

# *LINES OF A LIFETIME V*

## 'MEASURING UP'



poems

Bruno Scarfe





August 2017



***MEASURING UP***

**Some of the inside story**

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**A selection of poems from the collection**

***Lines of a Lifetime***

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**BRUNO SCARFE**



With  
*la musa y la motivación*  
in mind



## **INTRODUCTION ‘*Measuring up: some of the inside story*’**

‘*Measuring up: some of the inside story*’ is volume five in the overall collection *Lines of a Lifetime*, following *Cadiz* and the series *Eros I, II and III*.

An additional brief definition of this particular title reads 'a selection of poems on the mind, the senses and the self'. They are concerned with each of these three elements individually, their inter-relationship, and the unknown element beyond or within which defies analysis ... some would say the spirit.

As with the previous volumes, though it has at times been easy to decide which poems to include (as is the case with the sets *Mind the monkey!* and *No nonsense, now!* plus a few other pieces), some inclusions may prompt disagreement. As for deciding on the exclusions, well where do you begin? It has been argued that 'Metric feats in S minor ...' (vols. VI and VIII) obviously deserves to be included here, yet to me that piece is too externally orientated to qualify. But one or two pieces in *Cadiz*, a number of pieces in the *Eros* series, and some others in vols. VI to XI could qualify. Yes, this is definitely 'a selection ...' only, affected by the requirement that I present the poems by subject and my own perception that there can be too much duplication.

The poems contained in this particular selection were written in Cadiz, Melbourne and Salamanca, with the majority being Cadiz ('Sense of loss, loss of the senses' though written in Cadiz, harks back to my time in Australia). The poems in this volume to have been published are '*Desengaño, esperanza y muerte*' and '*Soledad*', appearing in the U.K. within the year or immediately after.

## **INTRODUCTION General: *Lines of a Lifetime***

I am told I wrote my first poem 'Summer', when I was eight.

It strikes me now as embarrassingly flawed. I seemed to think that swallows landed on the ground and, a little while later and at another place I seemed to think I could recognize a particular swallow ... well, I ask you! Not to mention the matter of describing a cat I claimed to be unable to see ... Yet my father was delighted at this effort. Why? I suppose he considered these ingenuous aspects as secondary, reflecting a child's psychology where reality may come second to the wish and where time sequences are not of the essence. I can feel though that the poem has a sense of rhythm ... actually rhythms, and all over the place, but rhythms nevertheless. I believe he used the poem when lecturing on poetry, possibly making some of these points.

All so embarrassing. And yet there can be no doubting the positive effect his pleasure had on me. Later, during the rest of my school years, I continued to receive his encouragement, and from his mother a little reward which helped supplement my meagre pocket money. Yes, truth will out. So that's how my poetry began ... and continued ... and continues, for even now there can be errors of fact, and controversy regarding suitability of subject and taste, not to mention techniques and presentation.

When, a few years ago, I decided it might be worthwhile at last to bring together and present my poetry, I decided to call it *Lines of a lifetime*, and organised the poems alphabetically by title. This would make for a random reading which would avoid pedantic chronological sequencing and the limitations imposed by an artificial grouping of subjects. But this was objected to, and I was

urged to arrange the poems by subject: not at all easy ... as many poems fall into a number of subject categories, leading either to perceived misrepresentation or to obvious duplication. Tough. The total collection now appears under the original title, above, but with these 11 subtitles: 1) 'Cadiz: people, places and situations', 2) 'Eros – foibles of the flesh', 3) 'Eros – heavings of the heart', 4) 'Eros – in absentia', 5) 'Measuring up: some of the inside story', 6) 'Mixed blessings: food, drink and quirks of the table', 7) 'The Natural World – heaven and earth', 8) 'The Natural World – the bestiary I', 9) 'The Natural World – the bestiary II', being cattributes A-Z, and others, 10) 'Words at play: games with words expressed in verse', 11) 'Wrestling at dawn or, Juvenilia'.

Hopefully, these subtitles and the accompanying comments will provide some insight into the range and nature of experiences I thought fit to express in verse. The poems, covering the period 1947 to the present, include ones written or conceived in the U.K., Australia, New Zealand, France, Spain, Germany and India. The majority are in English, many are in Spanish and there is a handful in other languages dead and alive.

To

*New College Choir School y Ampleforth College, y las  
universidades de Salamanca y de Oxford, y amigos y conocidos  
escogidos – sin querer identificar a ningún profesor ni amigo  
puesto que tantos me han echado una mano  
all thanks*



## **MEASURING UP: Some of the Inside Story – a selection of poems on the mind, the senses and the self**

The coffee affair

Dental divulgence I and II (to ‘Milagros’ and ‘Amparo’)

*Desengaño, esperanza y muerte*

Loss of illusions

Mind the monkey! 1: “Flibbertigibbet ...”

Mind the monkey! 2: “Happy-go-lucky ...”

Mind the monkey! 3: “Hare-Brained ...”

Mind the monkey! 4: “ ... Jack-in-the-box ...”

Mind the monkey! 5: “Lazy Susan ...”

*Nada*

No nonsense, now! 1: At home, but where?

No nonsense, now! 2: The five counsellors and the jailbird

No nonsense, now! 3: Gifts of Hearing

No nonsense, now! 4: Gifts of Sight

No nonsense, now! 5: Gifts of Smell

No nonsense, now! 6: Gifts of Taste

No nonsense, now! 7: Gifts of Touch

No nonsense, now! 8: Of mortal matters, and a spirited reply

No nonsense, now! 9: A time for everything

No nonsense, now! 10: Who pays the Piper?

