bedroom,
she remembered to paint out the apple tree.
She had decided, you see, on the ride,
that if there was to be fruit for the picking
it would do for their jam at breakfast and
this only.

Lucy Dougan

Coelacanth

As if we'd tell you our deepest guild secret.
Woven tight as a mantle of dark blue scales
Passed down from generations; banded by
The coral lace of the covert Indian Ocean.
Instead, we staged our genetic comeback.
First we sent on bone letters, silver gelatin
Plates that you processed as stone records.
Our species commandment; live in rocker
Obscurity, don't alter much; avoid modern
Comparisons. Netted by a random sweep,
& a keen eye for nuance, our ancient lobe
Fin poked out from a midden of tropical
Fish & we became scientifically famous.
Formaldehyde framed, we made a killing.

Brett Dionysius

The Bogan Heart

Country music, piped into a mall
might not be soporific
as something classical, still
it helps to reduce the lifting
of shops, and works
to distract the unemployed
from retail withdrawal.
And while it won't turn
punks and emos into fiddle-
loving Charlie Daniels fans
a dirty acoustic ballad will always
jump-start the bogan heart
that revs within us all.

Anthony Lawrence

I Like That Clown

He is as louche as absinthe when the water hits it.
 He might like that clown, that clown you painted,
 that gapes a toothless pit of a mouth in a black house
 because he has eaten all his children. And clowns are
 funny. He is an ovum towards which the spermatozoa
 swim. The zygote with a single cell is a contract for a
 birth, with royalties. A drop of names, a list of shorts,
 a line of heads, and in due time, an obit. That glances
 o'er a life, a hand that trembled onstage, shook down
 the petals of the beautiful mournful autumn roses. He
 says a judicious thing, a non-committal - hm hm hm.
 He sketches an abstract, he proffers a gloss, he sings.
 He likes the way the sea looks as black rules silver.
 Says
 I like that vivid clown that screams with silent
 laughter.

Jennifer Compton

Rain

It was rain
 the way her body
 dissolved in his arms
 and she seemed to slip away
 even as he held her.
 It was water the way she looked at him
 through the dark drift of her eyes
 as he tried to bring her back to him,
 as light was dampened
 by implacable, drowning memory
 of other places and things,
 until, in the evening,
 with blinds drawn
 and his sense of her
 a remnant vision of the lit afternoon,
 he felt her slide
 into his sense of being.
 He was no longer male or female—
 held in between
 in a dissolving embrace
 as time crashed
 about his head.
 When he had been three
 and seven and twelve
 he had known his maleness
 as something given.
 Now he swam in her
 and was lost from himself,
 time's filaments seeming
 to stretch from his body.
 He, too, was becoming rain.

Paul Hetherington

the illustrator draws himself as the prince
(after a drawing by Anthony Browne)

says he's tired of sports cars, snug armour
and the funny thing is I believe him
it was the baby, the mention of babies
stirring at a membrane's edge that did it
falling out of the tower
did him a service too
being lost, wrapped up in forest
as I was in hair
brought him to a mortification
that is only reserved for the best knights
his eyes are so vulnerable in this
narrow band of light
that is why I kiss them now
kisses wet as tears just so he knows
I kiss his eyes because his lips are not there

Lucy Dougan

Remembering

She had wanted to remember him properly.
But, having sorted through letters
and all his dashed-off emails;
having read his books
and considered his love of country—
how he hiked every few months
in remote and dangerous places
and how he was never there
when she most needed him—
and reminding herself
that her affection remained
like something she wore,
she decided to make a dressing-gown
of his left-behind clothes.
Cutting and stitching, she made something
only to be worn in private
and would step first into her nakedness
and then into her memory of him
(how she'd felt wrapped up by him
in those first months).
She stood with the back door open
facing her crowded garden
and looked at the night sky wondering
where exactly he might be,
her feet cold on the slate tiles,
her body cocooned
by shirt-jacket-tie-and-scarf.

Paul Hetherington

At 10

Our girl performs
 a fierce grooming.
 I have heard her pronounce
 that her heels are a disgrace.
 I have found her sleeping
 in long loops of beads.
 She arranges herself
 with a deft androgyny
 recalling bronzes
 hauled from the sea.
 And she picks us
 sprays of her father's freckles
 lost with age,
 gold corn stalks of hair
 to braid.

Lucy Dougan

CONTRIBUTORS

Jennifer Compton lives in Melbourne and is a poet and playwright who also writes prose. Her book of poetry, *This City*, won the Kathleen Grattan Award in New Zealand and will be published by Otago University Press in July.

Brett Dionysius is a Queensland poet. He is also the director of the Queensland Poetry Festival, and edits *Seriously Fishy*.

Lucy Dougan's most recent book of poems is *White Clay* (Giramondo, 2008). She works for the Westerly Centre at UWA.

Paul Hetherington is the author of eight volumes of poetry. He is Associate Professor of Writing at the University of Canberra and co-editor of the online journal *Axon: Creative Explorations* which is due to be launched in August 2011.

Carol Jenkins first book of poetry *Fishing in the Devonian* was published by Puncher & Wattmann in September 2008. Carole established River Road Press in 2007, and writes the blog *Show Me the Treasure*.

Anthony Lawrence has published twelve books of poems. "The Welfare of My Enemy" a book-length poem, is due out from Puncher & Wattmann in August 2011. He lives in Newcastle.

Canberra-born, Australian-American pianist **Lisa Moore** is based in New York City where she has lived since 1985. Moore has released 5 solo discs and 30 collaborative discs. Recent performances of Mussorgsky's *Pictures at an Exhibition* have been widely praised.

Lindy Morrison played drums with The Go-Betweens 80 - 90 and Cleopatra Wong 90 - 93. Lindy works as a community musician and music educator and is also the social worker for Support Act the music industry charity.

Flute-Queen, soloist, adventurous classical artist, **Janen Rutter's** work is to present the flute as a voice of humanity. An impeccably-pedigreed classical flautist, Jane crosses over into theatre, jazz, popular music, cabaret, composition and poetry. A disciple of the Rampal School, Jane performs worldwide and is loved by concert goers and viewers.

MUSICWORDS