

## 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...

**Joe's first chapbook reviewed, essay on translation, news and events...**

# Joe's lonely verse



**YOU** might say that Joe Ogden's debut collection of verse, *Love Lost*, was conceived along with the man himself way back in January 1961.

Ever since it has been fermenting in his head through a series of failed relationships. Now the words are ripe and Joe has released them on an unprepared public.

The world might never be quite the same again. Welcome to the inner workings, not only of Joe's mind, but also his heart for the anthology touches upon the age-old theme of love. Or more accurately the loss and failure of love.

Readers should be prepared for revelation. Not that Joe's poetry says anything new on this ancient human passion. No, the revelation comes

*A lifetime in the making, but the inevitable has finally happened with the publication of *Love Lost*, Joe Ogden's first chapbook. **Mark Cantrell** flicks through the pages and finds an unexpected side to the group's resident philosopher-jester [pictured left]*

from what the poetry reveals in the man himself. Witness the introspective side of Joe Ogden and be astounded.

For most of us who know him, we are familiar with his masque as the bloke in the pub with the rather risqué line in social chit chat. His debut collection reveals that this is but one of his facets for he has dared to show his sensitive side. The work is poignant, thoughtful and often sad.

It's just a shame he kind of blows this new found sensitive image in interview.

"I've gone out with a number of lasses, but for one reason or another (me — I guess) they finish with me," he says. "It's something I will have to face up to someday: all the hope that I invest in a relationship

only to find out that I am not wanted.

"I chose this theme because I have a lot of poems on it. Not surprising given the number of emotionally damaged females I have been with — and yes they were nuts before meeting me. I tried to love them but failed them in the end."

Perhaps these women had to be nuts to go with him, but there is no doubt they have helped Joe to find a source of creativity. The poems are beautifully written and evocative of a lonely heart pondering life. Only occasionally does a hint of bitterness creep into the words.

But all is fair in love and poetry and heartache, and with the help of his collaborators, Joe has done a wonderful job on his debut collection. He

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# Truth and falsity in translations

*Karl Dallas continues his essay about the difficulty of translating poetry from its original language.*

**GEOFF Wood runs the Grove folk club in Leeds and is a regular attendee at the Wednesday poetry evenings in that pub, and also at the Reader2Reader sessions at Bradford Library.**

He pointed out this discrepancy the very first time we met, at Interchange, when he astonished me by reciting the Logue version, from memory.

So I went to the library and borrowed the Merwin translation, to see if I could create something which performed better than its rather pedestrian accuracy, but was more faithful to Neruda's spirit (which, incidentally, does not depict the passage through a single love, as it might appear, but sandwiches together two relationships in that great poet's passionate love affair with life).

Neruda has had a great influence upon me, along with other foreign poets, such as Brecht, Vladimir Mayakovsky, Federico García Lorca, and the French surrealist, Paul

Eluard, whose Liberté was the first poetic translation I ever attempted (not counting parsing Catullus in Latin classes at school) and which, nearly sixty years after its appearance in 1946, inspired me to emulate its form in my poem, Graffiti, which I'm proud to say is now being translated into Arabic by a Palestinian poet whom I met during my visit to Nablus.

The surrealist imagery of Neruda's *Residencia en la tierra* (Dwelling upon the Earth), an evocation of the Chilean landscape which he actually wrote while working as a consul in the Far East, inspired my earliest ambitious attempts at similarly bizarre images while still at school, which I feel emerge today in a rather better-digested form, such as the following lines from a poem written only last month:

"My tears are a scalding rain,/and everywhere they fall dark flowers spring up,/each of them embroidered with your face.

They are black tulips,/with leaves like swords, and as I pick and carry them in my arms the blood gushes forth, falling like dragons' teeth upon the ravished earth."

So, while it has been good to revisit the Logue versions - and I plan to play the entire sequence on my Bradford Community

Broadcasting jazz show on Christmas Eve - I'm going to have a go at producing something which doesn't do violence to Neruda's vision, but which is closer to its spirit than the Merwin.

It'll be the first major work I have done based on a foreign poet since my "paraphrase" of Aleksandr

## The Dawn

*Adapted by Karl Dallas from a translation of the Spanish of Federico García Lorca, April 6, 1974*

The New York dawn:  
four towers of turds  
and black doves cycloning down  
into the rotten garbage of the day.

The dawning mourns,  
sneaks up the stairs  
and stabs at your crotch  
with the flick-knife pai of day.  
The dawn has come into our mouths  
but no one tastes it  
nor recognises morning nor its hope.  
Your money swarms in anger round the heads  
of children you have wasted  
and gnaws their faces old with dope.

These early risers feel it in their bones:  
They'll find again no paradise to strip their fig-  
leaved loves.  
They slide in up to here in debts and regula-  
tions,  
and life's a game of chance to spend their  
sweat.  
The challenge of the light is shackled down  
by rackets of machines no one invented.  
Sleepwalkers stagger through the suburbs,  
survivors from the scarlet shipwreck of the sun.

Blok's The 12, which I performed as a one-man show as part of the Red October show Interchange presented in the Priestley Studio in November 1999.

I shall approach it similarly: I have photocopied the twenty poems, and have begun to scribble all over them possible alternative readings (though the only Spanish I know is how to order a glass of beer, my knowledge of French and Latin and a good dictionary, aided by Merwin for the word-for-word meaning of the lines to act as a foundation from which I should not stray, should help me do this; I produced a "translation" of one of Lorca's New York poems in similar fashion).

