

Tyke Writer

The Interchange
(Bradford Writers' Network) Newsletter

Issue 19: December 2002

Interchange @ the Priestley

Interchange (Bradford Writers' Network) meets every Tuesday from 8pm at the Priestley Centre for Arts (formerly the Bradford Playhouse).

The sessions are informal and provide a sounding board for members' work, as well as constructive criticism and feedback should this be required.

Support, encouragement and words are at the forefront of the group's activities, and all kinds of writing is welcomed: poetry, short and long fiction, plays, memoirs, articles and songs.

Inside this issue...

50th birthday party, essay by Karl Dallas, poetry insert by Joe Ogden, news, views & events

Half century stand

Middle aged, but still going strong. Stand Magazine recently celebrated its 50th Birthday. Mark Cantrell reports

POETRY magazines might come and go, but a magazine that has stood the test of time celebrated its fiftieth birthday last month.

Stand Magazine's anniversary issue was launched with a jazz and poetry party hosted by the University of Leeds' Department of English. The event took place at the Workshop Theatre and featured readings from Jon Glover, R F Langley, E A Markham, Rodney Pybus, Michael Symmons Roberts, Ken Smith, Anne Stevenson, Jeffrey Wainwright, Matthew Welton and John Whale.

The night also fea-

tured a contemporary jazz ensemble courtesy of the university's College of Music.

Stand was established in London in 1952 by Jon Silkin with £5 redundancy money, gained after he tried to organise fellow manual workers. The title expressed the magazine's aim to take a stand — against injustice and oppression and a stand for the role that art, fiction and poetry could play in such a struggle..

Silkin edited the magazine for many a long year until his death in 1999. From its London home, the magazine moved to Leeds when Silkin became Gregory Fellow in Poetry and where he studied for a

Degree in English. In 1965, he moved the title to Newcastle where it remained until his death.

The title returned to Leeds following his loss. Though an independent company, *Stand* works closely with the university's English department and is published five times a year.

During its fifty year history, the magazine has published the early work of writers who went on to establish themselves more widely, including Jeffrey Wainwright who read at the anniversary party. It has also played a major role in bringing the work of Russian and East European writers westwards via English translations.

The magazine still aims to bring to light radical, experimental and inventive work.

The readers read

Professor Jon Glover is managing editor of *Stand* and head of cultural and creative studies at the Bolton Institute. His *Poems New and Selected: To the Niagra Frontier* (1994) is available from Carcanet.

R. F. Langley was born in Rugby in 1938 and lives in Staffordshire.

He has published pamphlets and his work has appeared in many journals and anthologies, his *Collected Poems* (2000) is available from Carcanet.

E. A. Markham has just published *A Rough Climate* (Anvil) - his seventh collection of poems - and *Taking the Drawing Room* through

Continued on page 4...

Truth and falsity in translations

Karl Dallas ponders the difficulties in translating poetry to capture its true essence

POETRY, they say, is what gets lost in translation. It's true; a lot of translations may be literally true to the letter of the original, while entirely missing its spirit.

At the opposite end of the scale are Christopher Logue's adaptations of the *Veinte poemas de amor y una canción desesperado* (Twenty Poems of Love and a Song of Despair) by the Chilean Nobel prize winning poet, Pablo Neruda, performed as *Red Bird Dancing on Ivory* in the 50s with the Tony Kinsey quintet, and recently re-released as part of a mammoth 7-CD compilation of Logue's work.

Comparing them with the rather prosaic literal translations by the American poet, W.S. Merwin, it is clear that the Logue does more than reinterpret the originals with great freedom.

As he says of his version of the *Iliad*, the great Homeric epic which makes up the bulk of this new collection:

"Rather than a translation in the accepted sense of the word, I was writing what I hoped would turn out to be a poem in English dependent upon whatever, through reading and through conversation, I could guess about a small part of the *Iliad*, a poem whose composition is reckoned to have preceded the begin-

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nings of our own written language by fifteen centuries."

This may be a valid approach, simply because modern scholarship indicates that "Homer" was no single poet, but an ancient and still continuing tradition of bards, for whom the story was all, and the received text merely the framework for a

continually changing process.

