

# LUNCH



002

Welcome to our second summer LUNCH.

Suitable for vegetarians and vegans.

# LUNCH 002

Welcome to the second edition of Lunch. Our magazine is full of the poetry created by poets who are friends of Poetry Kit Courses.

This edition edited by Jim Bennett

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Cover picture - Tea in the Bedsitter 1916 – Harold Gilman 1875-1919

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BILL COTTER

**STORM OVER LAKE CONDAH**

He lopes above the lake, the unwanted thought,  
There, where the land and the sky run together  
And where the petals of the blood-stained sun  
Close upon themselves  
And where the shallow water shivers among the reeds.

Now, he is perched high on the branch of a wattle.  
His glossy wings are folded,  
His hooded head is thrust out  
And his dry, rattling stone voice is calling,  
Calling upon the cold, featureless moon to appear  
And whiten the lake.

**BILL COTTER**

**HIGH COUNTRY DRY**

A few stringy clouds hang above the hills  
And the 'roo skin patches of dry, cleared land.  
Perched on a burnt- out stump, a raven spills  
A flood of stony notes that creep, expand  
Across the gullies, then lumbers off, fanned  
By the festering wind and the late sun.

Beside a spider legged windmill sits one  
Grey rabbit, and, bristling with defiance,  
A barrel headed bull roars at the sun,  
His eyes focused on the smoky distance.

Stock tracks meander through the dry clay beds.  
Spikes of bracken fern glint in the harsh light.  
Old man stringy barks shake their shaggy heads  
And long deserted creeks are lined with bright,  
Shingle back stones. High up, a whistling kite  
Swings in lazy loops, props then wheels away.

A grumbling truck passes, loaded with hay.  
Mud blisters crack on the surface of dams  
And on Lake Glenmaggie the shadows play  
Over stumps where secretive bream once swam.

**BILL COTTER**

**GIBBER PLAIN**

The blowtorch sun blasts the blue  
Metallic sky. Spiked and sparking,  
Copper gibbers gleam and glance.  
Salt bush, silver skinned,  
Wallows in the dust. Death drains  
The bell-blue curve, bends the spine  
Of hills hung, heaving and spent,  
Parting, polishing the bones of the past.

**BILL COTTER**

**DESERT STORM**

Dawn nudges the darkness aside  
And a thick light slowly fills the gullies.  
Clouds and thunder come tramping together.  
Lightning spurts in pasty yellow.  
Afternoon rain creates mini craters smelling of mud.  
A feral bull camel chews its cud,  
Unconcerned  
And a kangaroo, grey as weathered hessian,  
Props against a rock.

Now, dusk wipes the sky clear.  
The moon rises, clean as a washed plate.  
A burrowing frog, patient for many months,  
Blinks, licks the mud, lumbers up.

The camel chews on  
And the kangaroo lopes leisurely away.

BILL COTTER

**A BEACH TOO FAR**

Death of a shearwater

The minute detonations of his heart  
And the deep, bedded history of his race  
Drove him on.  
But, tonight, salt spittle, foam,  
Wind and bursts of whip sharp lightning  
Conspired against him.  
The ragged skeins of his companions struggled on,  
Soon lost in the tangle of dusk and rain.  
But he, responding to a will not really his own  
And an auto pilot buried somewhere in his brain,  
Persisted, rising, falling, rising again,  
Until, with the beach spider web thin ahead,  
He was taken, swung high,  
Brandished and tossed,  
A trophy,  
Crucifix dark,  
Into the sea.

## PETER EMERY

### **Christina's World**

(from Andrew Wyeth's painting)

I briefly pause from scrabbling uphill -  
succulent wild blueberries  
that grow down in the Dell  
so tasty so worth a little effort

Today as I look all around me  
I realise how much I love this place  
coastal Maine in all her summer glory  
and I wonder how I got to be this lucky

High on the ridge stands  
Grandpa Hathorn's mansion  
often called the house of many windows  
each one frames a fresh view of my world

OK so my legs are next to useless  
I choose to not let that be who I am  
prefer to keep my eyes on wide horizons  
I'm Grandpa's girl my spirit is a sailor

## PETER EMERY

### **The Look**

(from *Mrs Mounter at the Breakfast Table* – Gilman)

