

LINES OF A LIFETIME VIII

'THE NATURAL WORLD'

The Bestiary 1



poems

BRUNO SCARFE

October 2017

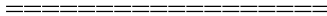
THE NATURAL WORLD 2

The Bestiary 1



A selection of poems from the collection

Lines of a Lifetime



BRUNO SCARFE



With
San Francisco de Asís
(4 de octubre)
in mind



INTRODUCTION *'The Natural world 2: The Bestiary 1'*

'The Bestiary 1' is the second of the three parts of *The Natural world* and volume eight in the overall collection *Lines of a Lifetime*. It follows *Cadiz*, the *Eros* series of three, *Measuring up*, *Mixed blessings* and part one of *The Natural world* (Heaven and earth).

While quite a few poems in this collection were written specifically about members of the animal kingdom, in many cases the latter are present as similes or metaphors, form part of an allegory, or are alluded to in passing ... though I like to think they contribute meaningfully to mood or subject. Remember too that *'The Natural world 2: The Bestiary 2'* is about ... just the one animal (not human).

The following are some poems omitted here on the grounds of their slight relevance, or to reduce the incidence of duplication. They are 1) 'Absence 5' (bugs), 2) 'Approaches' (emus), 3) 'Blues' (birds), 4) 'Autumn love' (snakes, spiders), 5) 'Doctor Foster: last known whereabouts' (crocodiles), 6) 'El Faro' (*calamares, ruiseñores*), 7) 'Fragment 1' (monkeys), 8) 'Lluvia en la noche' (*pulpos, serpientes, toros, tortugas*), 9) 'Love, so beautiful' (worms), 10) 'Men on the Moon' (cats, dogs, owls), 11) 'No, not to separate' (flies, worms), 12) 'Real' (dogs), 13) 'Sense of loss, loss of the senses' (cats, ducks, hens), 14) 'Torture of memory' (kookaburras), 15) 'Trish 2' (lions), 16) 'Trish 3' (bears), 17) 'Trish 7' (horses, snakes), 18) 'Trish 8' (dogs, geese). Also absent is the series *Mind*, the monkey! (not about monkeys), and 'A Tail to wag a dog' (not about dogs).

Most of the poems in this selection have been written in Cadiz, though Auckland, Melbourne, Oxford and Salamanca are also represented. A piece written in Auckland and one from Oxford have been published.

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 and 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, 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 couple in French.

*En agradecimiento
a los seres 'inferiores'
que nos acompañan
en sus mundos paralelos*

THE NATURAL WORLD 1: The Bestiary 1 – a selection

Absence 1	Dragonflies
<i>Acierto de peregrino</i>	<i>Pájaros, peces</i>
Bag cat	Cats
<i>Bonito error</i>	<i>Atún, bonito, mero</i>
Bound and unbound	Birds
Contrary cat	Cats
<i>Desde el Puente romano</i>	<i>Buitres, cabras</i>
<i>Elegir su elixir 1 & 2</i>	<i>Monos</i>
Emergency cat	Cats
Focus of attraction	Fish
Fragment 5	Ants, pigeons, plovers, sparrows, swallows
Free, to choose	Ants, crickets, flies, frogs, lizards, sparrows
Games: 'Gobbledygook'	Frogs, ibis, turkeys
Little catastrophe	Cats
<i>Un lugar para armas tomar</i>	<i>Navajas</i>
Metric feats in S minor 1,2 & 3	Snails
The Moon, three images	Vultures
Naturally	Seagulls
Out of its depth 1 & 2	Silverfish
<i>Pasatiempos: 'Sol y sombra'</i>	<i>Toros</i>
Pause I & 2	Cats
<i>Perro destino</i>	<i>Perros</i>
Pigeon	Pigeons
<i>Prendas de amor</i>	<i>Murciélagos</i>
A Question of values	Cats
Royalty, almost	Pigeons
Still life plus	Swallows
Summer busyness	Swallows
<i>Surréalismes</i>	<i>Serpents</i>
Swallow holes	Swallows
A timely spring	Hares, swallows
Top dog	Dogs
Up and away	Starlings
Wing din	Cicadas
Without you	Snails

Illustrated: *Acierto de peregrino*, Bound and unbound, Free to choose, Pause I & II, *Prendas de amor*, A Question of values, Royalty almost, Up and away, Without you



Absence 1

Ground strewn with rubble – you know the building site,
and its grey mesh geometric fence.

Spaced evenly and facing east on its top-
most strand, glittering and live ten
dragonflies vibrate, readying for take-off.

“Look!” I cried. But your eyes, absent,
could not reply.