Albert Lord tells of an illiterate modern East European bard who was read an ancient epic from a book; he performed it next day, and his own version was three times as long as what he had heard the day before.

But what Logue does to the Neruda is something quite different. Surprisingly, for someone whose laconic voice is in many ways the nearest British equivalent to Germany's Bertholt Brecht, Logue overlays the hard-edged realism of Neruda's original with a veneer of sentimentality.

For instance, Neruda's final poem ends (in Merwin's translation): "Though this be the last pain that she makes me suffer/and these the last verses that I write for her." Logue's version of these lines reads: ". . . I shall forget her and, alas, as if by accident, a day will pass in which I shall not think about her even once; this, the last line I shall write her."

This certainly reads well, and, set against Kinsey's very simple ostinato drum riff, is extremely moving.

The problem is that we have lost something, the rather self-pitying "Though this be the last pain that she makes me suffer" and gained - if that's the right word - something Neruda didn't write: "I shall forget her and, alas, as if by accident, a day will pass in which I shall not think about her even once", something which is in fact alien to the whole spirit of what I believe Neruda is saying.

I have been living with these poems, in Logue's version, for nearly 50 years, and I must confess that last line never failed to bring a rather maudlin tear to my eye.

So when I obtained a review copy, after all these years, having (I thought) experienced something analogous in my own life of late, I put on the CD in great anticipation. But, "No!" I wanted to cry; "it's not been like that for me!" Nor has it ever been.

Karl Dallas will complete his exploration of translation in the next issue.

Wot -- no cash? Religious horror

BAD news on the finance front as Yorkshire Arts turned down Interchange's recent application for grant assistance.

Despite the setback, the doors are still open for funding applications in the New Year.

According to feedback from the application process, the group's bid failed for a number of reasons, mostly 'administrative'.

First, the application was deemed to be poorly presented, with too many additional sheets added to the paperwork. "Yorkshire Arts likes you to stay within the space allotted on the form and include any background stuff in a sepa-

rate document," says Bruce Barnes.

Secondly, there was an insufficiently clear focus in the application. The judging panel was apparently unable to immediately see what the money was for and how it fitted in with Yorkshire Art priorities. This is something that could have been picked up early on and corrected via feedback. The lesson being, get future applications in early.

Applications under the new funding set can be made from April 1 next year and application packs are available from February. There are two categories: group and individual grants.

Mark Cantrell

Tyke Writer:
Get
scribbling

FORGET
Christmas.
There's a far

more important date approaching.

That's the New Year when Tyke Writer will enter its third year of publication.

So it's up to you group members to keep on supplying the news, the comment, the poetry and the prose to make that year a success.

See the back of this issue for details of submitting work, or collar the editor at one of the group events. Remember: the shorter the better, and copy is preferred in digital format.

DDOUBLE Dragon Press wants horror stories with a religious theme for a forthcoming anthology.

Scriptures of the Damned will be published as an e-book and is scheduled for release sometime in the middle of 2003.

"We are looking for 12 to 14 short stories written in the religious horror sub-genre," says the company's Peggy Shumate.

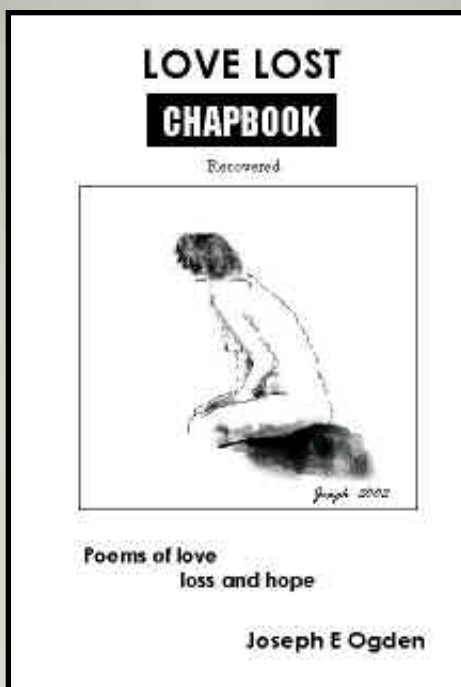
Six of these stories will be commissioned,

while the rest will be made up of unsolicited works.