Mrs. Mounter portrayed as I remember her  
that famous look said more than many words  
you'd get one if you were late to pay the rent  
she'd seldom choose a verbal confrontation  
preferred a look determined disappointment  
you'd feel reprimanded were not late again

that look reminds me so much of my father  
who seldom raised his voice far less his hand  
there was no need whenever I'd upset him  
he'd *look* and I would question what I'd done  
no avoidance through resenting his behaviour  
unnervingly effective the power of that look

PETER EMERY

**my neighbour's wife**

I recall that summer when I turned seventeen  
weeks of endless sunshine and girls  
in mini-skirts and skimpy tops  
learning how to play with sex and femininity  
and awesome power to keep lads on a string

raging hormones guaranteed their tricks  
would work on me I gave those girls  
especially Miss Jenny Kay  
every last ounce of encouragement  
to make me dance I loved to be their puppet

but Jenny Kay had competition  
my room looked out on our back yard  
and next door's too where a young wife  
*you can call me Rachel* sunbathed privately  
safe from any prying eyes excepting mine

where Jenny's charms were girlish and naive  
Rachel was in every way a woman nubile  
a fantasy dream lover fit for any teenage lad  
in reality I knew she scared me just a little bit  
so I kept my Rachel safely for my dreams

## FIONA H

### Flames

My heart took one fell swoop  
As you shot me  
from the sky  
And into your fist

As you shot me  
I try to rise  
And into your fist  
You make me fall

I try to rise  
You watch me cry  
You make me fall  
The words are clear

You watch me cry  
Once held so dear  
The words are clear  
My diatribes

Once held so dear  
Your bonfire pit  
My diatribes  
Ashes of spit

Your bonfire pit  
Flames all out  
Ashes of spit  
My hands are split

Flames all out  
As I scrape you from my tongue  
My hands are split  
and wonder what it was all about

As I scrape you from my tongue  
from the sky  
and wonder what it was all about  
My heart took one fell swoop

## FIONA H

### **Baby Bird**

Before leaving the house with my daughter  
I turn on the radio;  
Callers talk of trips to Cuba.

Another muddy March morning on the horizon  
Million literal miles from Cuban colour  
Tiny hummingbirds in brilliant skies

We take our steps outside  
Join early risers for school and work  
Cars flying precariously close

Daughter safely delivered  
I put on ear phones to drown the sounds  
Splat! A small broken egg on the path

Church bell strikes nine  
Glancing upwards I wonder  
If it fell from a nest

Tragedy at this early Hour  
Man hurries past, Icarus perfumed  
While I go Home to write.

An aura of emptiness  
egg's final resting place  
Another promise lost.

FIONA H

**Fallen Night**

Pack up your breakdown and take it  
Far from where we savour  
Your fall from Grace a favour;  
a fervour of morning butterflies.  
Every time I see me falling  
To see you in colour;  
not so black or white.  
How unbecoming this ache becomes.  
Darker the night falls  
Slower the tuning in time  
Breakdowns and breakups;  
no easy way  
to save us from falling  
into ourselves.  
Night of tragic comedy  
Pick me ups for passion  
tranquil pain killer joke  
Coleridge and Cohen  
for the comedown  
Turn me back on.  
Catch me when we fall  
Back to the warm dark wave  
Before night is gone.

## FIONA H

### **Selkie**

Suspended in Time, I am twelve  
Floating face down in shallow sea  
Cold, clear, salty, the taste on my lips  
As I respire.  
Outspread limbs  
turn me around again  
Opening my eyes underwater  
Sun's heat on my back  
Summers always seemed longer and hotter.  
Submerged sound;  
Overhead a plane's flight  
I watch its shadow on underwater sand  
Rippling shape  
I am weightless.  
Calm waves reflecting light,  
Time ticks slowly as it likes.  
Mother sitting by the shore  
Father crosses himself, then swims across the tide.  
A seal watching us on sea-weeded rock  
Sheds its skin in imitation.

