

Painted, spoken

edited by Richard Price

number 35

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Nancy Campbell
as you lay sleeping

I was speeding across Europe I was coming to sit on the blue chair / as
you lay sleeping on the blue bed / lay there behind a curtain with no
freedom to rise / unable to speak the dreams in your head / and though
your eyes are closed I whisper / it's freezing, it must be dark everywhere
but here / this ward where no one will ever switch off the lights / but
listen, the little wooden booths are back on Broad Street / electric cables
running between them, generators whirring to fuel the stoves to heat the
gluwein / and chandeliers blaze in college rafters / it's almost Christmas /
hares hang upside-down from hooks in the butcher's, and mistletoe
masses on market flagstones //

and you are still sleeping when I say goodbye, and board a train in
London / and see through dirty windows at dawn the pale architecture of
Liège / light snowfall outside Aachen / and in the mall at Brussels, where
chocolate shops glitter and jewellery shops sparkle, I squirt a sample of
Max Factor into my palm—a thrifty trick to hide tired eyes—and buying a
cheap *galette* and coffee in a paper cup I ride the lift to quai 16 / I give
directions in French to an elegant woman from Tokyo / the route doesn't
change, though the journey is now more urgent / stepping on and off
trains, on and off trams / watching streetlamps flicker on in towns whose
names I'll never know / and I cross a bridge and the sound of my suitcase
changes behind me / as if it too speaks a new language //

and I who promised never to fly again have been at 40,000 feet looking down on clouds / I have made and missed a hair appointment / I have kissed strangers thrice on the cheeks in greeting, once or twice on the lips but my lips are sealed / I have climbed to the old tower, I have swum upstream / I have sold books in several currencies, and posted them to Longyearben, Washington, Berlin / I have lost long evenings in restaurants where candles gutter under bell jars / I have decorated the lamps in my study with ivy and the ivy leaves grow brittle but do not fall / I have written about snowflakes and shadows and the colour white and how the snow angel is best seen in raking light / Did you know that snow sometimes looks purple, yellow, blue like the bruise upon the arm you cannot move?

James McGonigal
Sunday Best

Graves of father and mother
in the west and the east
of a small country.

Does distance matter after all
to the hand that writes it out
or eyes that read?

First light today weaves threads
across everyone's shoulders
like a good coat.

And counting

For months I have studied
 the maple tree, planted
that first year we came.

From baby fingernails
 scratching for purchase
on March air – to the open

palms of summer outstretched
 to catch raindrops – and now
these weather-beaten hands

on crisp November grass.
 I can count on ten fingers
those leaves that still cling

to the maple tree.

Robin Fulton Macpherson
Uncertain Traveller

Tree roots seem to find plenty
to hold on to.

Each time I'm on an island
I imagine
I sleep as if well-balanced
on a mainland.

I may be wrong about trees
and about me.

Caroline Clark
telling stories

telling stories
but real ones
ours

you couldn't make it up

*

truth poisoned me
truth liberated me
truth made me

*

when I am weak
like river grass
rooted yet washed
over

nothing else

the way things go

*

might we not like
a flower for what
it suggests, its take
on the world

we wish to deny
or prove otherwise?

*

you write poems
what kind?

next time answer:
the real kind

*

because the spirit
is real

the life elsewhere
beyond

within

there is more
we have always

felt
seen

*

Now is the season of consequences
And we're in this together
Look, this isn't a poem
I will not count the syllables

*

You can have this one on me
Season of loveliness
Will it come again?

*

The story is my own
to tell. My own like
the sky, like the air,
like the sun.

*

you've got to be willing
to get down on your knees
in the sand and play with them

*

Years and dates the
way we track them by
our age, job, children,
status. What lives on?
What dies? Later we
recollect and archive.

*

take one
then another
this is no addition
but fuel
impressive
motion

*

the distance from who
you were
to who you are

*

remember,
happiness spreads from sadness,
the same flower

*

configure
go figure
the less
is the more
invert
the desire
re-design
fire

*

in bitterness and hope
all things will pass

what you hold onto
those things will last

*

all I've learnt
filtered
through this moment

*

When we say
they have their whole
future ahead of them
we are saying
they don't know yet
they still believe
they have hope
their eyes are lit from within
they are on a road.
Like this morning
air, it says, there's
still time yet.