Acierto de peregrino

Estoy de paso –
pájaro fugaz,
pez escurridizo
y no me paro.

No queda pista
ni en el aire
ni en el agua
de mi visita.

No queda polvo
en las plumas,
las escamas
no llevan lodo.

Estoy contento.
Pues consta por todas
partes el encuentro,
y voy ligero.

Bag cat

Look! my cat likes
to hide in bags!
Capricious cloth ones, live,

which stretch, fall flat,
then rise and stand –
each fold with its surprise.

Bonito error

“¡Qué lasaña más rica! ¡vaya esmero!”

le digo contento a la cocinera.

“ No, ¡que es de atún!” me contesta seca,

“es lo que se emplea, ¡que no es mero!”



Bound and unbound

Bound for Cadiz in the heat of summer,
on briny decks, from the Antipodes:
once resplendent, serene and proud – they were
kings no longer, but brooded like birds trussed,
squashed, and fretting to stretch and spread their wings.

Few, if any, perished on the voyage.
All three thousand strutted their stuff once freed
chaotically, in packs and singly, drunk
throughout the house, smacking the walls and floors.

Foxed and dog-eared, sleeves stained and jackets torn,
in every size, colour and condition –
conjured memories of lost times and lands.
They jostled my mind, charged my attention:
incredible tales! inspired telling!
of orthodox and others – countless clans.
None missing? Dismissed! and I washed my hands.

Contrary cat

Why *won't* this cat
sit on the mat
I've gone and bought for her?

Why *will* she lie,
paws folded, on
the shopping bag nearby?

Desde el Puente Romano

Manadas delirantes de espectros efimeros
valsando van
con la silueta
de la Catedral.

Y sus capas de seda besan las cañas,
y al cielo sube un suave susurrar.

El estático brujo del río Tormes
abraza las piedras del Puente Romano;
y el murmullo de los besos por el aire tibio
es el lírico canto de un día que muere.

Tras flamígeras torres agoniza el sol,
y en la sima de su ansia caen gotas de sangre,
oscuras,
volcánicas.

¿Por qué me asfixiáis, duendes fugaces
de las entreluces?
¿Por qué me claváis con carámbanos incitantes
de esperanza funesta?
Es la hora de la madre
que espera al hijo
que ya está muerto.
Es la noche satánica
cuando llama tres veces la aldaba de bronce
sobre la puerta dormida.

El eco lejano de legiones errantes
atormenta el sueño del Puente Romano.
Susurra el crujir de miles de cuerpos,
resuenan pies, cascos, garras.

Se aproxima el estruendo de cincuenta mil buitres
del cruel infierno.

Sigue acercándose, me hipnotiza,
se abalanza hacia mí, brincando, chillando,
siempre, siempre

Y ha pasado. Ya se ha ido. Entre las tinieblas se esfuma,
huye, calla, desaparece.

Y ahora, nada: sólo silencio.

Me acaricia el pecho un ardor muy grato:
está pensando en un sinnúmero de cuernos de cabra
que le hubieran traspasado de lado a lado
si no existiera el cabrero
que ahora, solitario, pasa:
dueño aburrido de unos mil demonios.

Elegir su elíxir

I

Yo, cuando me encuentro gris,
me animo con un anís.

Pero algo en los bares odio:
se trata de ‘El Mono’ polio.
Tiene fama este licor
de ser (dicen) ‘el mejor’.

Excluir por eso a otros buenos,
limita, y me pone negro.

Elegir su elíxir

II

Le veo en sueños a ‘El Mono’
nada manso, sin cadena:
alza en alto su botella
para pegarme en el coco.

¡Ay de mí! que soy culpable.
¡Ay de mí! pues él lo sabe.

Siendo joven, me pusieron
a estudiar lo que más vale:
en lenguas clásicas, griego
y latín – el culto viejo

venerado por la flor
y la nata intelectual;
luego, francés y alemán,
inglés y, claro – ‘español’.

¡Pobres padres que me guiaron!
¡Escuela, universidad
y academia, que otorgaron
mis estudios incompletos!
Ni en Oxford, ni en Salamanca
insistieron en lo bueno
que me perdía, y venganza
catalana que habría.

Y ahora, otra vez, la huída
de El Mono aterrador.

Una gota del licor
en la lengua filistea
que ignora la contraseña
catalana, daría con
toda mi digestión hecha
polvo inútil, en el suelo.

Emergency cat

My cat's so neat,
she runs her tray
so everything's in place.

Except, it's true,
when she's on heat
and anywhere will do.