## SHEREE MACK

### **‘we'll show you you're a woman’\***

*in memory of Eudy Simelane*

*The minute you see likeness is when you realise that no matter what you're going through in your life, you are not alone*

- Zanele Muholi

- a) On the outskirts of Johannesburg, she is finally cured.
- b) The Namaqualand daisy is in flashy orange bloom.
- c) They say Satan has a hold on her. She is a demon.
- d) I am afraid to be myself.
- e) In a park, on a moonless night,  
they each take their turn to correct her.
- f) The township always smells of *Omo* washing powder,  
even when we have no water.
- g) My mother says I must take a boyfriend.  
She invites the Pastor into our home to convert me.
- h) No way a finger or tongue can satisfy you, he says.  
You need one of these to sort you out, he says  
as he pulls down his pants.
- i) They find her naked body in a creek,  
stabbed 28 times, including the soles of her feet.
- j) No one is saying anything. No one has been caught.
- k) I sense the guys in my neighbourhood are planning something. They cannot accept me  
choosing a woman. My day will come.

\*‘We'll show you you're a woman’ was the title of a report compiled by Human Rights Watch into the violence and discrimination experienced by black lesbians and transgender men in South Africa.

SHEREE MACK

**What the body remembers**

*a found poem*

*Stop pushing me, fingerprints all over my back.  
I turn because a friend calls my name.*

Death stares from the cracks and corners,  
blood, year after year, remnants of finger sweat.

You have time to watch the birds return to the trees,  
waiting for the storm.

The plushy air of summer thunder.  
Here it comes, in the low lichen coloured light. A ritual.

Quick glances, sideway looks dripped in water.  
A needle threaded with thought. Ash upon their boots.

They search for my body, unwrapping  
and wrapping bundles, little fragile wisps of linen.

Across the river, only one to see my lit face passing.  
Whisper what I remember.

I can't speak of it without feeling.  
It's something found with a white flower.

## SHEREE MACK

*stand on any corner of the fire city, look west to death*

After Eve Ewing

we come from fire city, it's been so for generations.  
we show the whites of our teeth, to put you at ease.  
we real cool\*, sound and safe. down in the ashes of our homes,  
we know how to conceal, the flick of flames,  
through practice. we advise you to not come any closer,  
not to touch our hair, say, or our anointed skin. we know.  
we burn our own lips own before we speak of our tiredness  
and frustrations, before we call out your actions for what  
they really are. don't look at the sun, yes that hot.  
we lie down, spread out ruby, vermillion, red lapping waves,  
thinking of an alternative era when fire kissed truths burn  
our birth into freedom and laughter and love.

\*homage to Gwendolyn Brookes too x.

## SHEREE MACK

### **The Melodrama of Gone With The Wind - Found poem**

Sweeping violins. A Southern Belle, pretty and shallow, chatters on as young men flock around her feet, captive. \*Fiddle de de.\* Relishing in colour, technicolor; rich reds, blues and greens of the gallant Old South. Pan out see mansions surrounding by plantations. Bonnets and ribbons. Dances and horses. Cotton.

Mammies, yes we all need a mammy. If not to to fetch, clean and be loyal, then as a comparison as she be obese, coarse, ugly, but have a shiny, glossy face of contentment as she be the most happy slave alive. See. \*Just hold on and suck in.\*

Silhouetted against a magnificent orange tinged sky, identify the stock figures; the Confederate soldier, the minstrel, the mammy and the spear wielding African savage. Changes are afoot, here comes the war. Men ride off waving their hats in the air, screaming like Indians. The women are left behind with terror in their eyes and excitement in their breasts as they must tend the children and the wounded.

As a wind of flames sweeps through Georgia; menacing reds and oranges against a bleak dark sky swirl and crackle in time with fast ascending music. Real danger and Butterfly McQueen (real name not character name) runs around like a blue arsed fly worrying with no sense or plan.

But turn towards a more intimate scene, with softer reds and misty pinks. And slick black haired anti-hero takes her, the heroine, in his arms, kisses her deeply and leaves her alone on the road to Tara with invalid, newborn and Prissy ( who we have already established is useless). Tears, plenty of tears. Always draws the audience in.

\*Yes'm\*. In hunger, Scarlett digging up dried up roots and tubers down by the slave quarters. She's overcome by a 'niggery' scent and vomits. An epic moment. (There's the assumption I should know what this smells like, what this means?)

But not to worry. The war ends. They marry. He might want to tear her to pieces. She might still think she loves someone else. A child comes along and doesn't stay long. But she was Bonny.

cont..

cont...