Submissions must be original work and not have been published before. The preferred length is between 3,000 to 6,000 words and the payment will be split royalties.

"Stories must be rich in religion and not just Christianity but any known or little known religion," Peggy adds.

Send submissions to: peggy.shumate@double-dragon.com.



JOE Ogden's latest collection of poetry is due for publication in January. Every copy of *Love Lost* sold will donate £1 to the Priestley Centre for Arts.

Look out for the full details and a review of Joe's chapbook in the next issue of Tyke Writer.

The next issue will also finish Karl Dallas's essay on translation. Out at the end of January.

Half a century of Stand

...Continued from page 1

Customs (Selected Stories, Peepal Tree). His Selected Poems is forthcoming from Salt, Australia. He is Professor of Creative Writing at Sheffield Hallam University.

Rodney Pybus' most recent collection of poetry is Flying Blues (Carcanet). The title group of his first volume In Memoriam Milena (Chatto & Windus, 1973; bi-lingual edition with French translation by Françoise Trichet, Editions de l'Envol, 1995) has been set to music by Jacques Michon, and received its premiere at Toulouse in 2001.

Ken Smith's latest volume is Shed: Poems 1980-2001 (Bloodaxe 2002). He was a co-editor, with Jon Silkin, of Stand in the 1960s. He was

poet in residence at Wormwood Scrubs and his poems have been broadcast regularly in BBC Radio. He received a Lannan Foundation Award for poetry in 1997.

Michael Symmons Roberts latest collection Burning Babylon (Cape) was shortlisted for last year's T. S. Eliot Prize. He is a regular collaborator with the composer James MacMillan, and an award-winning writer for radio.

Anne Stevenson's latest collection, Granny Scarecrow, was shortlisted in 2001 for the Whitbread and Eliot Prizes. In 2002 she was awarded the inaugural £60,000 Northern Roach Writers Award. Her next collection, A Report from the Border, will be published by Bloodaxe Books in 2003.

Jeffrey Wainwright's most recent book of poems is Out of the Air (Carcanet 1999). He teaches in the Writing School at Manchester Metropolitan University where he is Professor of English.

Matthew Welton is a co-editor of Stand and came second in this year's Daily Telegraph - Arvon poetry competition. The Book of Matthew, his first book of poems, will be published by Carcanet next year.

Dr. John Whale was born in Liverpool. He is a co-editor of Stand and teaches in the School of English, University of Leeds. His poems have been published in a wide selection of magazines and journals and his work was featured in Anvil New Poets 2 (1995) edited by Carol Ann Duffy.

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.

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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.

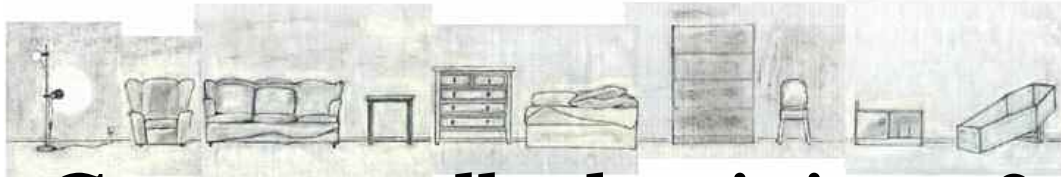
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Can you tell what it is yet?

If you go down to the Priestley today, you can see the other side of Joe Ogden's art — not words but pictures..

Four of Joe's art works are on display as part of the Priestley's annual exhibition of members' painting, etchings and photographic talent.

The exhibition runs in the Cellar Bar until January 18th 2003 and Joe's artistic integrity will set you back £25 each.

"A year ago I found myself in the midst of an emotional break down," Joe said. "It meant either find a creative escape route, or death, the emptiness was that bad.

"I decided to put my suicide off a year and took up my art after 20 years. In that time I'd lost a lot of skills but I'm working at it.

"Empty Now [above] is an inner landscape of loneliness."

The above image came second in the PCA art exhibition.