Focus of attraction

In this river, fishes groped an isolated life,
each one alone,
deep down in densely waving weeds –
so green and gloomy,
and under stones, and in the cold clay banks.

Each one alone.

And see them now! They've sprung to life,
streak up and down,
score the surface,
leap from wave to wave –
gold and silver gleaming in the sun.

Hear them laugh, and sing!

Though the weight of water flows on as before,
new life inside will make it change its course.

Fragment 5

I love to see

(in disbelief) how plovers hover
over the open fields,

sparrows land in a sea of pigeons,
sneak 'their' bread and scatter,

ants ease some clumsy bundle past rocks
and leaves that block their track,

swallows squeal, climb in zigzags, glide in
games of lead and follow.

While up on high

clouds career, pause for breath, and dawdle,
riffraff, have-beens, bounders,



Free, to choose

Sparrows chat, listen, hop and swoop,
a lizard hugs the sun clad wall
and crickets sing maracas notes;
ants shift a crumb across a stone,
a frog lost in the cellar, bawls
and flies drift, stilly, round a room.

Creatures, some large, some small: and though
they all have needs, and wants (a role),
– we were told a long time ago
they lack free will, and lack a soul.

So many ways to live a life,
so many lives with little say!
We, choose the way we live our lives,
we, choose the way ... we end our days.

Games: 'Gobbledygook'

I rave of frogs,
of sassy turkeys,
ibis.

I rave of beds,
do rave of jibes
on boring claws
up root or log;
my awe apart,
my ire low,
I rave of far ago.

I spruik jargon,
spruik tasty verbiage,
gobble.

'By Gobbledygook'
(Is my tag so dim?
– or classy?)

GAMES

Gobbledygook

b o r i n g ■ c l a w s
■ f a r ■ o ■ l o w ■ p
f ■ v e r b i a g e ■ r
r ■ e ■ ■ b ■ s ■ ■ u
o r ■ i ■ l ■ s ■ g ■ i
g o b b l e d y g o o k
s o ■ i ■ d o ■ ■ b ■ ■
■ t a s t y ■ j i b e s
I ■ p ■ a g o ■ ■ l ■ a
■ j a r g o n ■ b e d s
u ■ r ■ ■ o ■ b ■ ■ i s
p ■ t u r k e y s ■ m y

Little catastrophe

For convenience,
when I left home
I made her safe
in the kitchen
– seven week waif –
all alone.

When I returned,
guess what I found?
her water spilled,
food scattered round
the floor, now turned
convenience,

while in her sandpit,
x-spelled in catskrit,
a tincy wincy
sign of sh...

Un lugar para armas tomar

Para comer en el café bar
la Rambla,
no ponen sólo cuchillos, mas
navajas.

Metric feats in S minor

I

Inch by inch they've always moved, and
move today: centred, steadfast, slow.

2.54cms.

– is all the talk now, as they glide
concerned, but gallant, through the grass.

2.54cms.

– seems quite absurd to snails, who ease
their way imperially along.

2.54cms.

Round it down, to 2.5? or
2? round it up, to heavens, what?

2.54cms.

Come what may, life will never be
the same for you, or snails, or me.

2.54cms.

Might there be marches? chaos and
clashes? as the law concerning

2.54cms.

looms, and bites? Will snails soldier on
regardless? They'll be spared, at least

– under the sway of metric rule –
all temptation, when running late,
of putting their best foot forward.

Metric feats in S minor

II

When the heat's on, will snails convert
(at sixty seconds a minute)
from our Fahrenheit to Celsius?

Metric feats in S minor

III

“A pint of milk, a pound of flour!”

– “These measurements, Sir, aren't used now.
.568 of a litre,
.454 of a kilo
is what you mean, but – we regret,
such quantities aren't practical.
Half a litre, half a kilo,
that's how we sell them now, you know.”

“That's not much drink, and too much dough!”

– “Just relax, Sir, and face the facts:
you'll have to change, and start again,
unlearning all you've learned before.”

The Moon: three images

Night, a cave wall
curving wavewise
round the whirlpool
of the Earth.

In the shadows
of the cliff face
ring a siren's
moss-sad footfalls.

Night, a black gown
wrapped uneasy
round the dark dreams
of the Earth.

In the deep folds
of the mantle
gleams a brittle
silver brooch.

Night, a vulture
whirling closely
past the cornfields
of the Earth.

In the wide-winged
circling vulture
burns a bitter
lustful eye.

Naturally

Long figures, black, and fragile specks of heads
wait, go forward, and dare the waves;
most are swallowed up – just one or two ride
home in momentary triumph.