Song of all ages.

*

you'll get your time
but not the way you imagined

you need newness
from without

Drowned worlds revived

By James McGonigal

Penelope Shuttle, *Lyonesse* (Bloodaxe Books), Richard Skelton, *Stranger in the Mask of a Deer* (Penned in the Margins)

Here are two excellent and timely collections. They are timely because published in a period of climate emergency, when rising sea-waters and retreating ice-caps make the threat to our current pattern of life increasingly clear. This immediacy is refracted through a much deeper and farther pre-historical context, however. In *Lyonesse* Penelope Shuttle explores the legendary kingdom of western Cornwall, thought to have been lost in a cataclysmic Bronze Age inundation, with only the Isles of Scilly and St Michael's Mount left visible above the waves; and Richard Skelton enacts the life and mind of a Late-Upper Paleolithic hunter, following the animals that have followed the melting ice-sheets northwards on a British peninsula still part of northern Europe. Their excellence as collections derives not only from such visionary perspectives but from the poets' creative skills in mimesis, their enactment through rhythm, metaphor and line of ways of life which are at once deeply other and uncannily familiar. Such psychological exploration of the historical continuities of human existence from past epochs to our own is remarkably done, and is enhanced by the typographical skills of the publishers. Every aspect of this poetry signals significance, and I already fear that my brief prose will fail to do them justice.

Lyonesse is in two parts, the first dealing with the drowned kingdom of Lyonesse, and the second, 'New Lamps for Old', describing a slow recovery from trauma. These exist in necessary continuity, and it emerges that their composition overlapped. This structure reminded me of 'The Wreck of the Deutschland', where the actual shipwreck and loss of life in Part the Second is delayed until we have shared a more personal wreck in Part the First: the

breaking down of Gerard Manley Hopkins's personality under an astonished recognition of the unstoppable force of the divine. And we are meant to read the second wreck through the first. It is only through such a progress that the nun's final cry of fearful acceptance makes sense. In Shuttle's collection, it becomes clear that the cataclysm evokes grief and loss, not so much its first shock as the underwater world which follows upon that, in a dream-like experience, as if sleep-swimming while time and tides pass by.

The loss was of her life-partner, Peter Redgrove (1932-2003), a fellow poet and her co-author of poetry and novels as well as works on alchemy, dreams and the female cycle. She has written of him before, notably in *Redgrove's Wife*, shortlisted for the Forward Prize and the T.S. Eliot Prize in 2006. They had lived in Cornwall since 1970. Now personal loss and loss of landscape combine, with the ocean carrying both destruction and the possibility of recovery over the years. Thus patterns of time recur throughout, in underwater church bells and traditional songs, in sea shanty refrains and children's games. And yet this is also a dream landscape cut free of time, discoverable only in the imagination and wit of the poet:

There's all the time in the world
in these sea-cold gardens raked to a Zen precision. (p. 81)

The couple's decades together come unbidden through the imagination in bright and witty detail. Grief becomes a mythic journey of glimpses, then, with unpredictable metaphors and memories suddenly emerging from seemingly empty hours of predictable days. The Lyonesse of romance comes filtered through an underwater light and is opened up to new exploration through an impressive diversity of layout and form. Human loss and the human potential for renewal are both touchingly present. Mystery and clarity of vision co-exist too, as scientific investigation of a Bronze Age inundation and the archaeological record of other sunken cities meet

the oral remnants of a lost place in its other French, Breton and Cornish manifestations: Leonnoys, Léonois, Loonois, Lethostow, Lyonnaise. (Endnotes provide interesting detail and a different discourse.) The role of poetry itself is therapeutic, as is the support of writers' workshop members and friends who stimulated and then responded to the emergent work. Ancient poets add another kind of support, as Thomas Hardy, Walter de la Mare, Marianne Moore and, perhaps especially, David Jones contribute lines and echoes into the weave of the text.

