



**VOLUME 1**  
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## WATER<sup>1</sup>

### HEAR THE MUSIC

Download from Water's [online tract](#).

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.

## Facing the Wind

How many times  
has he done this before –  
walked out on the rock shelf  
at Moona Moona Creek?  
Stood among seabirds  
facing the wind  
that sweeps across Jarvis Bay?

He tries to explain  
to himself that it's a necessity,  
whether or not  
he discovers anything new –  
like the seabirds  
drawn by instinct  
to satisfy a hunger they never will.

Peter Szrynecki

## Marrakai

1.  
They're here now the Guardians  
sitting on a rock  
in the sun. Later  
when walking  
I am much taller.  
As the sun kisses my  
skin hiding some of the  
white enhancing the  
brown I glow happiness.

2.  
Birds start the singing.  
Ants and butterflies start  
to dance. Leaves sway  
the ancient spirit hums  
Flies sit still.  
Autumn appears  
in a moment  
cooling the sun. The flock will  
arrive soon. I hear them  
on the perimeter, I close  
my eyes. Wasps lick my DNA.

3.  
Young cane grass  
flowers rub  
on my cheek.  
I turn to glimpse  
Cat cloud laughing  
behind the tree  
changing to Rabbit  
Cloud.

Ali Cobby-Eckermann

## Paradise

after white marble *Panel from calligraphic frieze*: Iran, Afghanistan or North India, circa 1200 AD

This is light, pure and complex, a whiteness varying from porous to waxy. I thought I heard the muezzin calling, but it was the swish of a breeze. No eagle's soar as I desired, but freefall into absence, a piercing continuity. No questions or answers, no plot, just boundless float on a curved raft; part of the fleet with angled exclamation marks for sails. We are tendrils entwined; each twist tipped with a pointed arch. A single nose remains, for the scent of jasmine, yet there are no flowers. No need for bees casting shadow aside with whirring wings. Light is everywhere. We glide on the light.

Jan Dean

## Poems Without Contexts

We are all dark figures in a landscape.

No-one was distracted by the unfamiliar postures of the roadkill.

The eyes of the shoppers were empty and fierce with desire.

His wound was the perfect and intimate shape of an absence.

Soon, you will come to a broad incline, facing the sky.

At significant moments, the flesh interrupts its own narratives.

The body knows how close the edge is.

The sea is a self without language.

The equations of time are too simple for humans to bear.

On the last day, the bones will break through.

The heron flapped slowly away from its flesh-and-blood self.

How the crowds must have laughed, when the comics came on  
between bloodbaths!

The rain-clouds were big with their own disappearance, and sky.

Martin Langford

**Ghazal of roots***India*

You take a dozen photos of the tree behind the temple,  
diving through the ochre earth, dreaming deeper roots.

The bus groans and tilts round fog-cloaked hill corners.  
Henna snaking around her hands, the schoolgirl yawns.

Flowers offered at feet of stone wilt and rot in the air.  
Somewhere in your cheek, a tear is trapped and evaporates.

It's dusk as the shops close. Your throat confuses the thick  
mist of incense with the offerings of buses and trucks.

Everywhere you turn, a man holding his pissing cock,  
a gaunt woman and her children, a million gods watching.

The plants that have taken your breath away are nameless.  
The knot where the umbilical cord was cut is permanent.

A seated, gilded Buddha, same shape as the Christmas tree  
beside him, laughs as you order the Continental Breakfast.

**Broken ghazal***Darfur, 2004*

Ashes where the huts were.  
Next to a truck tyre, an axe wet with blood.

A sound like high-voltage electrical wires –  
a legion of flies, on the bodies.

The silence, then, of empathy,  
its hacked arms.

*This is our problem*, he says through tears  
and pixels – the unspeakable radif.

### Before the Gulag

Maybe she sits at the lamp —  
 which poem is she about to write?  
 All of them protest. Even  
 her love poems, they say,  
 inculcate — poems that will  
 live on in filing cabinets  
 long after her bone dust  
 gets ploughed into a rye field.  
 That ink, about to mark the page,  
 may fade but for perpetuity  
 will condemn.

### Talisman

Often, I'm not quite in  
 the school rules. I slip in  
 under the radar. I don't  
 comply, but perhaps  
 I can be explained away.  
 I have lived near pillows  
 or even under them,  
 occasionally not seeing  
 the light of day.

I have been laid aside,  
 sometimes, as other  
 things hold sway. But  
 it is in my nature  
 to stay, maybe frayed,  
 with legs akimbo or sitting  
 in a jar. I am what it is  
 to be found. With me  
 she is never lost.