Like thick lips and flat noses, against white chiselled features. Grin, keep grinning at the camera and even do a little childish dance in your starched turban. Rustle, rustle red petticoat on under black skirts. Always pleasing her white folk. Is this who I am supposed to identify with? The faithful worker, desexualised so the white family remains safe?

(Not me. I'm with Scarlett, green bonnet, green velvet curtains outfit, red figure hugging evening dress with feathers. I should be kissed and often by someone who knows how.)

\*It's quitting time, quitting time at Tara.\*

Source: <http://www.art21.org/texts/kara-walker/interview-kara-walker-the-melodrama-of-gone-with-the-wind>

## SHEREE MACK

### **How do I touch without gloves?**

The orchard is a rare find.  
I never thought of the blossom.  
The pure smell lingers down the road,  
undulating. From the back,  
she squeals for the hidden dips,  
felt in the core. Always afterwards.

His neck is red. Pains in his head.  
That must be why he seldom smiles.  
I know I put them on a pedestal.  
Yet, I still want what they had.  
How they kept the ice from melting.

The alternative is now ‘Other’.  
She invites me as things get political.  
It reminds me of those actresses  
who accessorise at the awards  
with women of colour.

Perhaps, the sea is history  
and with cobbled streets along the docks,  
I thought we were going somewhere.  
Same images played over and over again,  
the trickster used my face. My skin. My voice.

I say, give me green fields and bleating sheep,  
for I can see behind their stares.  
Some days, I smile them away. Other times,  
I visualise punching their eyes out  
then laughing into the hollow chambers.

KRISS NICHOL

**Big as the Wind**

the morning like you was beautiful  
as it sat wrapped like a special present

eagerly you peeled back the first layer  
deciding on a coastal route  
stopping at Flamborough Head

the bowl of the sky was so blue it hurt  
and the sun breathed mirages

that sprang from parched grass  
only to shift their wobbling  
onto tarmac blurring the road

we walked along crumbling cliffs past  
dislodged stones that huddled like mounds

of milk teeth I caught your Bisto-kid image  
along with slices of that day served up later  
on squares of polished paper

yesterday I watched your eyes glaze over  
heard your laughter still to a frozen silence

and today in this house you never saw your soul  
big as the wind blows through the rooms  
out into the November rain

KRISS NICHOL

**A Day with Grandma**

walking into memories cracks open  
doors to melancholic journeys  
and boiled cabbage childhood

but today happiness calls      in the rush  
of blood that holds us together  
breaks the skin of day      with its simplicity

together we crack eggs      pour milk into Pyrex  
jug of coarse white flour      your pink tongue  
peeking through mocha-coloured lips

bubbles surface and pop in the pan  
of hot butter      the mix solidifies  
is thrown and caught

with equal mix of joy and terror  
I'm imprisoned by the sound of your laughter  
yet freed      to fling wide the windows of now

make new memories

KRISS NICHOL

**In The Evening When the Boats Come In**

trailing nets pregnant with bounty  
a cry shimmers in the sunset

suspends for a moment  
is replaced by shuffling sand  
as the village makes for the shore

grabbing sections of nets  
they pull in unison    singing  
hemming in the catch

while the sea shudders and boils  
from futile escape attempts  
as booty is dragged ashore

nets give birth to rainbow colours  
reflected in the dying sun  
gills gape in ensuing panic

hands grasp slippery tails  
smash heads against rocks  
till twitches and tremors are stilled

and after    by communal fires  
scented with supper    the catch  
is consumed    conch shells blown

sleepy children put to bed

KRISS NICHOL

**Rough Beast**

*“And what rough beast, its hour come round at last  
Slouches towards Bethlehem to be born”*

WB Yeats *The Second Coming*

hefts of humanity bend and beg  
in the writhing heat  
beside bones bunched  
and bundled into cloths  
abandoned in desert graveyards  
presided over by vultures

nearby the Sphinx rises  
to the snip-snap of camera  
its weathered nose  
eroded by time  
disintegrates back  
into the skittering sands

and in the City of the Dead  
where vagrants and dogs are bagged  
and binned by soldiers  
centuries of slouching  
lead to slow slides  
into anarchy then oblivion

KATHRYN WHARTON

Refugee

In dreams she visits her childhood land,  
small limbs curl up in the soft white sand.  
She feels the rain, quick and warm,  
trickle on the skin of her upturned palms.