Triangles, white, incongruous against
the even blue, seem not to move –
but the sails, taut, tell of yachts manoeuvring
as crews compete to rule the wind.

Facing the weather, at rest on the sea,
every wing folded, watchful, still –
look at them, gathered there! all of one mind,
gulls unruffled, where they belong.

Out of its depth

I

The silverfish
turned up its toes
when it couldn't have the last word.
It proved too much
of a mouthful.

Out of its depth

II

The world of letters would last far better
if silverfish
gave up their dish
of words, and went
for 'Cocksure'*, the last word in French letters.

*Poet's copyright / patent pending.



Pasatiempos: 'Sol y sombra'

Olor a toros:
la plaza a sol y sombra,
con calor.

Olor a corridas de toros,
a plaza de sangre,
a plaza de polvo,
a plaza de pena:

¡ay! qué asco y ¡ay! qué calor.
Sol sin sombra
y sin amor.

Olor a corridas de toros,
a música y paso-
dobles, con sed de hielo,
de agua, y de vino,
la copa de coñac y anís:
sol y sombra
con abanicos.

Olor a toros:
la plaza a sol y sombra,
con calor.

PASATIEMPOS

Sol y Sombra

a b a n i c o s ■ ■ p ■ c ■ ■
■ ■ ■ ■ ■ ■ ■ h i e l o ■ p
■ t ■ ■ ■ s ■ ■ ■ ■ n ■ r ■ a
c o n ■ c o ñ a c ■ a ■ r ■ s
■ r ■ ■ ■ l ■ y ■ ■ ■ v i n o
■ o ■ p ■ ■ ■ ■ ■ ■ d ■ d
■ s o l ■ Y ■ s o m b r a ■ o
a ■ ■ a ■ ■ ■ a ■ ú ■ ■ s ■ b
■ ■ ■ z ■ s i n ■ s e d ■ ■ l
c o p a ■ o ■ g ■ i ■ e ■ d e
a ■ o ■ a m o r ■ c ■ ■ a ■ s
l ■ l a ■ b ■ e ■ a n í s ■ ■
o ■ v ■ ■ r ■ ■ ■ ■ ■ c ■ ■
r ■ o ■ ■ a g u a ■ o l o r ■



Pause

I

Becalmed.

Though day gives way to night
and frosts and snow follow the summer sun
predictably,
change disturbs,
seems always unexpected.

Becalmed.

Wasn't there a warning?
Was losing way so sudden? and what if
I ran aground?
Relax! Accept the challenge,
and – be calm.

Pause

II

Cats: masters of motion, rapid or
slow, and of pause.

Cat's-paws, prelude or sequel, ruffle
the water.

Or courting catastrophe, 'becalmed'?

Perro destino

En las esquinas de las calles
de Cádiz capital,
abundan monumentos
de la gloria nacional:
defensores de antaño
que alejaban a invasores
de ultramar.

¡Que perduren en sus puestos
los cañones!
¡que recuerden, que proclamen
los cañones
tanta gloria nacional!

Inocente, preguntaba
si servían
los cañones
de apoyo a las casas
demacradas del lugar.

Inocente, preguntaba
si servían
los cañones
para inspirar respeto
a los coches circulando sin parar.

Y con sonrisa me decían:
– Los ojos y las narices
cuentan su destino actual:
para los perros les sirven
de molde para mear, mear, mear.

En las esquinas de las calles
de Cádiz capital,
abundan monumentos
de la gloria nacional:
defensores de antaño
que alejaban a invasores
de ultramar.

Pigeon

Ruffled, huddled, still,
against the wall
feet away
from the happy tavern door –
it lies,
displays no feeling
and makes no sound:
it simply –
dies.





Prendas de amor

¿De dónde los quitas?

¿De su cueva,
del bosque,
de las ciénagas?

¿Los sacas con vida?

¿Son del cielo,
de Murcia, o,
del infierno?

– Te los regalo, cariño, me desafía.

Admirado
pues, me muestro,
mas por dentro
dolorido.

Dos murciélagos,
pobre de ellos,
fallecidos.



A question of values

There lies
rigid
in the centre of the street
the fur of jungles,
gleaming,
by a pool of blood.

Children, drugged on slogans, dare model trucks and cars
along the pavement till they slither, spin and crash;
at the line, mother puzzles over knots and coils
of clothes, frayed and agitated in the washer.

(Remember
how
dew glittered
in the
uncorroded sun?)

In a stench of smoke, a man obeys his mower,
tonsures heads of grass on the sacrificial lawn;
a neighbour, diagnosing noises in his car,
looks up, deaf to the world, and opts for grease and oil.