I have had pushed  
 into my threads, wrapped  
 around my glass, caressed  
 into my fur — I don't know  
 its name — but it preserves  
 me. I may rip a bit or rot,  
 may bear the marks  
 that life has scored  
 across me

(and often  
 I bear some of them for  
 her) but because of it  
 (it seems to be made  
 of memories, hope, love,  
 trust — words so big, they  
 poke out like an echidna  
 alphabet — but those  
 words have become me)

I have an endless life,  
 I am symbol, I am  
 metaphor; and in all  
 these things so rich  
 am I, even so, you can  
 walk past me, see me  
 and not know  
 that I am there.

Anna Kerdijk Nicholson

## Death By Water 1

It's little wonder I write about water.  
 Seven generations ago, having shot his load  
 of rum and sperm in Sydney Cove,  
 Stephen Tuckerman, Captain of the USS Carolina  
 disappeared off the coast of Chile with all his crew,  
 Lieutenant Neil McKellar of the NSW Corps,  
 dispatches from Governor King and the sword  
 of Captain John Macarthur.

He left behind  
 an illegitimate son whose daughter,  
 Mary was widowed in 1856  
 when her husband, Thomas L'Estrange  
 drowned while attempting to swim on horseback  
 across the Cudgegong River then in flood.  
 The man who tried to rescue him  
 drowned as well. A raft was built  
 and eight men were awarded medals  
 in 1857 "in approval of exertions  
 made to recover the bodies of persons drowned."  
 One of these eight was Harry Albury  
 whose grandson had Joe Wilson tell  
 of how he'd "helped drag two bodies  
 out of the Cudgegong River in a flood,  
 and they weren't sleeping beauties."

One hundred  
 and eight years later Thomas and Mary's grand-daughter  
 nursed me, her great-grandson in her arms.  
 That's what happens with death by water:  
 fiction flows into fact, fact into fiction  
 and rising up in a flood of words  
 the past spreads out beyond the present,  
 carrying into life its drifting dead.



**Ali Cobby-Eckermann's** first collection of poetry *little bit long time* highlighted her 'stolen generations' journey to connect with her family in south and central Australia. This collection was published by the APC in 2009, to sell out success and will be reprinted in 2010 by Picaro Press. Her poem *Intervention Pay Day* won the Red Earth Poetry Award in 2008 and was published in Best Aust Poems 2009. She lives in the 'intervention free' village of Koolunga SA and is renovating the old general store to establish a Writers Retreat. Walks along the Broughton River with magpies and willy wagtails are her most enjoyable hours. Currently Ali manages the 'See My World' project which focuses on improving literacy levels for young story tellers and writers in remote and regional parts of Aust. The 'See My World' project will launch an anthology of stories and poetry by young Aboriginal writers from across the country in 2010.

**Jan Dean's** poetry collection *With One Brush*, which connects art and memoir, was published by Interactive Press in 2007, and short-listed in the 2008 Mary Gilmore Award. She was recently published in *The Night Road* (the Newcastle Poetry Prize anthology), *People of the Valley* (Catchfire Press) and *Eucalypt*: a tanka journal (issue 7).

**Edward Gubbay** was born and raised in Sydney and began his Bachelor of Music at The University of Newcastle in 2006. He majored in composition and sound engineering and was a member of the University of Newcastle Wind

Orchestra on baritone saxophone and is currently a bass member of the University of Newcastle Chamber Choir which took out Prime's Battle of the Choirs in 2008. Edward is currently doing honours in composition. His interests run from minimalism and traditional Japanese music, to romantic style symphonies.

**Andy Jackson's** poetry can be found in numerous print and on-line journals and literary and arts festivals, including *Australian Poetry Festival*, *La Mama Poetica*, *Queensland Poetry Festival*, and *Newcastle Young Writers Festival*. In 2008 he was awarded grants from the Australia Council and Arts Victoria, and won the Rosemary Dobson Prize for Poetry. He is a Café Poet in Residence for the Australian Poetry Centre. Recently, he won the Overload Poetry Festival's Most Innovative Work Award for *Ambiguous Mirrors*, a collaboration with puppeteer Rachael Guy and cellist David Churchill. His most recent collection of poems, *Among the Regulars*, is scheduled for release by papertiger media later this year.

**Anna Kerdijk Nicholson's** first book of poetry, *The Bundanon Cantos* (Five Islands Press, 2003) was mentioned in the *Sydney Morning Herald's Best Books of 2003*. Anna is also the Principal of a Sydney law practice, specialising in litigation. In 2001 she received the Arts Queensland Award for Unpublished Poetry (the Val Vallis). In 2003, the Australia Council for the Arts awarded Anna funding to write a poetry manuscript on appropriation, through the eyes of Captain Cook. She featured on Red Room Radio in 2003 and in 2006, starring in the literary TV series *The Wordshed*.