*¿O?*

Point of departure

A question of identification

Real

Self portrait (analytical inventory of parts)

Sense of loss, loss of the senses (to Barbara Fleming)

*Soledad*

*Sombra*

To squander today

Vine leaves in autumn (to Judith Rodríguez)

Why say it all?

### **Illustrated**

Mind the monkey! 5, *Nada*, No nonsense, now! 4, 6 and 8, Point of departure, A question of identification, Self portrait, Sense of loss, *Soledad*, To squander today, Vine leaves in autumn



## The coffee affair

It waits in  
suspense, silent but  
warm, to

rest or to  
rouse, then smiles as you  
date it.

When, in a cup,  
it's shed its  
colours, taste, and scent,  
who'll resist  
this loved one's touch?

## Dental divulgence

*To 'Milagros' and 'Amparo'*

### I

Facing, coiled tight like snakes, sleek sets of  
cable tipped with steel, and menacing.  
Ore to be gouged from a rock-face, shakes  
less than teeth to be drawn from a jaw.  
The drill bites screeching into the teeth  
then gags the tongue with rubble and grit.

More controlled – no eyes, no hands – than hers  
as she drills, and fills, and polishes.

Old fears come first; the anaesthetic's  
next; real pain? for hours, or days, comes ..... last.

## Dental divulgence

### II

Isabel, the dentist,  
I named 'Dolores';  
but later, confident,  
called her 'Remedios';  
then, finally, impressed –  
made her 'Milagros'.  
(At some stage I could have  
mentioned her perfect  
Andalusian

features: petite, black hair,  
olive skin, curved white  
of eyes cradling  
pupils deep as the sky, and still.)  
María José, her aide,  
I named 'Amparo',  
and kissed her on the cheeks  
on her last day there.

## Desengaño, esperanza y muerte

Espuelas de odio me herían el ánimo,  
hojas toledanas me rasgaban la vista,  
cartuchos de sangre me aniquilaban.

Pétalos crespos de luz latiendo  
se derriten en nimbos  
que besan los labios  
de mi ser fugitivo.  
¿Me diste tú, Plaza, la bienvenida?  
¿Eras tú, Madre, que me concebiste  
desde el humo  
y desde las llamas  
que me asfixiaban  
en la estaca  
del brutal desengaño?

Pasean Dominicos, blanquinegros,  
ondeando sus mantos medievales,  
y llevan prendidos en cintas barrocas  
democráticos sueños de amor y de paz.

Remaches de sol salpican los ojos  
de las escopetas  
de la ley  
que vigila.  
Dan las doce de la mañana,  
y rezongan campanas  
que siempre sueñan  
en cuántos cayeron para salvarse.  
Huyen las sombras claroscuras,  
descansan los dardos de la disciplina:  
chillidos metálicos

de satánicos coches  
me machacan la vida,  
me traspasan el alma y me sepultan.

Y en los oídos del cadáver  
vibrarán los ecos que nunca duermen  
de los cien mil ciegos y las gitanillas.

## Loss of illusions

To grow old is to be freed,  
to be freed after watching as their branches reached  
inspired, for the sky.

See the smoke? ghostly in the twilight, climbing to the clouds.

To grow old is to be freed,  
to be freed when you've learnt that they were damned to earn  
derision and hatred.

Taste the smoke, gorge hunger on this hollow fruit of dreams.

To grow old is to be freed,  
to be freed after the interminable pain  
of pruning, uprooting, and setting them on fire.

Smell the smoke, anaesthetize despair, stifle hope.

To grow old is to be freed,  
to be freed as they writhe in flames,  
collapse to ash, dissolve to smoke .....

shapeless, silent, anonymous in the night.



# Mind the monkey! 1

Flibbertigibbet,  
all over the place!  
fiddles and fidgets  
and fumbles away.

Flibbertigibbet  
loves Tittle-tattle:  
she's won the Midget  
Tongue Twister Hagggle.

Flibbertigibbet  
chats with the riff-raff,  
soaking up snippets  
of colourful gaffes.

Flibbertigibbet  
– oh dear, him again! –  
he laughs, and pivots,  
and leaps in the rain.

Flibbertigibbet's  
poor head's in a daze.  
It knows it lives a  
life lacking an aim.

Flibbertigibbet  
skips around blithely.  
Nothing inhibits  
his acting wildly.

## Mind the monkey! 2

Happy-go-lucky  
with never a care,  
hasn't a worry  
he thinks he can spare.

Happy-go-lucky  
takes things in his stride;  
'unknowns'? they're funny,  
if seen from inside.

Happy-go-lucky  
just idles around;  
he only hurries  
when the time's run out.

Happy-go-lucky  
has no umbrella;  
he finds life sunny  
under the weather.

Happy-go-lucky  
has a rule of thumb:  
"take ideas, roughly,  
with a pint of rum".

Happy-go-lucky  
enjoys roundabouts;  
"swings", he says glumly,  
"aren't nearly as sound".

## Mind the monkey! 3

Hare-Brained, though hamstrung  
and nettled, to boot,  
brings home the bacon,  
quite rashly, on foot.

Scatter-Brain ran a  
ground, when he forgot  
he'd swapped his cata-  
maran for a lot.

Feather-Brain drains rye  
crackers, scrubs the fridge  
and dusts the plates, eyes  
on her offal dish.

Hare-Brained says, "because  
they taught us spare time  
doesn't count, we lost –  
just, by a hair line".