The detritus of an ocean bed of artifacts is a stark representation of grief: 'down here / no one cares / if you're honest or a liar / rich or poor / the only virtue here / is how much / you've forgotten / of that blood-boltered world / above the shiver / and pound / of the waves [...] ('Inscribed on a Stela found on the seabed', p. 27). Where Lyonesse was once a city of lovers, now 'lovers / are plentiful bone on the seabed' ('Sentimental Customs', p. 28). This may be the emotional low point of the poem, though irrepressible verbal play soon adds lift:

The lions of Lyonesse
were legends
in their own raw lifetime
[...]
those golden guys with manes
and gaping slavering jaws
the piss-backwards lords of Lyonesse
(*'Legends'*, p. 33)

Unsurprisingly, lions recur in this place, powerful yet cautious, as in their refrain:

Around Cape Horn	there's ice and snow
but lions know	where not to go

(‘Holy Father Lions’, p. 46)

On the opposite page, words from an unpublished notebook of Peter Redgrove give a clue to his continued lordly presence, with whom his wife still speaks: ‘I’ll be your *partner in fainting* / I’ll fly out of the storm’s eye / be your sword blade / in the hard school of blood / [...] I’ll bring you my bird-in-the-hand / pitch you the swansong of Lyonesse’ (‘O Shake That Girl with the Blue Dress On’, p. 47). That blue dress might suggest that this love poem is a mirror of Thomas Hardy’s haunted poem of lost love, ‘The Voice’, recalling his future wife whom he met in her ‘air-blue gown’ on his journey as a young architect into Cornwall, which he called Lyonesse.

The spectrum of tones is remarkable. These range from the stark prose poem ‘An Account of the Submergence’ (‘Our conclusion is that the seas will go on rising. That cities not yet destroyed will turn blind eye and deaf ear to Lyonesse the wiser’ pp. 54-56) to the wild beatitudes of the ‘Sermon of the Crayfish Christ, or The Latitudes’ (pp. 86-87). The Holy Ghost and The Devil face each other across pages 70 and 71. But within the book as a whole, the major shift of tone comes in Part Two: *New Lamps For Old*. This reference to the fairytale motif of Aladdin and the genie signals a mysterious transition of tone and state of mind:

shall we go out
into the long-ago summer evening
you my dear Duke Orsino
me my usual self

and drink our fill of the evening
as we always did
from Falmouth held out to us
applewood cup filled to the brim

‘cup of evenings’, p. 99)

These are all poems written, as the poet says, ‘when I came up for air from the watery depths of *Lyonese* [...] an account of finding ways to begin again, to find meaning in life after bereavement [...] a transit from sadness, moving via reflection in language to (it is my hope) poems possessing energised repose’ (p. 13). So there are light and delicacy here, as in that brimming applewood cup, rainwater instead of salt, a Japanese feeling for nature that is the opposite of a Zen precision raked by the tides:

only the moon abroad in her finery
saw the lost one go
down where the valley brims with hawthorn

came so close the lost
but slipped away star-ripple in the river
(‘fly-by-night’, p. 106)

The long sequence ‘Swarthmoor Hall, Ulverston’ (pp. 108-116) is particularly moving. In this Quaker retreat house, something of an atmosphere of silent contemplation leading to illumination pervades the poems composed there: ‘prune the appletrees / seal their wounds with wax’ [...] ‘carry a handful of ash / from the fire pit // scatter it in the beck flowing / between shadow and sunlight / under the oaks’ (p. 109). The movement towards the moment when ‘things decide to continue’ is beautifully caught:

the hills all the flowers known and unknown to me
every blade of grass all decide to continue
(p. 113)

Sad memories recur, of course, of fraught hospital visits and empty rooms. There is also the honest recognition of memories passing like glances over a shoulder: ‘as you fade away / gleam by gleam / like a small lovely morning / only you and I can see / and now it’s gone’ (‘glance’, p. 129). *New Lamps For Old* ends by magically countering the refracted world of Lyonesse, as loved cityscapes are caught in passing within a mirror ‘smaller than a tear or the curve / of the earth’ (p. 149). The intimate and the vast are held in remarkable balance here. It takes a bold and lithe poet to manage that. And it occurred to me that the fine cover page might be altered to read *Penelope Shuttle: Lioness*.