One of the difficulties Logue side steps neatly, by just ignoring it, is the declarative

nature of some lines, totally acceptable in Spanish, but which render into English rather oddly: for instance, in *Cuerpo de mujer* (Body of a woman), the first poem in the sequence, how may I render "Ah los

to the supposed fact that William Randolph Hearst allegedly used that very term to refer to the clitoris of his lady love (though how anyone knows this, of that supremely private man who did everything he could to sup-

"I knew you and from that moment knew all your womankind as one and I as every man."

Perhaps, in these more unbuttoned times, I might be a bit more physiologically explicit. These are still problems for which I lack suitable solutions.

It remains to be seen if I shall succeed. In attempting to do so, however, as I penetrate to the heart of what Neruda is saying about the permanence as well as the transience of human relationships, I hope I shall learn something more about what it addresses in the story of my own human condition.

**Karl Dallas**

*Red Bird Dancing on Ivory, versions of seven poems of Pablo Neruda, by Christopher Logue with the Tony Kinsey Quintet, is part of Audiologue, a 7-CD set of recordings 1958-1998 (Unknown Public, UPL701, PO Box 354, Reading RG1 5TX, tel: 0208 968 5655, email unknown.public@virgin.net)*

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*I cannot yet think of any way to refer... to the way in which a woman, as she approaches climax, goes within herself and seems no longer to her lover to be present as a discrete individual.*

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vasos del pecho! . . . Ah las rosas del pubis" (literally, "Ah the goblets of the breast! . . . Ah the roses of the pubis!"). The latter reminds my licentious mind that the "rosebud" mystery at the heart of Orson Welles' Citizen Kane movie is said to be a reference

press Kane, I cannot imagine). I think I know what Neruda means when he cries: "Ah los ojos de ausencia!" ("Ah the eyes of absence!") but I cannot yet think of any way to refer in so few words to the way in which a woman, as she approaches climax, goes within herself and seems no longer to her lover to be present as a discrete individual. In my long poem, *The Last Sacrament* (sometimes called *Return to the Garden*, in homage to Joni Mitchell's Woodstock), first published in my book, *Singers of an Empty Day*, I wrote of this experience back in 1970:

## Enter the madhouse

**A**n article by *Tyke Writer* editor Mark Cantrell has been used as the foreword to a forthcoming project by Nine Hearts Publishing called *Diary of a Schizo*.

The article *Dance With the Muse and Write To Dissent* was first published in the second issue of the small press magazine *Ubique* last year. From that appearance, the author was contacted and asked if the article could be used.

"It's flattering to be asked like that," Mark says. "It's another publishing credit under my belt, which helps to further awareness of my work, though I don't know what this invitation and the book's theme says about me!"

# Lonely heart bared for all

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has done Interchange proud.

So what does he hope to do with the book, other than establish his name as a poet? Well, for one he plans that £1 of the £3.50 cover price will be donated to aid the Priestley Centre for Arts. But not only that, his heart strings (or at least some part of his anatomy) are still strumming to the muse:

"Maybe some posh bird will find me interesting and want to jump my bones," he adds wistfully (as the sensitive sides flies away), "or maybe it is to show people that finding love and failing doesn't mean you have to give up. Never stop looking!"

Love might be lost, but Joe's development as a poet is no lost cause.

As for the book itself, it is neatly laid out and easy on the eye. A crisp and clear cover design invites the eye to turn the pages, so long as the gaze can be torn from the rather fetching cover art (left). The drawing was also done by the author of the words.

Design and production, however, wasn't all Joe's work. He had assistance from Howard Frost and Lynette Shaw McKone, for which he says he is very 'thankful'.

*Love Lost* is a fine debut collection and a credit to all involved in its production.

## LOVE LOST CHAPBOOK

Recovered



Poems of love  
loss and hope

Joseph E Ogden

*Love Lost*, by Joe Ogden. Price £3.50. 34 pages, 24 poems. For purchasing details contact the author at: [joedot@blueyonder.co.uk](mailto:joedot@blueyonder.co.uk). Every copy sold will see £1 of the cover price donated to the Priestley Centre for the Arts.

## Red hot with Joolz

**BRADFORD Central Library kicks off the New Year season of open mic nights with Red Hot Chilli, hosted by Joolz at the Platform.**

Local poets are invited to sign up for one of around 12 to 15 five-minute slots, featuring an item of their own work and a poem of their fancy by another author.

Interested poets should pick up a leaflet from Waterstones, the Love Apple or, of course, Bradford Central Library and return it to the library. Alternatively contact Paula Truman direct at the library on 01274 753915 (email: [paula.truman@bradford.gov.uk](mailto:paula.truman@bradford.gov.uk)) by the 16th January.

Red Hot Chilli takes place at the Platform, Bradford Central Library on 23rd January and commences at 7.30pm. Tickets cost £2.

## Tyke goes PDF

**FUTURE issues of Tyke Writer will be available in PDF format as well as in print.**

PDF or portable file format is a popular method of accessing documents electronically. All that is needed to access the files is the freely available Adobe Reader to view the issues on screen or to print them out.

Back issues will also soon be available in this format, and the editor plans to archive them on the web.

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:

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**E**ditorial 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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