

Queensland Memories



STREET
POETRY

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*Much of these mind maps are murky dream canvas
 Painted emotions, masks of fear
 Childhood gauntlet of lost photographs
 Conversations of parents- "He nearly died"
 The day I stopped a tram near old Kalinga
 by falling down a flight of stairs alone,
 The night I swallowed paint and had to be
 rushed to the Royal Queensland Casualty
 The sicknesses and surprises of schoolday wild
 finding a snake in the bush at Wavell Heights,
 Secondary School a Christian Brothers Nightmare
 alone with one friend who took the time to care,
 Physics with Gyger, phosphorous in rain
 Learning lessons by strap, again and again,
 Latin a punishment for adolescent brain
 Playground for prefects - bullies untamed
 On retrospect, the whole exercise insane.*

Nobody survives their childhood
 Words can only tell you
 some of the screaming terror times
 Harpies and horrors ripping sensitive mind
 to victim masochism, accepting blind
 Religion, school politics, dream obedience
 till university and philosophy
 cleared cobwebs from my memories
 and I could clearly see
 the tyranny of poverty
 the blindness of authority
 the horror of necessities
 which dictated realities

Success is the keynote, honesty rare,
 Hard to believe unless you live up there
 Nightlife is controlled by Fat Gut Police Force
 who understand dissidents - suppress them, of course
 Corruption's paranoia just below the surface
 of smiling sunshine, tourists welcome, surf beaches
 They erode daily beneath shadow sky scrapers
 Prices stock market higher for retired Melbourne dowagers
 The old tusks think this elephant graveyard is fine
 to bask and to die beneath tropical sunshine
 They fit into Old MacDonald Farmer Fascism
 which exploits workers in order to make fortunes
 Unions are corrupt; everything's in order.

*Some hide around Gympie with markets and art
 Some Atherton Tablelands, magic mushrooms, National
 Parks
 Some Kuranda and Cairns in some jungle communes
 Some Cedar Bay beneath police helicopter moon
 Some exist in the pubs, drunk in public service
 Some exist in schools, teaching and learning
 Some survive on farms, inland coastal fringe
 Some grow their green weeds on the Hinterland
 Most know the reality of Queensland today
 - You get only what you can afford to pay
 Parasites live off tourist economies
 learning that only the rich
 can afford to be free.*

University a sanctuary
 from Queensland Catholic family
 A drunken father, Avon mother,
 Tupperware parties in the garage
 made sure I became Working Class.

*I was a victim-child now seeking more
 Refugee from eroded Queensland shore
 to plummet cold a stone to Melbourne's winter
 to suffer in the silence of these frozen tears.*

But now I sun myself in smiles
 I speak of what I find to be worthwhile
 I stand on streets, not policeman paranoid,
 When I feel angry, I have a right to be annoyed
 Queensland's just a hangover of hypocrisies
 Nobody obeys the will of the majority
 Dark ghost dances for Aborigines Democracy
 means watch-house for the night, Boggo Road following
 Syphilis and drugs and suppression of feelings
 mean drunks repress their emotional dimensions
 They never say what they feel to be true
 but tell you to shut up and be silent too.
 The Uni a tombstone of marble brick hearts
 The hopes hanging in degree course in Arts,
 When commitment calls, few take their parts
 The drama is life,
 most play for laughs.

Memory erases traces of old Kanakas
 Aborigines given cheap port for dole dollars
 The young on surf beaches given hard times
 by blue collar
 Tensions between the old and the new
 confront daily, often in full view,
 You will see gold rape violence in alcoholic cars
 streaking in gasoline alleyway bars
 Gold Coast corruption, materialism gone mad
 Spraying bikini bodies with oil of Suntan
 Bodies lie on the beach while burglars prow around
 High rise the crime rate, New Zealanders blamed.

*Schools preach obedience, religion is God
 Sunday for greyhounds, trots, races and pubs
 Quiet as a church this state of the mind
 exists like Toowoomba - town frozen in time
 Flowers in gardens with houses on stilts
 clothes on Hills hoist flapping in the breeze
 A dog barks, but silence is warm as the heat
 Everybody knows everybody else's business in these sunburnt streets,
 There's scandals and gossip and village chit-chat
 There's sermons on Sundays then straight to the beach
 There's police patrolled highway on loud motorbikes
 The locals all know who can do what they like.*

Sandcastles of money on Noosa and Co
 A bridge not wanted down on Stradbroke
 Tourists pass through Queensland "Go Slow"
 It's not what you are, it's who you know

Brisbane a brown town, white freeway car city
 A paradox of architecture, highrise office buildings
 Money talks if you can cash registers singing
 Dollars make sense if you can count coins ringing

The Coast a haven for the young at heart
 Surfing and screwing and smoking worlds apart
 Pleasure city promotes epicurean "forget"
 Distraction allows destruction of the environment.