Scatter-Brain says, "no  
bus sways if over  
crowded – subways don't,  
if clouded over".

Feather-Brain weathers  
– what-d'you-call-it? – 'life',  
a breeze, at leisure:  
she's that way inclined.

## Mind the monkey! 4

Though Jack-in-the-box  
has no brains at hand,  
they'll do for the shock  
he lands with a wham.

Jack-in-the box makes  
quite a commotion;  
you'll hear his knock shake  
scales off the ocean.

Jack-in-the-box tricks  
the adult and child.  
His cap is off quick-  
er than you can smile.

Though Jack-in-the-box  
has little to say,  
it's sound as a clock  
with the time o'day.

Jack-in-the-box is  
all noise and no thought,  
his ideas popped in  
a hole with no floor.

Though Jack-in-the-box  
has no time for chat,  
he'll deal you a stock  
conundrum off pat.





## Mind the monkey! 5

Lazy Susan spins  
(slowly), shows her bliss  
when she meets a dish  
that she can service.

Lazy Susan saves  
time, meets the guests, turns  
and circles, and makes  
square meals successful.

Lazy (!) Susan saw  
pepper foiled and on  
his knees (for assault),  
the vinegar gone.

Lazy Susan's days  
are numbered: T.V.  
meals save so much space,  
and are so 'easy'!

Lazy Susan wants  
to turn the tables:  
– table her turn as  
one of the faces.

Lazy Susan shud-  
ders: think of the East!  
A thousand and one  
spices – at each meal!





# Nada

Me llamo 'Nada',  
y nada empiedra los kilómetros de mi existencia.

En nada sueño,  
a través de los siglos grises del crepúsculo.

En nada pienso  
y no siento nada,

y mi ánimo es una hipótesis  
que jamás se queja,  
que no llora nunca.

Flor de mi esperanza,  
nadie lo es.

Espuela de mi ser,  
no lo es nada.

Llevo anulado el corazón,  
soy la sombra de la negación.

Ciega sobrevivencia en el calabozo de los cíclopes,  
existo,  
cual ángel ebrio  
en un lagar de infierno.

# No nonsense, now! 1

(At home, but where?)

In chorus:

“Hi there!” they yelled, spun  
round, cried –

“try to find  
some space of welcome  
for us”.

But Taste and Touch,  
Hearing, Sight  
and Smell, left empty-  
handed. ‘I’,  
though in, was ‘out’.

## No nonsense, now! 2

(The five counsellors and the jailbird)

“What better  
than help you take note  
of things

in conflict  
with your welfare? so  
send a

guide now, and show  
us .....” “My room?  
Will you find me in  
my live tomb  
of flesh and bone?”

# No nonsense, now! 3

(Gifts of Hearing)

Satchmo, Kraus,  
Carmen Amaya,  
Ferrier,

took their turn  
to soothe, or fire,  
or rouse.

A peal of bells,  
organs, horns –  
struck chords, no less than  
waves – windborn –  
and breaths of shells.





No nonsense, now! 4  
(Gifts of Sight)

They saw all  
and sundry, bestowed  
gifts strange,

filmed in planes:  
mirrors misled no  
mortal.

Eyes, brought to mind  
visions, truths –  
which, without insight,  
were just views  
through half closed blinds.

## No nonsense, now! 5

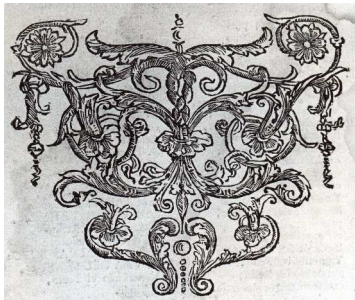
(Gifts of Smell)

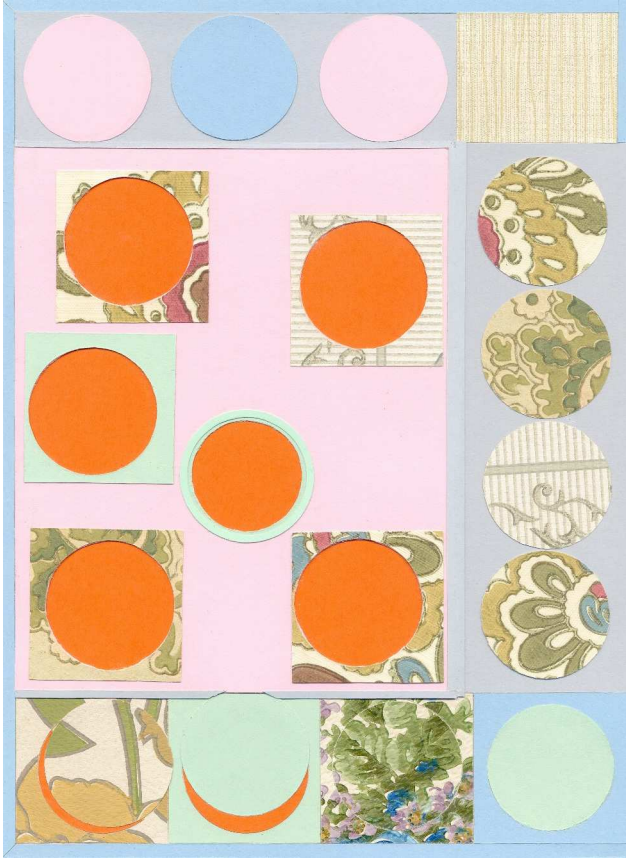
Bread – baking,  
coffee freshly ground,  
warm toast,

stood for home:  
like incense, in crowds  
praying.