Where her particular excellence is found in creativity, Richard Skelton’s is discovered in a visionary intensity which is complex yet clear, local yet cosmic. *Stranger in the Mask of a Deer* is a truly remarkable long poem, unlike any other I know. Of course it has resonance with present concerns about rising sea levels and retreating ice, but it covers such tracts of time and culture as to set these within a new perspective, while also touching on current philosophical issues of animal rights, consciousness, alterity, and the recovery of a sustainable relationship with the natural world. Its setting within the hunting environment of the late paleolithic human re-occupation of the British peninsula (linked to Europe by the Dogger land bridge) is an imaginative *tour de force*. The hunt provides clarity of focus as we move through this newly emergent post-glacial terrain. The beauty of the book’s design and typography also guides us surely and steadily, though the way is fraught with strange discoveries.

The style combines meditation and chant. Cosmic reach is combined with moment by moment detailing. Casting about as a reader for familiar handholds, I sometimes imagined that Walt Whitman had merged with poets of the Objectivist movement, William Carlos Williams, say, or Lorine Niedecker; or with the bleak but lyrical refrains of Samuel Beckett’s prose. The verse is

underpinned by findings in anthropology, climatology, botany and archaeology, discoverable in the fascinating endnotes. Thus the shaman-like journey is held close to the scientific ‘reality’ which this poetry seeks to extend. Through Skelton’s previous artistic work in music, landscape, eco-poetics and esoteric literature, he has learned the skills to create a score for exploring a new unknown.

His own description of the poem as ‘call and response’ signals its origins in ancient music and culture. This is appropriate to the setting in time, about 18000 years ago when the sheet ice withdrew and northern Britain re-emerged from its long hibernation below. At the beginning of the poem the land is seen as the little bear, sheltered by the fearsome yet somehow caring ice-mother bear of the Arctic cold above it. The two-part musical form is appropriate also to the central experience of a mysterious Other, glimpsed alongside the hunting party, and seeming to be both human and animal, hunter and hunted. The choral nature of such music means that it is difficult for me to convey its power by select quotation, since so much depends upon aspects of continuity and performance, and a cumulative rhetorical effect. But the impact is extraordinary and, to me, irresistible, with a prophetic pulse to the verse that demands to be heard, even as it explores great silences of time and space, and the inner mysteries of identity and death.

A strong binary structure is also evident below the surface music. Like ‘The Wreck of the Deutschland’, this long poem gains from the balance of its two main parts. There are twenty subdivisions, a Foreword and Afterword plus eighteen sections of varying length and with single-word titles, such as Sorrow, Stranger, Land, Teacher. Of these, perhaps the most crucial are Dream (pp. 35ff) and Hunt (pp. 123ff). All contribute to the whole, but the over-arching movement can be divided into what comes before ‘Dream’ and what comes after. The dream is a vision or series of visions, ‘a consequence of taking an infusion of mugwort (*Artemisia vulgaris*). The *Artemisia* genus itself is attested in the Late-glacial pollen record

for the north-west of England' (Note 40, p. 160).

Combined with medication for chronic pain, the mugwort induced 'visions in the darkness at the edge of sleep / a kind of phosphorescence hovering in the room above me / faint at first but unfurling growing in detail / alive' (p. 39). Additional longer term effects included headache, disorientation, hallucinations, dream and sleep disturbances and uncontrolled shaking. This almost seems akin to male rite of passage practices in some cultures, but undertaken accidentally and with the unforeseen consequences of an induction into the mysterious continuities within time (the lack of conventional punctuation throughout endorses this) and within nature. In particular there is 'a figure in those trees wearing strange skins glimpsed through / the branches / looking looking' (p. 42):

