

EDITORIAL

I love travelling by train. Especially in Europe. My first journey abroad without my parents was by train to visit my German exchange partner in the Rhineland: the sight of Cologne cathedral rising up across the river in a shower of light as we approached by night is a vision of exotic beauty that has stayed with me all my life. It was the beginning of a new path towards studying European languages, literature and history that helped determine my knowledge of the world, my career as a teacher and my development as a poet.

In the last few years alone trains have carried me to Berlin, Gdansk, Rome, Barcelona, Prague, Paris, Milan, Zürich, and Brussels; in the more distant past to Marseille, Luxemburg, Moscow, Helsinki, St. Petersburg/Leningrad, Novgorod, Warsaw, Torun and Turin. From the train I have seen trees growing out of the ruins of what would be rebuilt as the Bundestag of a reunited Germany; I have seen the medieval towers of Torun rising like Camelot from a river mist; I have crossed the peaceful river Bug only to discover the military might of what was then called the Soviet Union hidden in the woods beyond.

How does this relate to poetry? Well, here is how: over the years the trains have become for me a metaphor for what happens in the exchange of literature, ideas and, in the case of a magazine like *Poetry Salzburg Review*, poetry. People talk on trains in a way they don't on planes and can't when everyone is in a car on the roads. There is something adventitious, creative and spontaneous about these meetings: a French teacher of German or Italian opening the minds of their pupils as mine was opened on that journey to Cologne; a Polish chemist sympathizing over Brexit; a young couple taking their baby to see a grandmother in Bulgaria; a Dutch teenager talking in Italian to his friends from Sicily. There are shared experiences of good and bad: delays and detours, sudden awe at a sighting of the unexpected, strange and fruitful juxtapositions of varied landscapes. Travelling across country like this explains both the permeability and tragedy of borders; it explains wealth and poverty, war and peace; it illuminates influence and highlights the need for reciprocity and communication. It also reminds us, an apparent paradox that is only superficially so, how English language and poetry has been shaped by the myriad cultural riches it has encountered and absorbed over the centuries.

Poetry Salzburg Review embodies and fosters all this. The month of November 2024 saw the launch of the magazine's new translation series, with Timothy Adès's translation of *Autumn Fire*, Ricarda Huch's last collection of poetry. She is of major significance in several fields in the first half of

the twentieth century: for her work as a pioneer woman historian of German Romanticism, of the Holy Roman Empire and Prussia; as an anti-Nazi thinker and agitator; and as a poet and novelist in her own right.

Poetry Salzburg Review continues to introduce an exemplary range of perspectives to a wider audience: to cite just some instances, recent issues have contained a detailed analysis by Glyn Pursglove of the experimental Welsh poet Peter Finch, demonstrating the latter's debt to such diverse influences as Rabelais, Philip Glass, Allen Ginsburg and Dada; new work by the American poet William Virgil Davis that references the Orkney poets, George Mackay Brown and Edwin Muir; a very beautiful modern meditation by the Wiltshire poet David Lukens, on the theological virtue, hope; J. M Solonche's tight forms and deceptively simple language that suddenly open out into vast meditations on time, the narrator's house stretching into infinity "where our house has become / a castle the size of a city/ The ceilings are lost in the clouds"; Sheenagh Pugh's evocative explorations of the Shetland landscape. This is rich and variegated poetic country.

Poetry Salzburg Review 42 is no exception. The range impresses, as usual: you will find here work by poets from all over the world, and with very different poetic affinities. To single out particular contributions is perhaps invidious, and remains of course a personal choice. But I would like to mention Vuyelwa Carlin, a poet whose work deserves to be better known; Philip Gross, whose most recent collection from Bloodaxe, *The Shores of Vaikus*, 2024, goes in search of his Estonian paternal cultural inheritance; Nolo Segundo, who first started publishing his poems recently in his 80s; the versatile Irish poet Fred Johnston, who died in September 2024: a writer who bestrid the cultural, religious and political divisions in the island of Ireland; and the up and coming Cornish poet, Vivienne Tregenza. Readers will find plenty more.

The reviews too underline the eclectic nature of *Poetry Salzburg Review*: we have a major retrospective of the work of the multi-faceted James Kirkup, a significant poet in his own right and a pioneer translator of modern Japanese poetry; Lisa Samuels on Angela Leighton, whose work, both critical and poetic, challenges contemporary nostrums about what poetry should be; and Martyn Crucefix on the *New Collected Poems* of the prodigious and mercurial Jeremy Reed, whose inspirations have been the poète maudit and glam rock, Blake and Baudelaire, surrealism and science fiction.

Poetry Salzburg Review, then, continues to travel across country and bring us revelations from these fruitful and thought-provoking poetic encounters.

Hilary Davies