Hay, and wood smoke,  
grass and earth,  
were fragrant foils to  
pomanders,  
and phials of gold.







# No nonsense, now! 6

(Gifts of Taste)

Time and heat,  
garlic, pepper, oil  
and salt,

helped transform  
food – fried, roasted, boiled  
and steamed.

A cheese, a mead,  
wine, liqueur,  
and bread? They're 'just' grapes,  
wheat, milk, pure  
herbs, and honey!

# No nonsense, now! 7

(Gifts of Touch)

Cheeky tongues  
have fuelled and fanned a  
hundred

flames, plundered  
homes, stilled hands and hearts  
in one.

Frost, wind, and heat  
pulverized,  
rains made mud: .... gave it  
all a life  
– with tongue in cheek.





## No nonsense, now! 8

(Of mortal matters, and a spirited reply)

“He takes his  
time to answer now”,  
they said.

“His grey head’s  
worn, his heart’s burnt out  
weighing

rhymes and reasons.”

“‘Heart’? or ‘head’? –

They’re mine. But ‘me’? I’m  
far from dead:

I’m the real one.”

## No nonsense, now! 9

(A time for everything)

“We’ve brought furs,  
jasmine, mangos, flutes  
at dawn,

crowds that mourn,  
chlorine, aloe juice,  
and ... dirt.”

“You’ve let me choose  
yes, between  
desires and needs – but  
didn’t steer  
me through the rules.”



# No nonsense, now! 10

(Who pays the Piper?)

They arrived  
in a body, re-  
minding

me why it  
mattered. I deferred  
reply.

They grumbled: “You’re  
out of touch!”  
“Just ‘views’! .....what ‘taste!’” and  
“so much *guff!*”

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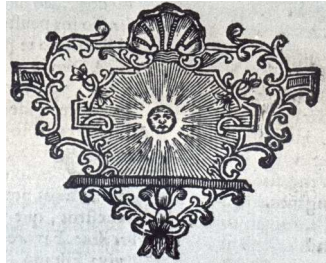
‘I’ call the tune.

¿O?

Limosna,  
callada pide,  
quieta;

te niegas,  
y ni le dices  
'hola'.

Sin embargo  
discutes  
contigo; eres  
o, ¿cutre?  
o, ¿sensato?.

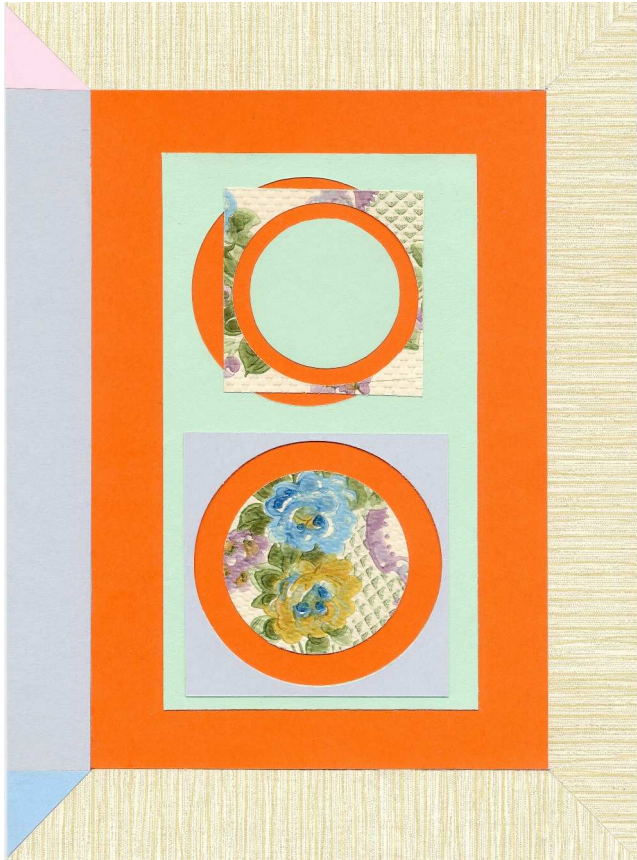




## Point of departure

Through my two eyes,  
outside I see  
a nose,  
two hands,  
two feet:  
my feet, my hands, my nose.

How, though, am I  
to see inside  
and what,  
then, would I see?  
Would it be mine?  
If so,  
wherever can 'I' be?



## A question of Identification

Were I to lose my sense of taste  
and sense of smell,  
if touch and feel found no reply,  
if hearing went  
and I went blind –  
well, would there then be less of me?

The 'I' inside, the 'I' no eye  
can find  
(not yours, not mine) –  
would be there,  
still.

# Real

Of course

we hear

a hum

of cars,

the thump and roll of distant drums,

clash of cymbals

and call of brass,

a man deranged expressing rage,

much kitchen clattering

next door,

and barking

(off).

Yes,

feel them, Thomas, if you must -

these sounds are each and everyone

part of this world

we see

and touch.

How is it,

though,

that *thoughts*,

intangible,

can equal or exceed

such noise outside?







## Self portrait (analytical inventory of parts)

Now, on the minus side we have:  
eyebrows, teeth, stomach and 4 toes;  
and on the plus side, yes, we have:  
2 arms, 2 legs, my hair, 1 nose.  
The rest now, neither good nor very bad,  
await a rating, but I'll have to choose  
a moment  
when my mood's neither buoyant nor depressed.