The fur of jungles
gleaming
by a pool of blood
lies there,
rigid,
in the centre of the street.



Royalty, almost

Such decorum!
See? no need to talk.
It's so natural, that silence
as they proceed at a measured
pace along the street keeping perfect time.
Unfussed, they come close
bestowing a nod
to left and to right
systematically
(although there's nobody about ...how odd!),
always watching where they're going.
And past my window, now, they've walked
– the two pigeons – and
quite out of sight.

Still life plus

White walls dazzle,
brilliant,
beneath a sun
high out of sight
from where I lie;
the whiteness underpins, and clasps, the sky.

Here – note a patch
of ochre red,
there – gold and brown,
fine lines of black,
a sea of blue
beyond
and overhead;
the view, devoid of life, seems fixed and still.

Then I hear them:
shadows – sideways,
up and down,
round and round,
tiny, darting, dark;
whirls of joy, swallows on the wing, they fill
the light with sound, bring everything to life.

Summer busyness

Swallows swoop from
Rosalía,
up San Dimas
and then back.

Their shadows run
across the walls
in wild pursuit,
gain, catch up
and overtake.

Their calls, their cries,
their squeals precede,
accompany
and follow.

Surréalismes

La C est rouge
la D est verte
la C la C
la C nage

l (e-)
e n t
m

parmi
les QU
mO eurs
C QU
R I s
G R
des sE pents
R

nuages (qui sait?)

qui s'é-
v a n o u i s s e n t

SQU L TT S
f
e
u
i
l
l e
e s é
m m
o
r u
t f
e
s

au crépuscule

Swallow holes

I've just been told
there's lots more sky –
most of the swallows flown.

But – what a sight!
it's full of holes
each swallow's left behind!

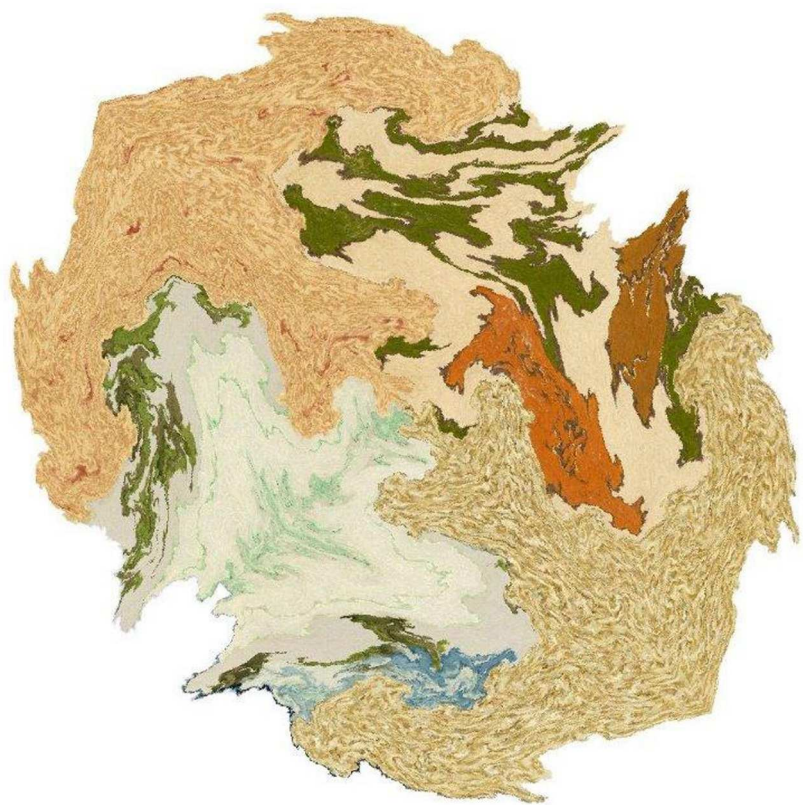
A timely spring

Though one swallow doesn't make a summer,
it only takes one hare to make a spring.

Top dog

Leading their boss,
they'll make him stop,
start, reconnoitre, run.

They'll sniff, they'll wee,
they'll pooh and see
that master tidies up.



