

EDITORIAL

This summer term I finally had the opportunity to teach a course entitled “The World of Publishing: Publishers, Magazines, Writers, Agents, and Marketing”, something I had envisaged for quite some time. Indeed, the title itself was taken over, or nearly so, from part of a project already accomplished that David Malcolm and I had been commissioned to do for Wiley Blackwell: their *Companion to Contemporary British and Irish Poetry 1960-2015* (forthcoming 2020). One of the aims of the course was to familiarise students with the world of poetry publishing and to persuade them to research the work of personalities and institutions important in this connexion, whom and which I had admired for quite some time.

A spin-off was that I found myself reviewing and starting for the first time fully to appreciate, the position and prestige that Poetry Salzburg, the magazine, and the poets associated with them, have acquired since the turn of the millennium. As we publish from the heart of the European Union, we can only help our poets organise launches and poetry readings, but, regrettably much too rare, we are able actually to attend these occasions, even introduce our poets and host the evening. Lately, we have had, however, the good fortune to gain for our publishing list poets not only excellent in their craft but gifted with the resource, commitment and energy to take upon themselves a large part of the work of promoting their own collections and pamphlets. Our latest publication, *After-Images*, “a love letter to French film maker *Éric Rohmer*” (Chrys Salt), was launched by its author Antony Johae in Colchester in late July. An audience of more than eighty (!) attended the reading on a Saturday evening, an impressive achievement in a world not irresistibly attracted to the delights of poetry and a richly deserved boost for both the author as well as, additionally, his publisher. The launch, it may be added, had already been preceded by two readings at Poetry Wivenhoe and in Canterbury.

Our Poetry Salzburg Pamphlet Series has turned out to be a success story since its inception in 2010 with Paul Green’s *Gutter Talk*. Among the most popular publications so far is Keith Hutson’s *Routines*, a manuscript that William Bedford, a former member of our editorial board, forwarded to me at the time with his endorsement that we *have* to publish “these wonderful poems”. We issued Keith’s pamphlet very quickly, reprinted it twice, and were fortunate in managing to persuade him to join the magazine’s advisory board. Because of Keith’s initiatives as a graduate, we have developed a rather close working relationship with the Writing School at Manchester Metropolitan University. Many students and graduates have

contributed to the magazine and submitted manuscripts for the pamphlet series. This is exactly the kind of development we had envisioned for the series, which was best described by Jackie Kay when she said that “the pamphlet marks a new poet’s potential in a rather dignified way. It’s the wee malt as opposed to the big pint.” The latest “wee malt”, *The Minute & The Train*, was launched by its author John-Paul Burns at the Manchester Writing School in early June. Keith Hutson hosted the evening to introduce “an exciting and genuinely original voice” on the poet’s home pitch.

The Black Cab is another manuscript that was first submitted to Keith by its author John Challis, a Research Associate at Newcastle University, in April 2017. Keith passed it on to me with his explicit recommendation that we publish this “exciting debut” (Sean O’Brien). John’s pamphlet did us proud, being selected by New Writing North for their list of twelve must-read titles by northern authors for Read Regional 2019. This highly successful campaign saw the new titles stocked in libraries across the North, while the authors took part in eighty-five events around the region between March and June 2019. Funded by the Arts Council of England, the campaign was produced in partnership with twenty-two library authorities. John read and discussed his poetry at York St. John University as well as at events hosted by libraries in Hull, Newcastle, Gateshead, and Darlington.

Promoting the work of new poets is just one of our aims. In a previous editorial I drew your attention to another, equally crucial. Two years ago we started to run a section in each successive issue, focusing on the work of a poet of major standing identified with Salzburg. In the present number we continue our championing of significant poets in danger of neglect by publishing Jake Morris-Campbell’s essay on James Kirkup – a young poet’s re-evaluation of a local master, who happens also to be a national and international one. Another important poet, associated with Salzburg, is John Gurney whose four most important books we published twenty-five years ago. His fifty-two sonnets, published as *Meister Eckhart and the Predicate of Light*, will we hope have that effect we aim at, which is expressed with sympathy and realism by Alan Riach at the end of the interview that forms one of the highlights of the present issue: “It would be nice to think you could just turn it around and introduce the work of neglected authors, artists from different parts of the world. A massive amount could be done. And that’s difficult, often, or challenging, at least. But it’s also part of the work we do. Retrieving and renewing the past, and bringing out, hopefully, the best of what’s still to come.”

Wolfgang Görttschacher