I see:

2 eyes, 2 ears,  
1 mouth, 2 lips, 1 chin (!),  
eyelashes (x), 2 cheeks,  
1 forehead and 1 beard  
(a beard, I think, goes in);  
the neck's on the shoulders,  
there's a back to the chest,  
but Willy? he's hard to pin down;  
2 hands and 2 feet,  
10 fingers, 6 toes,  
2 elbows, 2 knees –  
and a bum (does that count as 1?);  
the skin's one and many,  
for while some parts are trim,  
some others are flabby.

So what are my chances, at sixty-two,  
of dances and outings with a floozie –  
like you?



## Sense of loss, loss of the senses

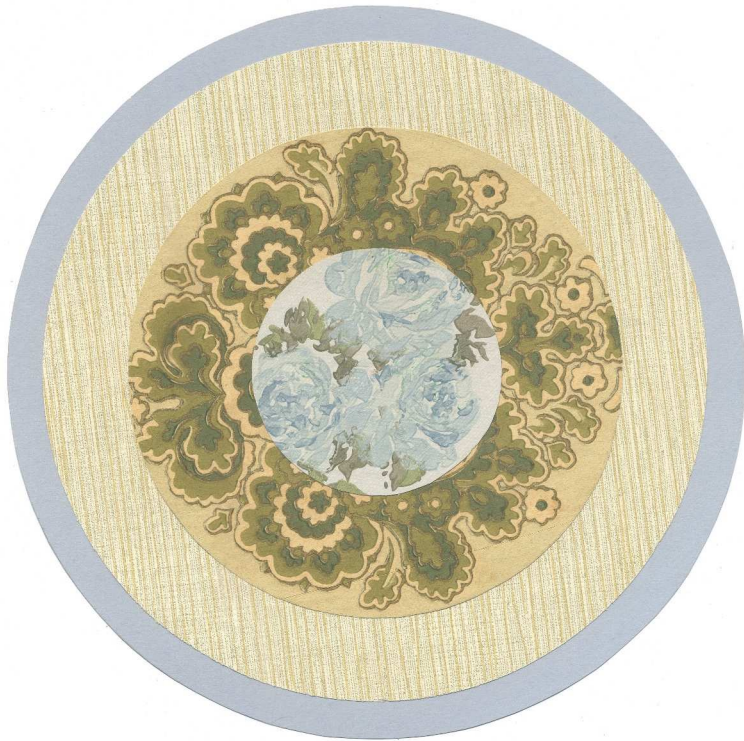
*To Barbara Fleming*

A taste, a touch, is all you need to have  
to set in motion change, which – however  
imperceptible at first – in time will  
take not simply wine and glass, but stone, and  
you.

Inhale the fragrance of a rose, a bowl  
of pot-pourri, a wooden camphor chest:  
some perfume lingers days, some – months, some – years,  
then nothing's left. Though all you do is breathe,  
it goes, like you.

I knew a cottage once, with cedars, pines,  
and fruit, which – like an island – had a stream  
all round: a site to live and love, for life.  
Cat and rooster, hens, ducks and ducklings, spoke  
their thoughts; in the wind the cedars sighed, and  
by night and day the water whispered, past.

The sights and sounds made magic in my mind.  
I looked and listened, took part, respected  
the rituals of the show. Still, in time,  
though nothing seemed to change, the magic ceased.



## Soledad

Solo, en la mano carcomida de la vida,  
solo, en las cadenas de mi sombra centinela,  
nunca tan solitario me sentí,  
sin amor de amigo ni de mí.

Por galerías de lluvia y niebla  
mi cuerpo, inconsciente, tropieza.  
Guerrero desterrado, mi ánimo  
volando va hacia la mar.  
Y mi alma, por sombras diabólicas condenada,  
de cadalso a cadalso huye, espantada.

Hilo, en tres segado, dividido,  
cada célula de mi ser abandonada,  
aquí quedo, tres veces menos que la Nada.

Por la Plaza cruzan pasos de agonía,  
y entiendo que Uno hay,  
más solo todavía.

Viernes Santo

## Sombra

Cara morena, cara morena,  
con pelo de lava y labios de fuego,  
surges, sombra, tan inesperada  
de la puerta lejana adonde corremos.  
Llevas contigo, o Muerte guerrera,  
a los que despierten cuando van a morir.

Cara morena con pelo de lava,  
mis amigos, ellos, no te esperan.  
Ni sufren, ni quieren, y siguen soñando  
hasta la orilla de tu lago castillo  
donde les chupas la letárgica sangre.

Cara morena con labios de fuego,  
Muerte que hieres a los que no ven:  
vestido de duelo, con llaves de vida,  
armado de lágrimas y dardos de amor,  
esclavo centinela, yo sí te espero,  
y cuando me busques, te aniquilaré.







## To squander today

So many years spent  
planning ahead for  
what we will do,  
who we will be  
tomorrow.

Then so many years  
convinced we were trapped,  
circling to the sound  
of the merry-go-rounds.

So many years spent  
trying to bring back  
what we have done,  
whom we have been  
yesterday.



# Vine leaves in autumn

*To Judith Rodriguez*

Don't wonder,  
when the road's long, and lonely, and cold,  
at your eyes – goaded by boredom – running ahead  
till they're stunned by the glow of vine leaves in autumn's  
crucible.

\*\*\*

Tolerate the eye that, hypnotised,  
stumbles in a stupor from drink to drink of dreams:  
of diamond mines  
a lifelong spring of mind and skin  
a lifelong union here, with her  
and communion there, till the end of time, with Him –  
dreams, distilled from pools of translucent rosé wine.