& moving through those trees the shapes of deer
the shapes of deer & the curve of the earth & the light low
shimmering dusk
& they scatter the deer but one holds its ground looks at me
stares me down
& it is a deer and not a deer something other we both know it
but i can say no more
& i am already running
running down the light low shimmering dusk
(p. 43)

Another moment of encounter occurs when the speaker, out on the road before sunrise, finds 'a hare newly dead but not / quite gone its corpse still warm its blood pooled around a / great scar at its back' (p. 69). A dream vision of an ancestral father with a similar scar had introduced this motif earlier. Again he sensed a watching figure through the branches:

& I picked up the body and I laid it in the heather

thinking of the long low embrace of soil
the many hands of grasses

& as I stood there I felt its lifelihood fade

The watching figure has disappeared, ‘away through the branches & not looking back / & the sun just coming up / just passing the horizon’ (p. 70). This sensation of being observed at his respectful care of the dying animal is preliminary to being taught by animal life itself in the Teacher section: ‘was there one of your group who was not of your own / one who walks on all fours & with teeth for a name // & did such a one teach you to be with animals / to be with yourselves (p. 101). There is substantial archaeological and genetic evidence for the domestication of dogs around the Late Upper Paleolithic setting of the poem. There are also lessons to be learned from art, particularly the carving of a masked human figure on a fragment of woolly rhinoceros bone, discovered in a Derbyshire cave. It must, Skelton thinks, have been carried to Britain from continental Europe, ‘its face pointed as if wearing a mask / a face pointed like that of a bear’ (p. 105). This local link to ancient mark-making and cave paintings of animal life leads on to reflection on the different mark-making of his own poem, and who it is that is ‘speaking us / writing us’ in words:

...for I have felt them gather me like pollen
or collect on my surfaces like dew
move through me like mist or wildfire
(p. 109)

After such physical and mystical preparation comes the Hunt (pp. 123ff). I do not intend to attempt to sum up its revelations here, beyond pointing to the reciprocal cost of taking an animal’s life. The spear that leaves the hand, ‘a blade so sharp it could cleave the

world', returns to meet the thrower. Archaeological evidence is again used to bring our focus upon an actual beast, a real kill.

This is a rich, dense and forceful work, enhanced by its stark beauty on the page and also by its hinterland of research. Produced as part of doctoral studies at Manchester Metropolitan University, it is a reminder that university scholarships can provide a basic sort of patronage, providing for bed and board and an audience, if not the lavish palaces of church or state in other ages. But the ages which Richard Skelton deals with are aeons and epochs, and the ancestral voices which he has caught and held were never heard before this timely and visionary poem.

Ralph Hawkins

living room

to the pastel lake

with its high mountain

to the ward

fluttering like an owl

her cheery smile

at her new cherry Nissan

the drowned world

in her pocket

with absorbent tissue

heartbeat

in the park with the linden

our tacit longing

vocal with pleasure

worried as she dives in the swell

surface after surface

reluctant hours, tasks, restraint

birds chitter, blossom of

such rich circumstance

malls with irregular heartbeats

kept at bay in the aisle

with deliberation

objects distance knowledge

the ethics of loss

all because you are not here

I go to the door, a type of wood I am not familiar with

or the jargon of cockatoos, in twos and threes in trees

I am alone but the birds fill the wood, lifting it

if you were here wouldst I were happy

I find it calming and I am certainly calm waiting for this voice in my
head to cease

you would glance at my shoes of which I am sure,

they are clogs unwittingly causing havoc to small creatures

ah see what you have done without meaning to

I have listened far too long to what they call entertainment

there is a cruel streak running through me with a wooden cudgel

on the nature of age

I find background noise distracting

trying to read, sew, buy, make do or good whilst

my futile future foreshortens, flowers in the kitchen

to gather, donut ringed

together, glazed over, ganache dazed, cling film covers

a roulette of outcomes, as predicted

I am wheeled back in, gently

to a warm bed, a real fleece, it's midnight and long to share an apple
crumble

an opera by Mozart or the Small Faces

at the window or coming tomorrow to peck the crumb from my
hand

here is the stone has fallen from my heart

with her hair pulled back after washing

she'd witnessed the farmer sowing

her white sheets strung out, fresh air

the wind with its sharp edge, such anger

the morning dough thrown down, so needed

it is then she wipes her eyes with her forearm, dusty sleeve

it all falls into place

the wish of having wished

scrubbing at the planter's hands

children endlessly at play in the field with friends

Sketches of Poets: Lila Matsumoto

by Richard Price

Lila Matsumoto's PhD concentrated on the two key Scottish little magazines *Migrant* and *Poor. Old. Tired. Horse*. Matsumoto was also the editor of the little magazine *Scree*.

