



Tyke Writer

The Interchange

Issue 11: March 2002 (Bradford Writers' Network) Newsletter

Events Guide

Interchange @ the Priestley

A workshop held every Tuesday from 8pm at the Priestley Centre for Arts, Chapel Street, Little Germany.

It provides a friendly and informal gathering where members can share their work. Also gives a forum for constructive feedback.

Interchange @ the Melborn

Every last Wednesday of the month, Interchange hosts an open mic performance event for writers, performers, poets and singer-songwriters.

Be there at 8pm for an 8.30pm start at the Melborn, White Abbey Road.

Talking to the world in poetry

Global peace was the theme of a special performance at the Melborn this month.

Mark Cantrell reports on *Dialogue Through Poetry*

HALF-WAY through his first poem and Joe Ogden's phone rang: "Hello? I'm on stage. Can I call you back? I'm performing. Listen."

He holds up the phone, and the audience cheers. It's the council, ringing about Joe's asbestos tiles.

An amusing interlude, then on with the poetry.

This is the Dialogue Through Poetry event at the Melborn, organised and hosted by Lynette Shaw McKone.

It was one of more than 200 readings in 150 cities across the world on the theme of peace, held during the week commencing the

17th March.

Sponsored by the United Nations, it incorporated UNESCO's World Poetry Day and Poetry On The Peaks: which featured readings on the highest peak of the world's continents and featured such readings as Dr Martin Luther King (I have A Dream), Pablo Neruda, Walt Whitman, the Dalai Lama and others.

"Bottom line, poets have always been looked upon to heal societies," said International Coordinator Larry Jaffe. "They have been considered doctors to the soul for centuries. Poetry speaks from the heart and soul and

is the best conduit for channelling if not fashioning how people feel."

The Melborn event added Bradford's voice to this global outpouring of peaceful intent.

Richard Heley topped the bill with his excellent poetry. He shared the stand with a wealth of talent: with performances from Lynette, Ed Reiss, Seema Gill, Ruth Malkin, Bruce Barnes, Alex Krysinski, Peter Karran, Joe Ogden, Karl Dallas, Carol Anne Solorz and band Co-Darajo, as well as the editor of this publication.

"Poets have taken on the mantle worn by the protest singers of the 60s and 70s," said Lynette. "We are using our words to make points about the way the world is going."

Old Grey Fox casts his literary spells

FIFTEEN years is a long time in poetry, it's an even longer time in magic and other wizardly doings.

Well, that's how long it has taken Interchange veteran

Howard Frost has cooked up the goods in the cauldron of his mind that is guaranteed to leave us spellbound.

The Old Grey Fox poems is a collection of 20 of his 'sword and sorcery' poems, brought

together specially for his forthcoming trip to the United States.

Our American cousins are most definitely in for a treat; and if they think otherwise, well if these poems hint at any hidden talents or past lives, then Howard might well turn them all into frogs.

Actually, it seems a tad trite to refer to this collection as 'sword and sorcery'. These aren't 'orc bashing' or stereotypic renditions of the cheapest kind of fantasy material.

There is a depth of intelligence and sophistication to these works that does more than just hint at deep thought.

There is no continuous narrative within these poems, but all share the same theme. Perhaps since the idea of the Old Grey Fox has been seeded in Howard's mind, we might start to see such a narrative develop in future works of this nature.

The book's production is a 'no frills' affair. Simply made, a mere conveyance for the words. Indeed they need no frills, the words speak for themselves, and anybody fortunate enough to have heard him perform will hear the unmistakable Frost tones encapsulated on the pages.

And without his usual long preambles too!

If you fancy possessing a slice of Howard's work you can't go far wrong with this collection. So buy the book -- but don't all rush at once. I am sure Howard doesn't want his American audience to be deprived of their chance at owning a copy.

Mark Cantrell

Water Magic

From The Old Grey Fox Poems
By Howard Frost

Today, I walked beside the deep, still waters and recalled
The day when my tutor spoke to me of water magic.
He was, as I remember it, most insistent that I observe
Due deference towards the owners of the waters
Whenever I proposed magic use of them.

"Never," he said, "throw an unexpected blade
Into a stream, or pool. To do so might disturb
The dweller in that place, who may be powerful."

This I recalled a long time after, when someone
Threw a surrendered knife into a lake, without
The required ceremonial of asking leave.
A short three days later, the same poniard, or its iimage
Was found between his corpse's ribs.

"Water spirits," said my Master, "have hard hearts,
Because they mostly live in cold abodes.
We here in this land have few denizens of warm water."

I have remembered these wise words, each time
It has fallen to my lot to deal with water magic
And even when the inhabitants have been less strong
Than my magic, they have ever lent their aid
As a reward for my politeness to them.