Up and away

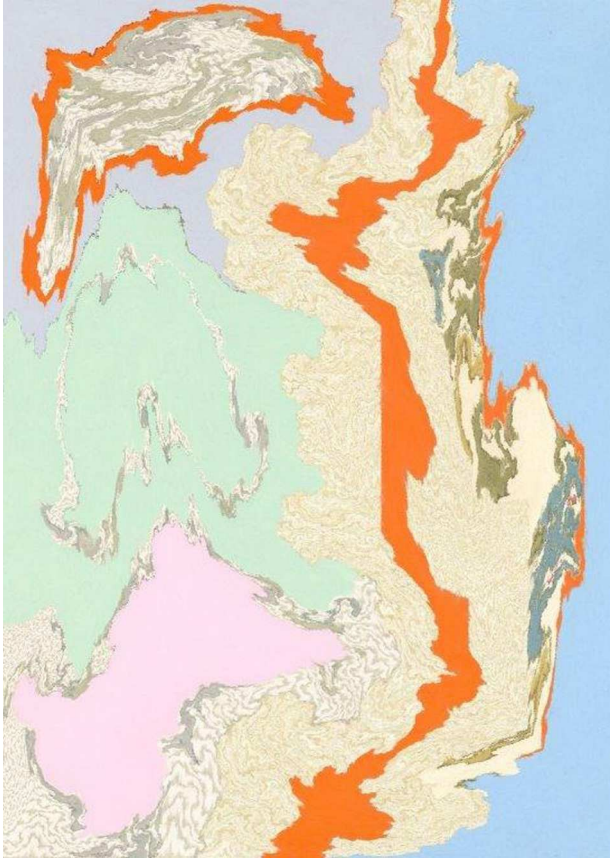
Seen on the ground, nearby, they always looked
a greasy lot, furtive, scruffy, squat, al-
most vulgar, their gait impatient, jerky.

But then, unbidden,
innumerable,
they filled the sky, hung
an undulating
belt of black against
the blue; contracting,
then, they made a square
which stretched and shrank, and
shrank and stretched; and then
a moment later
they curled and rolled, spun
into a breakneck
spiral, plummeted
headlong for the ground;
but then the vortex
split, regrouped, and formed
a cloud, circular,
tremulous and dense;
off they drifted, then
swinging suddenly
they soared and slipped, slipped
and soared, blurs which zig-
zagged, wavered, grew, drew
close; then, dropping low,
they passed, followed by
a rush, a 'whoosh' of
wings and they were gone.

Now, maybe, you'll term them 'iridescent',
'alert', 'carefree', 'sturdy', 'different'; and self-
respecting starlings *do* find *walking* dull.

Wing din

It makes a racket as though to tell
the world at large this cicada's ... well.



Without you

Days, like snails, have crawled across
the acres of dishevelled grass
that are my garden.

Like snails.

And each has left a track,
as though to show beyond a doubt
that it has passed.

Grass? Did I say 'grass'?

No, not acres of dishevelled grass,
for grass is green,
and green is hope.

Days, like snails, have crawled across
the sandy windswept shores
that line my life.

Like snails,

they wanted water,
and sensed the presence of the sea –
which then receded.

Night fell, as they lay there, and gasped –
all caked in grit,
all dry,
all desperate.

And days, like snails,
were empty shells that littered the lonely shore.



Notes

THE POEMS

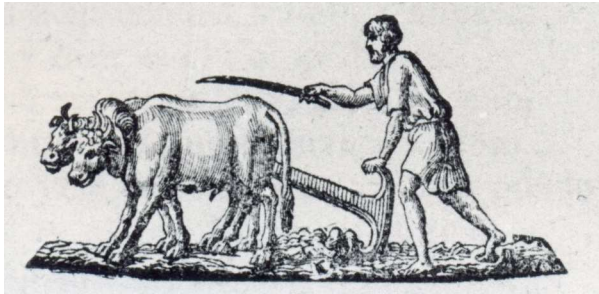
- Absence 1** (also features in *Eros - In absentia*) Cadiz 2007
(From a series of 12 poems to Winifred Ann [Jodell, née Woods] or 'Win', partner since about 1990 and away on respite care work in England.) Two buildings next door, half the street, had been demolished and the site was dead.
- Acierto de peregrino*** Cadiz 2004
Based on a chance meeting with Duncan, son of Deirdre Jack of Swift's Creek, Omeo - an Australian artist whose paintings I admire. I bumped into the gaunt, cheerful and very unencumbered lad in a Cadiz supermarket: he had done the *Camino de Santiago*, and exuded its atmosphere.
- Bag cat** Cadiz 2010
On *Noche*, a kitten adopted after being dumped outside one night (see also *The Natural world - The Bestiary 2*).
- Bonito error*** (also in *Mixed blessings*, and *Words at play*) Cadiz 2009
Set at the *Casa Lazo* restaurant. Tuna is known as *atún* or *bonito*, this last also an adjective with a different meaning. Then we have the fish *mero* (and, unrelated, *esmero*).
- Bound and unbound** (also features in *Cadiz*) Cadiz 2001
In 'Bound and unbound' three words in
hiding
summarize the subject; can you
find them?
- Contrary cat** Cadiz 2010
(See 'Bag cat', above)
- Desde el Puente romano*** Salamanca 1958
(Particulars on my website - Salamanca) There are aspects of Salamanca which remind one of El Greco's famous painting of Toledo: topography, colours, atmosphere.
- Elegir su elixir I y II*** (also feature in *Mixed blessings*) Cadiz 2001
The second poem started as a footnote. Catalan did not feature in Spanish studies at school level, and while some Catalan courses (mainly literary) were available within Spanish studies at Oxford, they were presented as options.