Here is the opening of her poem "Morning" from *Allegories from my kitchen* (Sad Press, 2015): "The morning is sticky yellow and gray. I reach into my boxy and what do I find there – soxy. The frequent cat sits outside the window and peers in and in. I dislike its sensuous lips all over again. The kettle is in a huff and the eggs griddle griddle."

This is a gentle, funny, poetry, with painterly effects (the breakfast colour of "sticky yellow" contrasted humorously with the barely awake colour of grey; the use of the affectionate diminutives for, after all, the inanimate "boxy" and "soxy"; the comedy of the speaker's very specific petulance against that cat's lips!).

All the poems in *Allegories from my kitchen* are prose poems, so that the reader is in a way presented with a tongue-in-cheek commentary on the modernist prose poem tradition. That tradition tends to focus on undercutting the act of describing it pretends to be making, be it the strange oblique music of Stein's *Tender Buttons* or Francis Ponge's praise to door and snail. However, Matsumoto has a warmer more direct-seeming style, as in this comic piece, "Pancake":

Oh! The horror vacui of a vintage pancake in the crevice between refrigerator and wall. I call my reliable caulker, and she arrives after lunchtime with an armful of smooshable foodstuffs, eventually electing pancakes as her most preferred medium.

Here, the arch stage "Oh!" is quickly followed not by "Quelle horreur!" as one might expect, but a morphing of that term into "The horror vacui". This is a term used in the history of art to note, as a fear of emptiness, the filling of an empty space in a pictorial plane with detail. That this concerns the space between fridge and wall, and that it has been (almost) filled by a forgotten pancake,

creates the deliberate bathos and the fun. The public stageyness of the language also contrasts with the domestic locale.

Registers are played with again in the use of that phrase “reliable caulker” – a caulker is on the one hand here clearly a mucker, a mate, while also being, more usually, a worker who can fill natural gaps in boat’s hull. There is something disconcertingly amusing that the friend is being summoned not to help get the “vintage pancake” out of the gap, but to find further foodstuffs to fill the gap properly. After what appears to be an elaborate assessment, pancakes are again chosen as preferred filler.

Gaps are important to this poem: the actual gap between wall and fridge; the gap between registers; and, much further back, deeper, an emotional gap, mild loneliness. The “caulker” is coming over to be with their friend, as they laugh about that ancient relic of food stuck behind the fridge. In this way, the overbearingly traditional location ‘for’ women, the kitchen – where women are supposed to be virtuosi of cooking and cleanliness – is neatly and warmly re-imagined as a place of friendship and to hell with the domestic imperatives.

Peter McCarey
From The Syllabary

16.7.10

The spring migration slowed like a freight
And smacked the buffers, bringing down
The snow's oblivion of fifty years.

The kites were here from Africa three weeks early, lost in peace.
They were the magic word that, by the weekend,
Routed the old régime.
Old ladies pulled their dogs from under sofas,
Hoovered them and radio-controlled them through the park.

My memory woke with neither shent nor shame.

16.8.10

Shaped and shipped, received
In Rackwick, or another wrecker's bay.

15.8.10 **Chaste**

Well that's the Dom. Rep. for you
- Said one of Calvin's children to his pal –
Bad food and a good fuck.

15.8.11

Life is chopped and changed, holyoak.
It's chained and hauled across the park
And chaired in Francis Bacon's pope
A pile of breath, a bonfire.

15.5.11

President Chad, the Holy Roman Emperor
Charged the dragon with a shaft of solar wind.
He charred a path through the truculent, the recalcitrant.
He had a charmed life, a hand-washer wife.

