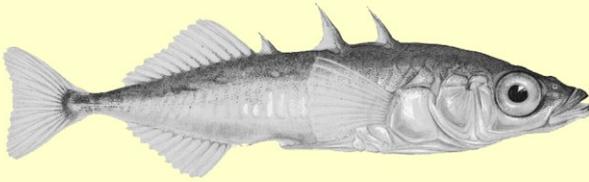




The Hedgehog Poetry Press

Stickleback



Stickleback

Jeremy Reed

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Spotlight on Jeremy Reed

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Bowie's Afterlife

Cremation smoke mixed into jet exhaust
gritty particles, ever seen a diamond
pulled from a fire as indestructible,

ash brushed off its scintillating carats
in the hard slam of mountain oxygen.
A blue diamond tinted aqueous green.

There's no backup copy, just consciousness
quantified subatomically, like thought's
the fastest way to travel to next thought

as light speed instantaneity. The glow
post-operative lives on as famous bleed
into a collectivised memory -

can't ever recreate the same again
south Brixton accent on Space Oddity
like flattening a tin can under the tongue.

He'd dispersed now into cosmic heartbeat
until dehumanised as atoms built
into the proposition of a star.

Don't come two likes of singularity
as Bowie gene - diamond-shaped molecules
glittering, repatterned like curves on rain.

Unaffiliated

Don't have no literary ID
just fractured nuisance, vaporous halo
as rogue antagonist, sold looks
to subsidise habituated art
like a poetry junky

shooting alien in my cells
as drizzled diamond chemistry.
'You're in another window,' Derek said,
'you see out they can't see in'
at Phoenix House, antiretrovirals

non-combative with jungle heat
his life fuckt by a virus into this
active deactivated rush
on a collapsed timeline. I'm back yarded
into never, some don't come back

from anything to anywhere
but sitting on a stump like me
deregulated by what I do
anonymised, slung-out in Leicester Square,
clouds on my back for company

moving on like crowds don't stay
except in snaps. I been around
in words like marketing alien slaves
procured off-world, de-systemised,
caught up with buskers doing garage raw.

Three (Better than You'll ever be)

Stands in my memory as a dissolve
like a paintbrush stood in orange pigment
under the street 3
pretty boys doing makeup
off the mirror in the Piccadilly slam's

grimed limbic sanctuary -
you could pick up as lickable
honey, anyone from anywhere
got looks and they had
a hybrid of street tough and glam

reprehensibly dodgy
like yesterday's sleep
coming back tomorrow. Get the eyes right
shocking off commuters
by personalised effrontery

in a toilet's grey fluorescent bloom
the tube's authenticated thunder
absorbed back into hot ozone
with a cheap vodka reek
of the city's back brain. They're always there

3 little subversive chancres
selling sex as modular currency
scramming upstairs to the rained on street
coded into me like a clip
as close as I'll get to reality.

Last Red Rose before World War Three

Squeezed out, urbanised, burgundy hottie,
scrolled, layered sensuality,
imagine seeing it as an alien
through hallucinated phosphenes
in from green Mars, the Mars we'll never find

like photos of the dead newly arrived
in dissociative state
from motion-sickness.
A beetroot-red aggrandised fist

with the hem of an apple pie
it's full in the face
vermillion smack

like its name is Sylvia Plath.
Got into a November corner
the light's yellow as a banana
and predictive of World War 3

whichever side you're on
you're a loser, but a red rose
counts for a planet this close up
a second giant red sun risen

coldly immaculate on Downshire Hill.



Jeremy Reed, born on a chip of rock off the French Normandy coast has been for decades Britain's most dynamic, adventurous, controversial and futures poet. Called by the Independent 'British poetry's glam, spangly, shape-shifting answer to David Bowie', his poetry, fiction and performances of his work are singularly inimitable in their opposition to grey mainstream poetry. He has published over 40 books of poetry, fiction and non-fiction, winning prestigious literary prizes like the Somerset Maugham Award, and was on his coming to live in London in the 1980s patronised by the artist Francis Bacon. His biggest fans are J.G. Ballard, Pete Doherty and Bjork who has called his work 'the most beautiful, outrageously brilliant poetry in the world.' Jeremy writes about every subject that British poetry considers taboo, glamour, pop, rock, sci-fi, cyber, mutant, gay, drugs, neuroscientific, the disaffected and outlawed, and the fizzy big city chemistry of the London in which he lives and creates. His performances solo, or with The Ginger Light are unrivalled in intensity. In recent years he has published the first book-length poem on *Elvis Presley, Heartbreak Hotel* (Orion), *Saint Billie* (Enitharmon) a book-length poem on Billie Holiday, *Orange Sunshine* an epic poem on 1960s pop culture, *Duck and Sally Inside* and *This is How You Disappear* (both Enitharmon) a book of elegies for dead and missing friends, a biography of Anna Kavan *Stranger On Earth*, a novel *The Grid* (Peter Owen) and his book of poetry *Piccadilly Bongo* contained a 4 track CD from the singer Marc Almond. Amongst his many forthcoming publications are *John Stephen King of Carnaby Street* and the 1960s look and a book of sci-fi poems *Honey I Need* with an introduction by J.G. Ballard.

www.jeremyreed.co.uk



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