



The Tyke Writer

INTERCHANGE NEWSLETTER

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Redbeck @ the Melborn

Bruce Barnes reviews a performance of Redbeck's women poets

The Redbeck Press is one of the few West Yorkshire based small presses publishing poetry and this year they were the press in residence at Bradford Libraries organising readings and workshops as part of Bradford's literature

festival, Reading the City.

Dave Tipton, the editor of the press, wanted readings in addition to the hi-profile Love, Death, & Bouncing Back reading at the Alhambra Studio on 1/5. (Sex & Carrots is off their menu). The reading at the Melborn was one of two fringe

readings designed to promote the work of poets published by Redbeck, including those who appeared in the anthology Spirit of Bradford.

The poets featured were Alita Lomellini, Seema Gill, Sarah Jane Tipton, and our Alex Krysiniski. I won't refer to them as women poets, for, with the exception of Alex, I don't feel that adjective qualifies their poetry. Poetry is about too much; that's what being in the world and trying to make sense of it is like, and if we are going to light on an adjective that encapsulates the experience, we need to be damn sure it suits.

Alita Lomellini read from her collection Target Practice and recent work. Born and raised in Bradford, lived in Arizona and Peru, now a Professor of French and Spanish

at Pennsylvania State University her poetry reflects her travels and often takes the form of musings derived from an idea or personal experience. I enjoyed the trips, the going off on tangents but sometimes I didn't pick up from the reading where she intended to stop.

Seema confessed to feeling nervous before she read; her poetry is lush, full of striking images, and deserves careful attention. Sometimes she conquers her nerves and the audience get the full benefit of her work, but not on this night, unfortunately. Reading to a public is a terrifying experience, even with smaller audiences, and many well known poets avoid it. (T.S. Eliot is supposed to have hated it.). I think the poetry reading exists as aversion therapy; it's there to be

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Poets go off on 'one?'

THE Bradford Poetry Workshop has launched its first anthology with a reading at the Xchange in the city's Central Library, writes Mark Cantrell.

'one?' feature poems from guest poet Joolz, as well as group members Bruce Barnes, Nicholas Bielby, Clare Chapman, Gerry Croft, Seema Gill, Taj Hayer, Ed Reiss and Helen Shay.

"The Workshop exists to specifically help poets who want to do more with their work and prepare poems for publication," says Bruce Barnes.

Copies of the anthology are available from Bradford Poetry Workshop, c/o 37 Wilmer Road, Heaton, Bradford, BD9 4RX. It costs £3.50 including P&P. Cheques payable to 'Bradford Poetry Workshop'.

Melborn Ruth signs off Route up North

IT was the end of an era as veteran member Ruth Malkin said her fond farewells as MC of the Melborn event last month (27-6-01).

After the end of the first half of the gig, she handed over the reins to new MC Lynette Shaw McKone.

Tributes gushed for Ruth, who has been hosting the event since it began, and has earned a rest.

Member Mark



Above: Lynette Shaw McKone takes over as Melborn MC

Cantrell also made his debut performance to honour her last event.

Poets can make use of a new recording service by Route, the multimedia enterprise from the Yorkshire Arts Circus.

They plan it to be a 'one stop shop' for those wishing to make use of the MP3 digital recording format.

Facilities will include recording, conversion to the format, uploading to MP3 sites, designing and hosting websites and domain name registration.

Interested poets can

email goll@route-online.com for further information.

Route also publishes a monthly newspaper of the same name that features articles, short stories and poems. Initially the paper was distributed through venues in Leeds, but from March it expanded through the north of England.

To submit work or be added to the mailing list contact: info@route-online.com. Web: <http://www.route-online.com>.

Poets do it in a coffin

By Mark Cantrell

IN a fourth floor flat on a run down Bradford council estate, two people strip for the camera and climb into a coffin.

This isn't quite a kinky sex session, but the photo shoot for the cover art and illustrations to *Love, Sex, Death & Carrots*, the latest anthology of poetry and prose from the Interchange writers network.

The models are members of the group who volunteered to flaunt more than their words in the name of literature.

Most poetry, they say, deals with love or sex or death, hence the title. The rest deals with anything and everything, which goes some way towards explaining the carrots. It

was editor and artist, Phil Wainman's job to try and capture this visually.

"I had this idea for the front cover, which was to have a couple in a coffin, surrounded by carrots with love hearts floating around," he said. "I liked this idea, because it properly reflected each aspect of the title in the image."

Initially, the biggest problem Wainman expected to face was in persuading people to pose. As it turned out, getting hold of a coffin proved far more difficult. In the end, one had to be built from scratch.