Orange is the essence of her mother tongue,  
sticky in the air, alive in her lungs,  
fresh from the heart of the market town,  
before the war songs rang.

In dreams metal rattles from the throat of a gun.  
Flesh melts to bone in the heat of the sun.  
She wakes up tall in war's aftermath,  
searching for home, in the cold wet mud.

KATHRYN WHARTON

**If.**

If I could,  
there'd be no lines  
of youthful vigour, no volunteers,  
no conscription, no posters,  
no great adventure.

There'd be no need for desertion:  
no man in no man's land,  
I'd mop up the mud, unmake  
the bombs; white feathers would float  
to the floor.

There'd be no minute's silence,  
no canon of poems  
to mark remembrance.  
If I could, I'd undo the lines.  
Poppies would blow

undisturbed.

KATHRYN WHARTON

**Visiting Bradford's Peace Museum**

Peace folds a white dove  
Torn ribbons in a rainbow  
Hanging in a cloud

On a curve of pearl  
Steel volcano erupting  
Blood evaporates

Arms tied in a knot  
Around a warhead of state  
Nucleus of peace

## KATHRYN WHARTON

### Peace Map

There are no sides

to the walls. Broken  
vein in the heart

of the landscape.

Did you share a joke  
in the mess

where your whisky waits  
spinning  
shattered glass  
to the ground?

You have  
fallen.

N o w  
n e w s   f i r e s   f a s t .

W e a p o n s  
g r o w              r e m o t e .

A                      child

wears a              m a s k .  
Prayers  
are no

a g a i n s t              g o o d  
chlorine              gas .

W o r d s              f r o t h  
from a              m o u t h .

The p e a c e  
m a p  
is t o r n .      a g a p i n g

w o u n d

o n a n a t l a s  
n o b o r d e r s .

H e a r  
a b e l l              t o l l ?

## **POETS BIOGRAPHIES**

### **BILL COTTER**

Bill Cotter's poems and stories have been published in journals and magazines in Australia. Also in New Zealand, England and New Deli, India. He has also had a novel , a short play for voices and a collection of short stories published in Australia. He has won a number of literary awards, including the Melbourne Shakespeare Society's sonnet competition. He is a retired secondary teacher living with his wife in Bairnsdale, Victoria, Australia.

### **PETER EMERY**

Peter is from Greater London although his working life took him all over the world. He started writing many years ago but it is only since his retirement that he has found the time to put some serious effort into his poetry. That effort has become significantly more focussed since studying with Poetry Kit and the results can now be found regularly in 'the poetry press'. Some of Peter's personal favourites have now been brought together in one place under the title 'Watcher'.

### **FIONA H**

Fiona H lives in Ireland and is rather shy so would prefer to let the poems do the talking. She is a former Humanities student; now she studies humanity through creative writing.

### **SHEREE MACK**

Sheree Mack is a freelance writer and visual artist living on the North-East coast of England with her husband and daughter. Her work draws upon her experiences of living in a black woman's body in a predominantly white world. She is currently writing about traveling and working in Iceland as well as the next installment of her creative non-fiction memoir.

### **KRISS NICHOL**

My poetry has appeared in numerous small press magazines, anthologies and online. In addition, I was highly commended in The Federation of Writers' Scotland 2013 Vernal Equinox Poetry Competition, 2013, won third prize in Scottish Association of Writers' *Write Down South Poetry Competition* in Nov 2015, was commissioned to write a poem for Wigtown Book Festival Sept 2016, have appeared in 5 issues of *Southlight* and 4 issues of *Open Mouse*, Poetry Scotland's online magazine. I have published three poetry pamphlets, *The Language of Crows* 2012, *Between Lands* 2013 and *A Suggestion of Bones* 2017, and a sequence of haibun, *Ancient Anchors*, that tells the story of the Earth from the Big Bang to modern day, is awaiting publication.

### **KATHRYN WHARTON**

I am Kathryn Wharton from Baildon. I wrote about the experience of war as part of my dissertation, one poem (not in this selection) came second in the armies Armistice competition. I have been published in two anthologies by Indigo Dreams and my poem 'I am' (about widowhood) was published in Mslexia Sept 2017. I am currently working on new poems.