**Martin Langford** was born in Plymouth and migrated to Australia at the age of eight. A former secondary teacher, he was Director of the 4th and 6th Australian Poetry Festivals. Martin has been associated with the Poets Union since 1984 and has published four books of poetry, and the book of aphorisms and short prose *Microtexts* (Island Press, 2005). Langford's new collection *The Human Project: New and Selected Poems* was published in 2009 by Puncher & Wattmann and launched by Andy Kissane in October.

**Kate Miller-Heidke** she states in one of her interviews that when she was little she would charge her family members 5 cents for her performances. In the 2007 ARIA Music Awards, Miller-Heidke was nominated for four ARIAs, for Best Female Artist, Best Pop Release, Breakthrough Artist: Album (for Little Eve) and Breakthrough Artist: Single (for *Words*). Miller-Heidke's second album, *Curiouser*, was released in Australia on 18 October 2008. The album was recorded in LA with producer Mickey Petralia, who has also produced albums for Beck. The songs were written mostly written over a two month period with creative collaborator and partner, Keir Nutall.

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. Moore has performed at La Scala, the Musikverein, the Sydney Opera House, Carnegie Hall and the Royal Albert Hall. Moore has performed with many organisations and groups, including the New York City Ballet, London Sinfonietta, Chamber Music Society of Lincoln Center, BargeMusic, St. Lukes

Orchestra, American Composers Orchestra, Steve Reich Ensemble. Lisa won the silver medal in the Carnegie Hall International American Music Competition. *The New York Times* claims "her energy is illuminating" and the *New Yorker* magazine crowned her "visionary" and "New York's queen of avant-garde piano". Moore has performed and recorded a variety of composers, including Janacek, Elena Kats-Chernin, her partner Martin Bresnick, and Phillip Glass. Hear her playing at [lisamoore.org](http://lisamoore.org)

**David Musgrave** is a poet and publisher. He was educated at Sydney University where he was awarded his PhD in 1997. David lives in Sydney and has travelled widely in Asia, Europe and South America. His poetry has been appearing in print since 1985 and he is the author of two books of poetry, *To Thalia* and *On Reflection* (both with FIP). His work has won or been shortlisted for several awards, including the Henry Lawson, Broadway, Bruce Dawe, Somerset, Sidney Nolan Gallery and Newcastle Poetry Prizes. His work as a critic includes publications on Samuel Beckett, David Ireland, the Ern Malley Hoax, depression and Norman Lindsay's *The Magic Pudding*.

**Peter Sculthorpe** was born in Launceston, Tasmania, in 1929. As a child he was severely reprimanded by his first piano teacher for returning to her, not with well-practised pieces, but with a handful of original compositions. Consequently, the seven-year-old Sculthorpe took to writing music under the bedclothes with a torch. Peter has written works in most musical forms. Some of his compositions include *String Quartet No 6* (1965), *Sun Music I* (1965) for orchestra, *String Quartet No 8* (1969), *Mangrove* (1979) for orchestra, *Kakadu* (1988) for orchestra, and *Requiem* (2004) for chorus and orchestra.

**Peter Skrzynecki** is of Polish/Ukrainian background and was born in 1945, in Germany, shortly before the end of World War II. He emigrated to Australia in 1949 with his parents. In 1964 Skrzynecki (pronounced (*t*)cher-ness-kee) began writing poetry and soon had his first works published in *Poetry Magazine*. Fellow friend and poet Roland Robinson published Skrzynecki's first book, *There, Behind the Lids* in 1970 with Robinson's Lyre-bird Writers Press and also his second book, *Headwaters*, in 1972. Both books were received favourably by critics and the latter won the Grace Leven Poetry Prize for 1972. The poems are reflective or meditative poems that dealt with the natural world, with the countryside, its people, its fauna and flora. In 1975, Peter's third book, *Immigrant Chronicle* (UQP) a new note or theme emerged in this collection. For the first time the poet wrote about his European background, his experiences as a migrant in Australia, the problems associated with being an exile, with his parents' dispossession and the difficulties, such as racism, bigotry and resettlement, encountered by them and other immigrants in trying to assimilate to a new life in a new land. Peter is married to Kate and has three children – Judith, Andrew and Anna.

**Stephen Wye** is a Newcastle-born composer. He enjoys setting text to music, and has so far made settings of Philip Larkin, Simon Armitage and Gerard Manley Hopkins. After stints at speed-typing, telephony, turkey-farming, criminal justice, corruption investigation, and health education in various countries, he began studying music at the University of Newcastle. His current areas of interest include music-making in 19th century Newcastle and big band.



**MUSIC, WORDS**