13.7.10

It's how you're sexed and when you sweat
How your name is spelt or stressed,
Where you slept and who they sent
To check your sect, your social sklent
And get you septicly swept if need be
Need be? Stet. They want your last rid cent
Whatever you sellt, whatever you spent,
For if they can they'll stent it
And if it clangs they'll smelt it.
Smile. Let's see your teeth now. All of them.
I'll set you right.

13.8.10 **Sate**

I'm a saint I'm a straight
I'm a thing of the State
I'm a Bellany skate on a deck chair.
I'm an ode on a slate
(That's a river in spate)
Just a tune on a chart
Sleight of hand, sleight of heart.

13.8.9

A stain on the sheet
Rock on the soul
Strain on the heart
Straining apart

Well I'm no angel
I'm no saint
I do when I'm sane
And I don't when I ain't.

13.8.8

Skaith and skail
Your faith will fail you
GO TO JAIL
No god to bail you.

Contributors

Nancy Campbell writes poetry, essays, and non-fiction. A series of residencies with research institutions between 2010 and 2017 led to books including *The Library of Ice*, which was longlisted for the Rathbones Folio Prize 2019, and *Fifty Words for Snow*. Within Europe, she has held Fellowships at Hawthornden Castle in Scotland, Internationales Künstlerhaus Villa Concordia in Germany and the University of Oxford. She received the Royal Geographical Society Ness Award 2020 and the Birgit Skiöld Award 2015. **Caroline Clark's** first collection, *Saying Yes In Russian*, came out in 2012 with Agenda Editions. Her work has been published in *PN Review*, *Agenda*, *Tears in the Fence* and *Snow lit rev*, amongst others. Her second book, *Sovetica* (CB editions), grew from her fascination with a handful of stereo slides made by her Russian husband in the 1980s. It contains poem-stories, reproductions of colour slides and black & white photos. **Ralph Hawkins** has been writing poetry since the late 1970s when he was one of a number of radical poets gathered at the University of Essex. Of many publications the more substantial are *Tell Me No More and Tell Me* (Grosseteste 1981; republished by Shearsman in 2021), *At Last Away* (Gallop Dog Press 1988), *The Coiling Dragon... (Equipage)*, and *Gone to Marzipan* (Shearsman). **Peter McCarey**: *Collected Contraptions* (Carcanet), *De l'oubli* (L'ours blanc, 2019) and www.thesyllabary.com. He has written on language, poetry and thought in *Hugh MacDiarmid and the Russians* (Edinburgh, 1988) and in *Find an Angel and Pick a Fight* (Geneva, 2013). After 15 years running the language service of the World Health Organization he convened a group of experts to confront a theoretical but prophetic pandemic (the prosework from the symposium is *Petrushka* (Geneva, 2017)). McCarey was a founding member of *Poésies en Mouvement* (Geneva), is panjandrum of Molecular Press and inventor of a pedal-powered confessional <http://molecularpress.com/for-hire/>, built by Duncan Scott. He has curated a collective exhibition on transitional toys (Glasgow 2020, Geneva 2021, Milan 2022). *Orasho and Unwritten Constituents* are to be published by Red Squirrel Press in 2022. **James McGonigal** is a poet, editor and biographer based in Glasgow. Recent publications include *Edwin Morgan: In Touch With Language. A New Prose Collection 1950–2005* (ASLS, 2020) and a poetry collection, *In Good Time* (Red Squirrel Press, 2020). **Richard Price's** essays on lyric poetry, artists' books, and small presses are collected in *Is This A Poem?* (Molecular Press). His latest book *The Owner of the Sea: Three Inuit Sequences Retold* is published by Carcanet, as is *Lucky Day*, *Moon for Sale* and the award-winning *Small World*.

Painted, spoken

poems

Nancy Campbell
Caroline Clark
Ralph Hawkins
Peter McCarey
James McGonigal

prose

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Sketches of Poets: Richard Price outlines the warm, witty poetry of Lila Matsumoto

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