Wainman's sidekick, Joedot (his professional name) supplied the necessary skills as well as the raw materials: "I had this old wood effect chipboard wardrobe," he said.

"It was going to cost about £150 to build a coffin big enough to fit two people from scratch, so the wardrobe had to go. This [and some scrap wood] cut the coffin's cost to about £40 and we built it over a few weeks."

Twenty Interchange stalwarts are included in the book; a presentation of poetry and prose and even a little music courtesy of veteran journalist and broadcaster Karl Dallas.

Many of the others are equally well known on the performance poetry circuit, both at home and abroad. They include Seema Gill, Bruce Barnes, Andrew Penwarden and Patrick Blues.

The 80-page book, which costs £5.99, was produced with the aid of a Yorkshire Arts grant. The launch took place at one of Interchange's regular performance events, where the audience was treated to a live preview of its contents.

Interchange Presents...

Poetry



Park

Lister Park, Bradford

Wednesday July 18, 8.30pm

OPEN MIC

Sign-up at 8pm

Refreshments

Enquiries: 0771 980 5907

CHILDREN WELCOME

LITERATURE lovers are invited to Poetry In The Park, at the Boathouse Pavilion in Lister Park.

The event is the latest performance venture by Interchange (Bradford Writers' Network), and it is being hosted and organised by poet/singer-songwriter and journalist Karl Dallas.

The event commences at 8pm, with performers taking to the microphone at 8.30pm.

Poesy

By Howard Frost

They never taught me it would be like this,
A place where firecrackers explode in your head,
Unbidden.
A place where, amidst the orchestral cacophony of life,
Your mind hears a single violin sobbing melodies
That tear your heart to shreds.
They only said, listen, learn and listen, this is poetry.

They never said, here is a fellowship to join
That consists of solitary prisoners in locked cells
Shouting.
A place where every touch can be agony, or ecstasy
And you will never know which until you are touched,
Maybe not even then, until, unless,
The touch makes your soul make the whole world listen.

They never imagined, not being poets themselves,
That there were, hidden inside the written words
Powers
Which speak for disenfranchised people
In a voice that can never be denied
Except by those whose ears are stopped
From ever hearing truth from honest men.

And someday, someday very soon,
The whole world will know
What Aristotle knew,
That who speaks truth is poet,
And who speaks poetry, speaks power.

EVENTS
GUIDE

Interchange @ the Priestley

Weekly workshop that takes place every Tuesday from 8pm at the Priestley Centre for the Arts, Chapel Street, Little Germany. It provides a friendly and informal gathering where group members can share their work.

Interchange @ the Melborn

Every last Wednesday of the month on White Abbey Road, Interchange hosts an open microphone event for writers, performers and singer-songwriters.

Singer/song-writers please contact Interchange in advance, as slots for musicians are limited.

Interchange @ the Monkey Bar

Every first Wednesday of the month from 8pm at the Monkey Bar cafe on Northgate, Wakefield.

Slip inside the covers

TYKE Writer editor, Mark Cantrell, wants to interview local poets and writers for a forthcoming book project.

Sin(k) City Poets

(as it is provisionally known) takes a look at the local writing scene through the eyes of those involved.

It is not a history of literature in Bradford, but a 'snapshot' exploration and celebration

of a living moment of literary activity.

Anybody who wants to have their views bound within the covers should contact the editor of this esteemed publication.

Redbeck poets perform

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done, in order to do it again. Manningham needs poetry and Sarah Jane Tipton is from there. Her free verse dwells on the riots, and relates the particular angst of teenagers growing up in a multicultural community. She read well, in tones that displayed both maturity and raunchiness; her determination to engage the audience came across. Alex Krynski didn't read; she performed. When there was a text, it was an appendage at arm's length to glance at occasionally. Otherwise the poems were in

her head and in her heart. Seeing her alongside poets who were reading, bought home to me the widening gulf that exists between poetry in performance and 'the reading'. I liked to think that the gulf was shrinking, that what poetry in performance and the 'reading' had in common was more than their differences; but not tonight, Alex.

The difference between poetry in performance and the reading preoccupies me at present. As with any decent conundrum, I have reached no firm conclusions other than that

the audience is an integral part of poetry performance. A poet can 'read' to an audience of one without it materially affecting the quality of the reading, and such a reading could be repeated; the emphasis might vary according to the poet's mood, but largely it would be the same reading. But the poetry performance is a collaboration between poet and audience, the one feeding off the other, and as such each performance is unique.

Editorial contributions welcome, but will be edited for space and style. All contributions must bear the author's name, which may appear as a byline. All work is copyright to the original authors.

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