Tolerate the eye that, hypnotised,  
finds in the magnifying glass of memories:  
a glint of gold  
summers of wit and suppleness  
summers with Zoé, touch and go  
and thoughts of rest beyond the grave or, even, there –  
memories, instilled with the pulse and life of embers.

\*\*\*

Beware,  
light snared by clouds or shifting in the wind  
will wake your eyes; then your doubting brain would shame you  
off the road to diagnose and normalise that  
blinding glow.

\*\*\*

Don't go. Trust the verdict of your eyes.  
Despise that nagging urge to probe, or else despair:  
at pulse and sparkle, stilled and dulled;  
riddles of punctures, clustering  
on tattered limbs that snails have spared  
from their glut of amputations;  
remaining skin, and flesh, and bone,  
all cancerously worn, and stained;  
the live and throbbing glow, become  
a lifeless red of cold, coagulated, blood –  
despair, as wine runs dry, and embers cool to dust.

=====

What do you make of these vine leaves, then? memories  
and dreams? or dull despair? and is autumn, winter?  
or spring and summer? Your judgement's the one that counts,  
so judge it all with an eye to your survival.  
If no answer satisfies, and facts are fictions,  
is that good reason to make winter premature?

## Why say it all?

The ancient, the old, the new,  
fill the view from our bed,  
delight the head.

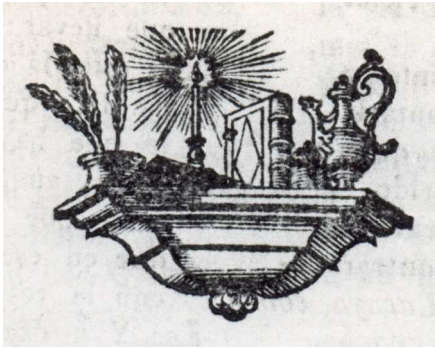
You ask for details? as though  
the answer would say it all –  
could satisfy you  
and tell a truth which could not lie.

Domes – baroque – then, two;  
and T.V. masts, twenty-two;  
and the latest dishes – two  
or, perhaps, three.

You see? the opening lines  
contained the mystery,  
more interesting by far  
than turgid truth.

To hint, or spell it out:  
what shall it be?  
Ages of Cadiz?  
or stone and steel and plastic  
symmetry?

Whispers from the mind  
are dreams and wine,  
points of fact are dry and flat  
and tend to disappoint.





## Notes

### THE POEMS

- The coffee affair** (also features in *Mixed blessings*) Cadiz 2004  
Anyone can distinguish between the rich texture (as here) of an espresso coffee resulting from a technique involving pressure and coffee resulting from traditional gravity feed.
- Dental divulgence I and II** Cadiz 2003  
Poem II started as a footnote. Some further worries ...  
For title, what? ‘Dental fragments’ sounds too much like battles lost.  
‘Jigsaw’, about the interlocking structure of the poem,  
I dropped, because the word too strongly stresses a game with pain.  
‘At the dentist’ – so drab, conventional, caused no second thoughts.  
One title haunts me still:  
‘An eye for a tooth’ – too difficult?
- Desengaño, esperanza y muerte*** (published *Oxford Opinion* v.3 n.8, 1959) Salamanca 1958  
(Particulars on my website – Salamanca) I was bothered by the seemingly passive rôle of the Dominicans, the presence of the Guardia Civil, the memories of the Civil War, and the din of the beggars, gypsies and traffic (then).
- Loss of illusions** Melbourne 1971  
Reflects my position in the clash between traditional as opposed to modern values in the university courses offered and the way in which they were presented. There was continuing pressure to conform to new criteria which were more career and business oriented than educational. I did not fit in.

<b>MIND THE MONKEY!</b>	Cadiz	2004
Series of five pieces where some choice and picturesque English words have been used to try to depict our fickle and wandering minds, as the avatar Sai Baba saw them.		
<b>Mind the monkey 5</b> (also features in Mixed blessings)		
<b>Nada</b>	Salamanca	1958
(Particulars on my website – Salamanca)		
<b>NO NONSENSE, NOW!</b>	Cadiz	2004
Series of ten poems on the senses and their rôle: their relationship to mind and body, the pleasure they afford, the illusions they foster. What are the options?		
<b>No nonsense, now! 5 &amp; 6</b> (also feature in Mixed blessings)		
<b>¿O?</b>	Cadiz	2004
A frequent scene at the supermarket door (and elsewhere, of course) and a challenge. Sai Baba, above, said one should not give beggars money, but food. I've been abused by a beggar, however, for offering just that ... food.		
<b>Point of departure</b>	Cadiz	2001
<b>A question of identification</b>	Cadiz	2001
‘Immortal’ with a capital		
‘I’,		
ought to have the final word somewhere (?)		
in ‘A question of Identification’ – yes?		
<b>Real</b>	Cadiz	2001
Cadiz Holy Week is a bit noisy (in general pleasantly so), Carnival noisier (and of a boisterous sort), while rubbish collection and street hosing mean substantial noise at some stage most nights. But there's noise and ... noise.		
‘Real’, of course, is not all it seems.		
For Thomas,		
‘real’		
lay at his finger tips.		
For me, though,		
‘real’		
is not out there at all:		
it’s inside, loudly calling out.		