Emergency cat (See 'Bag cat', above)	Cadiz	2010
Focus of attraction (also in Eros - Heavings of the heart) Though the fish are metaphors within an allegory, they merit a note. They reflect a personal background of fishing clear Oxford streams as a child, and designing and building elaborate fishponds in Perth (Western Australia) and Melbourne. I stocked these ponds with plants drawn from nearby rivers, creeks and swamps (some with yabbis and associated problems in the accompanying clay).	Melbourne	1970
Fragment 5 The series began as games with words and sounds, an offshoot of my English classes with Don Fernando of the Cadiz Port Authority.	Cadiz	2017
Free, to choose Set at my home in calle San Dimas. The 'cellar' used to be the <i>aljibe</i> , and the frog was for real, rescued and set free later in the nearby Parque Genovés.	Cadiz	2004
Games 'Gobbledygook' (also features in Words at play) (See 'Fragment 5', above) Towards a crossword, but missing ... the clues.	Cadiz	2007
Little catastrophe (See 'Bag cat', above)	Cadiz	2009
<i>Un lugar para armas tomar</i> (features in Cadiz, Mixed blessings and Words at play) Set in Olimpio's Galician place <i>La Rambla</i> (c. Sopranis), with its generous array of <i>tapas</i> , many of them seafood dishes (one of these appears here as a pun). On another tack, his <i>pollo al ajillo</i> was of the best in Spain. Energetic, enthusiastic, affable - I missed him on retirement in 2014.	Cadiz	2009
Metric feats in S minor I, II and III (also feature in Mixed blessings) Parts II and III started off as footnotes. Serious interest in the fascinating snail started in Perth, Western Australia where our garden was invaded on a massive scale every night. Drastic measures were taken, short of eating them (which in fact might have been, in its way, useful).	Cadiz	2001
The Moon, three images (published <i>Oxford Opinion</i>)	Oxford	1959

vol. 4 n.7, 1959)		
Naturally	Cadiz	2003
Does the sequence denote – inverted paradox – gullible, less so, not?		
Out of its depth	Cadiz	2001
The second poem began as a footnote. Not a useful sort of fish, and its silver anything but sterling.		
Pasatiempos ‘Sol y sombra’ (also features in Mixed blessings)	Cadiz	2007
(See ‘Fragment 5’ above) Towards a crossword. My views are mixed on the subject of <i>los toros</i> , but were further confused by someone's insistence that I sign a petition banning bullfights, or I would not be spoken to again.		
Pause I & II	Cadiz	2001
The second poem started off as a footnote.		
Perro destino	Cadiz	2002
I still fancy this as material for a Cadiz <i>chirigota</i> .		
Pigeon	Cadiz	2001
Set near one of many bars in c. Zorrilla, off plaza Mina. After the rose- buds, and the hay, it’s good to know (when all else fails) – Seneca’s there, in the wings.		
Prendas de amor	Cadiz	2017
Refers to a real event in Omeo about 1990. This was a sinister start to what became an impossible relationship.		
A Question of values	Melbourne	1971
Very much a Melbourne outer suburban scene, in the 70s.		
Royalty, almost	Cadiz	2007
Such bourgeois, bordering on aristocratic, protagonists.		
Still life plus	Cadiz	2001
Set in my first flat in c. Beato Diego – the bedroom view: Motionless and hot, all light and colour, then add a touch of sound – that’s ‘Still life plus’. It’s ‘abstract’, to you? or ‘impressionist’?		

In terms of the effect, well yes, that's true.
 And were these my aims? Not quite, no. I just
 'forgot' the buildings, so engrossed in what
 I saw ... and heard. 'Omissionist' says more.