I share this wisdom now because this generation
Seems to lack respect for ownership of place.
They perhaps forget that whosoever lays claim to somewhere,
Whether that "where" be land or water
The place belongs firstly to itself, and
Only thereafter to another.

Poetry with a beat

Last month the Beehive Poets put on an evening of poetry and jazz. Some of you might have been there. Here **Frank Brindle** shares his thoughts on how it all went...

A memorable evening was enjoyed by a much larger than expected audience when the music/poetry combinations of Nightdiver and poet Chris Bousfield were supported by the Beehive Poets.

They performed their own work in the cellar bar of the New Beehive, Westgate, last month.

The combination of real ale, real poetry and music went down a treat.

The poetry ranged from the sublime to the absurd

with lashings of humour. The music/poetry combinations of Chris and her talented family trio, who performed on alto-sax, clarinet, guitar and drums, worked well to generate evocative and thought provoking atmospheres.

Though initially intended as a one-off extension of the regular Monday night poetry meetings, it is now envisaged that other similar events will follow, so look out for dates in the guide.

Such a headache

HE came highly recommended, apparently, but up there on stage for last month's Melborn gig, Little Brother was a noisy disappointment.

I could say that he shouldn't give up the day job, but he hasn't got one. If he approaches the rest of his life as he does his poetry, then it's little wonder.

Little Brother's performance was loud. Very LOUD, as if he thought this would make up for the lack of merit to his work. He rambled. Dropped his work and even sent money scattering across the stage. Of the poetry itself, much of it held the seeds of promise. There was a talent in there somewhere,

struggling to get out, and Little Brother is obviously no stranger to audiences and a microphone. Ultimately, however, the promise in his work failed to materialise and his performance became painful.

The words just went on and on and on... No wonder he lost much of the audience's attention. The applause he gained seemed lacking in warmth and was merely done for politeness-sake. No surprise that some in the audience buggered off for a game of pool.

In future, LB should stick to introducing his singer friends; they were vastly superior and frankly blew him off the stage.

Mark Cantrell

Ruth inside

VETERAN Interchange member Ruth Malkin is coming to terms with life inside Leeds Prison, Armley, writes **Mark Cantrell**.

No, she's not an inmate sent to the wrong prison, Ruth is the prison's new writer in residence, teaching inmates how to express their finer feelings in a way that doesn't get them extra time.

Look out for next issue's full story and interview.

Valentine Waltz 2002

Graces of February sunshine
Role under my feet
And waltz of peace keep me alive
Playful breeze touches my skin
Leaves me blushing by your side

Bare legged lilies, roses, viols
Walking on the pavement
Empowering of life's might
Ruthless your voice takes my breath
Twittering bird's lasting flight

Turn this seasonal anxiety
Into your yearning of love
Asphyxiated pain and sorrow
Tell me friend your wishful plead
Will turn into the bliss of tomorrow

How can you not be the
One I so long have aspired
My soul mating with you, no deny
Bless my soul with your blue riches
Take me to fly with you before I die

Seema Gill

In Praise Of Poets

Everywhere I go, I am blown away by poets
Poets are the conscience of the new millennium
Pouring like silver sand through the open fingers of protest
Filling the void left by protest singers of the sixties
And seventies
Those singers, perhaps, changed the way
A whole generation viewed the world
They sang to make their point
Poets have always tried to change the way we view the
World that is their job, our job
And we, the poets, are making a point with our words
We are taking our words out into the world
We are reaching more and more people
We are touching more and more minds
We are spreading the word and the word is this:

NO!

No matter who you are, no matter what deity you praise
No matter how you live, Your voice can be heard
You have the right to be heard
And we are all poets
If you can string together two words you are a poet
But if you can declaim only one word then let that word be

NO!

NO we won't, NO we don't, NO more poverty, NO more
War, NO more persecution, NO more pollution
NO more destruction
We want a world for our children
We want a place at nature's table for our children
We want our children to live in peace
So we say:
Listen to us
We have words
Worth speaking
We have words
Worth listening to
We don't have
All the answers
But what we do have are
All
The
Questions.

Lynette Shaw McKone

As read out at Dialogue Through Poetry, the Melborn,
20th March 2002

The *Tyke Writer* is the monthly newsletter of the Interchange (Bradford Writers' Network).

For further details of the group, or to get involved, come down to the Priestley Centre for Arts, Chapel Street, Little Germany, Bradford.

Or contact:
Lynette Shaw McKone,
Interchange.

Tel: 07930 236122

Email: interchange@brad.communigate.co.uk

Web: <http://www.communigate.co.uk/brad/interchange>

Editorial contributions are welcome, but will be edited for space and style.

All contributions must bear the author's name, which may appear as a byline. Contributions are also preferably received in type written form.

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Editor: Mark Cantrell
Contact:

Tel: 07986 234372

Fax: 0870 1643314

Email: editor@soviet62.freereserve.co.uk

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March 2002**