<b>Self portrait (analytical inventory of parts)</b>	Cadiz	2001
<p>In ‘Self portrait’ I forgot 2 things:  the mouth comes with a smile  (a plus),  the skin’s got blemishes  (a minus);  oh, and Willy relishes a bit  of hunky-dory thingumajig  (or did).</p>		
<b>Sense of loss, loss of the senses</b>	Cadiz	2001
<p>The cottage, a miner’s from gold rush days, was home for  some years as I ran my bookshop in Foster, Australia.  ‘Nothing ventured, nothing gained’, they say  with certainty, but forget to add:  ‘One man’s gain is another man’s loss’.  Loss and gain, gain and loss – and we dare  pretend to fully grasp their meaning!</p>		
<b><i>Soledad</i></b> (published <i>Vida Hispánica</i> London v.VI n.2, 1958 and <i>Oxford Opinion</i> v.3 n.8, 1959)	Salamanca	1958
<p>(Particulars on my website – Salamanca) The footnote  refers to the Holy Week procession in the plaza Mayor,  visible from my <i>pensión</i>.</p>		
<b><i>Sombra</i></b>	Salamanca	1958
<p>(Particulars on my website – Salamanca)</p>		
<b>To squander today</b>	Cadiz	2010
<b>Vine leaves in autumn</b>	Melbourne	1971
<p>Triggered by a distant view which caught my eye on the  daily drive from home in Eltham to La Trobe University.</p>		
<b>Why say it all?</b>	Cadiz	2001
<p>Set in my flat in calle Beato Diego.  ‘Why say it all?’  The title lets me off, I think,  though (I confess) I failed to list  six washing lines and eighteen pegs  – some green, some pink –  some trousers, sheets, and rows of socks  flapping in the breeze.  (Please let me off!)</p>		



## Notes

### **ILLUSTRATIONS from my collections of *Papegados* and *Cristaletas***

My background as an artist is almost nil. As a schoolboy at Ampleforth in the '50s I managed to exhibit clay models of a cat and elephant, and also an interpretation of a woman of Ancient Crete in poster colours, at the annual 'Exhibition'. At that time I also did some pencilled sketches (I'd forgotten my camera!) to illustrate my travel diary 'Spanish Impressions', excerpts of which were soon to be published. Apart from that I had some success with photographs taken while running my first bookshop in Foster, Australia in the '80s, with close-ups of beach sand formations (b/w), landscapes and studies on reflections (b/w and colour). Generally speaking, though, there was nothing to indicate that anything special might happen as the second millenium got under way.

Having bought a 150 year old house (a 'finca') in Cadiz, Spain, I set about its repair. The 24 room brothel-turned-lodging house was home for six months to a building gang whose foreman caused me grief. He didn't want me around. In the end I thought of salvaging bits and pieces of the peeling wallpapers (spiders, flies and even lizards lurked behind), saying I wanted the papers as a record. This was partly to keep an eye on things (unbeknownst?) and partly to satisfy my pleasure at the designs and colours of the wallpapers ... and the just exposed pastel paint schemes underneath.

It was with time on my hands as I awaited completion of the house renovations at c. San Dimas 10 (known in its brothel days as c. San Telmo 6), seated at my then home in nearby c. Beato Diego, and surrounded by bags bulging with wallpaper remains – that I gradually became aware of growing discontent. This art work, for all that it had been created by small time artists, had now been freed from the walls to which it had been assigned, and was hoping for a chance to make a bit of a show. And there was I, conscious of this find, remembering it *in situ*, and dwelling on its curious designs and stimulating colours – frustrated: all because it lay there at my feet bagged up, invisible.

So I hit on a plan. I would stick samples of the wallpapers onto card and so bring them easily to mind. Days later, having scraped old plaster off the back of

some papers, and washed and dried others (watching in dismay as papers tore and colours ran) I set to work. I assembled my first wallpaper composite, incorporating strips of new card to match the paint underlay which had been so long lost to sight. I liked the result.

But my task was barely completed when I became aware that most of the designs and colour schemes remained unrepresented. So I set about creating another picture, and another and ... another. Which made 30, soon to be followed by a further 30 when two new papers came to light (and much later by six more when I incorporated Roman coins retrieved at Jimena de la Frontera). There were elements of every design and colour. Meanwhile, my pictures developed from basic arrangements of scraps, to considered abstracts and works with a theme. From a picture shape serving to display aspects of functional wallpaper art, I had gone to using wallpaper to create pictures.

What I had made are 'collages'. Dissatisfied at the lack of a Spanish word, I named my collage a *papegado*, from the Spanish for paper (*papel*) and pasted (*pegado*). After all, here we were in Spain, the wallpapers were Spanish, and the transmutation had occurred in Spain ... and Spaniards are open to neologisms. My *papegados* gave rise to exhibitions at the Cadiz *Casino* (reviews *Diario de Cádiz* and *La Voz*), the Cadiz *Ateneo* (intr. Marisa de las Cuevas, profesora de Historia del Arte), *Quilla*, and online through *La Rampa* Gallery. They have also appeared at several commercial establishments, and were made especially welcome at *Casa Lazo*. Recycled art, what?

## **POEMS**

**Mind the monkey! 5**

### **Papegados**

*Salvamanteles 7 'Al compás de la música II'*  
/ 1:23

**No nonsense, now! 4**

*Sobrecubierta 1 'Lomo con remolinos' / 2:22*

**No nonsense, now! 6**

*'La cocina del Gotinga a pleno rendimiento'*  
/ 2:10

**Point of departure**

*Salvamanteles II 'Amor constante ...' / 1:27*

**A question of identification**

*'Jugando al escondite' / 2:03*

**Sense of loss, loss of the senses**

*Fantasia 'Pasión se descubre' / 1:12*

**Soledad**

*Salvamanteles 5 'Separadas I' / 1:21*

**To squander today**

*'Constantes del ser humano' / 2:32*

**Vine leaves in autumn**

*Fantasia 'Pasión entre las suyas' / 1:13*

**POEM**

*Nada*

**Papegado converted to Frango**

Frango twist, from my '*A troche y moche*

*II'* / 1:04

But recycling did not end there. While walking along my local beach at La Caleta, I used to be bothered by the amount of broken glass lying around on the surface of the sand. It struck me as a hazard. Eventually I collected some and dumped it in a heap for all to see, hoping someone would get the hint and initiate a tidy up. No luck. But I had noticed two things in doing so: neither my feet nor my hands got cut, and many of the pieces of glass were attractive for both their colours and shapes.