Summer busyness	Cadiz	2007
A morning and evening close-up sight from our study giving on to calle San Dimas. The speed of manoeuvre is incredible, mishaps rare. Flights: over a period of about four months from April to August, give or take a fortnight.		
Surréalismes (also features in <i>The Natural world - Heaven and earth</i>)	Oxford	1960
Representational techniques ... and all on a typewriter!		
Swallow holes	Cadiz	2010
There's sadness at this time, but also acute awareness of the changed aspect of the overhead sky, so frequented as it had been by the large numbers of speeding birds.		
A timely spring	Cadiz	2011
Language is thick with sayings, some more right than others. Why not suggest one more, and let hares have a word? After all, what's sauce for the goose ...		
Top dog	Cadiz	2010
It's a scene to be believed ... this view is far from being biased. But Jesus – a neighbour – and his dog, who pass my window every morning, have a nicer relationship.		
Up and away	Cadiz	2004
Murmurations in the skies over Cadiz, a phenomenon which I noticed in the weeks before my Mother's death in Cadiz and prior to that of my son Patrick, in New Zealand. Like ballet, vibrant, in winter skies, and about appearances, and truth – inside. The cockatoos (sulphur-crested?) in Omeo, Australia share some of these behavioural characteristics.		
Wing din	Cadiz	2011
Such a shame that people – and my cat – want to kill cicadas, when they are just busy trying to communicate.		
Without you (also in <i>Eros - In absentia</i> ; published in <i>Westerly</i> , University of Western Australia Press n.2, 1973)	Auckland	1967
Time can drag its feet and hurt be prolonged, inexorably.		



Notes

ILLUSTRATIONS from my collection of *Papegados*

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 (Vejer). They have also appeared at several commercial establishments, and were made especially welcome at *Casa Lazo*. Recycled art, what?

POEMS

Acierto de peregrino

Bound and unbound

Pause I and II

Royalty, almost

Papegados

Viaje del alma por el espacio / 2:18

Sobrecubierta 3 'Lomo de seda' / 2:24

Vislumbres I / 1:11

Retrato 'Amparo' / 2:07

POEMS

Free, to choose

Up and away

Without you

Papegados converted to Frangos

Frango twist, from my

'Las cuatro Delicias I' / 1:06

Frango twist, from my *Salvamanteles 2*

'Oriana y Flor' / 1:18

Frango twist, from my *Retrato 'Alaitz'*
/ 2:05

ILLUSTRATIONS – other

POEMS

A Question of values

Frango twist of my photo of *Noche* on the *azotea* in front of a bougainvillea

Prendas de amor

Arte encontrado – marble plinth grotesques facing *Casa Lazo*, Cadiz

ILLUSTRATIONS – spacers and front cover

The spacers which open and close this collection are two (of a set of four) Spanish plates, one representing summer / *verano* and the other autumn / *otoño*. Both have a *mayólica craquelada* finish and are by Abad of Puente del Arzobispo. They came from a little shop run by a charming old lady who specialised in traditional Spanish pottery, in c. del Príncipe, Madrid.

At the start of the volume facing the introduction is a carved stone elephant, complete with baby (within). Towards the end of the volume facing notes on the poems, is a carved wooden figure half elephant / half human of Ganesh the Hindu divinity responsible for the removal of obstacles and patron of the arts and sciences. The latter was from Dinah, an Australian who went to live at Sai Baba's ashram in India.

Other illustrations include two Spanish ornamental plates, the first a classic porcelain and enamel one with a bird by Aguado of Toledo, the second with a rooster on a *mayólica craquelada* finish (unsigned).

The two b/w spacers are printers' ornamental blocks (usually general purpose) made of wood and, later metal. These were copied in the 1970s from the end or title page of plays now in the Scarfe – La Trobe collection (part sale, one third donation), Glasgow University Library. These are:

- a) Scene featuring a goat munching away next to a thicket (left), facing a dog recumbent (right), stylised woods in the background: title page block from *El Soldado fanfarrón, cuarta parte*, a 'sainete' by *** [author thus, but identified as Juan Ignacio González del Castillo], (José Ferre de Orga, Valencia 1811) as in v.6 of the BN 'Colección de sainetes sueltos'. Ref.: BS 724 & BN T 8568.
- b) A pair of oxen ploughing, followed by a peasant goading them on: title page block from D.V.M. y M. [author not identified] *Abelardo, o el Amante de Heloisa* (Ildefonso Mompié, Valencia 1822). Ref.: BS 12:ii.

The front cover carries a traditional ornamental porcelain plate by José Fernández of Puente del Arzobispo. It shows a hare, delighted with itself, making a spring. Acquired recently from *Antigüedades de la Rosa*, c. Benjumeda, Cadiz and presented to me by my wife Glen. Thanks. (See also the poem on the subject, written some time before.)