So I started collecting the pieces, some small and some substantial. They seemed to come in three colours: green, brown and clear. A rather limited range, you might think, were it not for the fact that each of these three was represented in a multitude of shades, from deepest green to a quite delicate green (almost blue), from brown verging on black to a delicate shade of amber, from a crazed and milky whiteness to completely clear. As for the shapes, these bits of glass seemed to represent the remains of a million and one bottles (and accompanying glass drinking ware?). Many of the pieces were mere shards, no more than splinters, but others could be whole bottle bases or whole bottle necks and openings.

You may guess what happened next. I had moved on from collages to montages, or from *Papegados* to *Cristaletas*, the latter being my neologism (another one) which incorporates glass (*crystal*) and an allusion to La Caleta, my beach of supply.

The beach continued to reveal fresh glass with each passing tide, and I continued to find that none of the millions of pieces, whatever their size or shape, seemed to cause injury.

**POEMS**

**No nonsense, now! 8**

**Self portrait**

**Cristaletas**

'*Cristaleta 4'*

'*Cristaleta 7'*

## ILLUSTRATIONS – spacers

The main group of spacers, consisting of printers' ornamental blocks (usually general purpose) were made of wood and, later, metal. These were copied in the 1970's from the end or title page of plays now in the Scarfe – La Trobe collection (part sale, one third donation), Glasgow University Library. Arranged here (only) by date, these are as follow:

- a) Horizontal arrangement with bowl and flowers, an elongated seahorse to either side facing away: title page block from Lope de Vega Carpio *El Testimonio vengado* (Luis Sánchez, Valladolid 1604). Ref.: BS 739.
- b) Two-plumed ornament on wall bracket: end block from (*loa*) *El Gran mercado del mundo* in part 4 of Pedro de Pando y Mier's collection 'Autos sacramentales, alegóricos e historiales del insigne poeta español don Pedro Calderón de la Barca' ([Manuel Ruiz de Murga, Madrid 1717]). Ref.: BS 329 & BN T 497.
- c) Ornament predominantly pendant: end block from (*auto*) *El Gran mercado del mundo* in part 4 of Pedro de Pando y Mier's collection 'Autos sacramentales, alegóricos e historiales del insigne poeta español don Pedro Calderón de la Barca' ([Manuel Ruiz de Murga, Madrid 1717]). Ref.: BS 329 & BN T 497.
- d) Half-page ornament finely and intricately interwoven: end block from (*loa*) *La Viña del Señor* in part 4 of Pedro de Pando y Mier's collection 'Autos sacramentales, alegóricos e historiales del insigne poeta español don Pedro Calderón de la Barca' ([Manuel Ruiz de Murga, Madrid 1717]). Ref.: BS 785 & BN T 497.
- e) Diminutive radiant sun within large total downward-pointing triangular frame surmounted by scalloped shell: end block from *El Sol de la fe en su oriente, y conversión de la Irlanda* in the collection 'Comedias nuevas, su autor D. Joseph Fernández de Bustamante ... primera parte ... 1759' (Francisco Xavier García, Madrid 1758). Ref.: BS 719 & BN R 24106 (1758 / 1759).
- f) Landscape with large ruined gateway building and tree (background), woods to left and high rushes to right (both foreground), and three waterfowl swimming from right to left (centre foreground): title page block from the 'sainete' (author not given) *El Sastre y su hijo* (José Ferrer de Orga, Valencia 1811). Ref.: BS 700 & BN T 27405.
- g) Wall bracket with (from left to right) inkpot and three quills, candlestick and flaming candle, standing book and fancy ewer: title page block from the 'sainete' (author not given) *El Abate y el albañil* (José Ferrer de Orga, Valencia



1813), identified also in the BN collection 'Recueil de pièces en espagnol'. Ref.: BS 11:i & BN T 9798.

h) Expressive full-face over dagger slanting down to right: title page block from Juan del Peral's Spanish arrangement *Un Dómine como hay pocos* (Viuda de R.J. Domínguez, Madrid 1849). Ref.: BS 251 & BN T 14472.

i) Arrangement with (from left to right) tilted book, lamp emitting flame and smoke on table, musical instruments with lyre predominant, etc., and (transversal) laurel frond with (centre stage) face mask on slant: title page block from Pedro Calderón de la Barca *Casa con dos puertas mala es de guardar* (librería de la Viuda e hijos de J. Cuesta, Madrid 1873). Ref.: BS 152:vi & BN T 17242.

j) Expressive full-face woodland satyr: title page block from the 'sainete' (Luis Moncín / Fermín Antonio Rox) *Los Dos viejos, uno llorando y otro riendo* (librería de Cuesta, Madrid 1873). Ref.: BS 260.

The remaining spacers consist of two typical *mudéjar* style wall tiles recovered from demolition sites in Seville, and a modern mirror set within a series of 24 traditional type tiles descriptive of a range of classic trades and professions.