Then settle down beneath Queensland's sun cancer
 Slow down, you're not going anywhere
 You can die in the state which boasts of its sunshine
 but lives in dark shadows for most of the time

Chess addicts, they play people as a cigarette
 Light them up, suck, exhale (choking breath)
 The immensurable distance between lost lovers
 This silence settles like a cloud
 Properties are toys for family courts
 and the lovers....

Wistfulness replaces desire's bed, settles the sheets
 and says "Well get on with it"
 Lovers faces hallucinate into HER face
 And it's no good....

Days are radios with chains
 Nights loud colour televisions
 You can't change the channel.
 Even if you could....

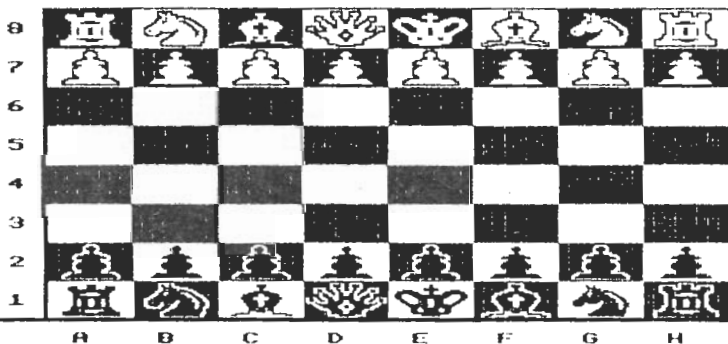
She is on an island
 Lilies amid hiacynth
 You cannot contact her
 She is dreaming....

STREET

POETRY

Pillows are your pentridge
 Bed your confession box
 You shake and wake and shiver
 Sweating hot

Turnstiles of moments
 Dump and change their clothes
 You who were together
 Alone.



Heart sings of consecrated circumstance
The willing victim staggers up to dance
Hung on her kiss, he's hypnotised, entranced
His drug is skin pricked solo song 'romance'

She will not mention love, she knows the rules
what least you mention, most attracts more fools
He's warm to hot, she's distinctly cool
Lies sound more pleasant when someone says they're true

The two stand off like gladiator combat
Weapon words are worn like a sauna suntan
glistening as sweat, with no umbrella
A rain of insecure brick wall demands

Now close in for the kill, it's kissing time
Someone is involved, the other redefines
To slip the rosy dagger into need's blind eyes
then withdraw, to leave this garden crying

Moisture love to whet this parched throat's song
to break the drought which time dragged on too long
to unlock gates whose only voice a rusty song
to hear hurrahs of chorus singing 'all as one'

Maybe need will never magnetise
Love's cure is a poison for the blind.

STREET

POETRY

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*B*eyond the glow of white moonlight
stars mutter mutiny, hide their light
Clouds cover faces, some falling stars
Blame their demise on the state of the night sky

Rising sun is wise to warm all followers
for moon retreats and dims her lamplight flowers
Day glows bright heat for all to grow
Night's flowers hide, rehearsing darker shows

Twilight is the borderline, changing of the guard
for here age and youth, growth and decline
One waxes full with sweet round lyric strength
One rolls heat around hemispheres

Then holes appear in what seemed once bright blue
Sprinkles glitter above rosy purple hues
Light had gone, and dark will claim its own
This queen of eyes ascends her nightly throne

Her subjects twinkle with eyes moist tears
Rain wipes the clouds' face, hides moon's fears
When clear, the moon reveals her silver carriage
A crown of stars to seal this nightly marriage

For sun and moon are lovers didn't you know
They share the light to create eternal shows
In tandem they reveal their wisdom, all they know
is to be what they are, happy to simply glow.

FOLD

Street Poetry

4896972

OPPORTUNITY

*V*olunteers sift clothes like bushfire victims
 Sing hope in smiles and spectacles
 Drop the prices for good old time pensioners
 Sweep the floor of heaven for their customers

There is a richness here of poverties
 Costumes from earlier on down this century
 Double breasted baggy trousers bend upon the wire hangers
 Grey ghosts of good men
 Now sold for a pittance

Tidy as tears, they talk over cups of tea
 Guardians of racks of shadows of memories
 Each story sings its past as you walk by
 You would take these orphans home, had you the money to buy

Archaeology does not reveal the trace of human hand
 That sewed and wove for hours
 that costumes might stand and dance
 This shop is a time capsule, it puts you in a trance
 You can imagine previous owners wearing these shirts and pants

The dust upon a jacket, the sweat upon a sleeve
 Images so clear, it's getting hard to grieve
 Bright babies clothes, an optimism of ducks and rabbits smiling
 Adolescent schoolwear, young romance beguiling

Business suits so stiff you wonder how they could fit in
 / Elderly wide wise trousers with extended waist line
 Birth and death are here, joy and laughter too
 Poems wrapped in shadows, opportunities for you.

THE DISTANCE

*T*he gap in time is now
 I nod, polite blink
 Foyer meditations, interval
 Ghost painting in oils
 This distance is long distance
 Time makes masks of faces
 You sneer when you would smile
 A bitter-sweet long distance

PERFORMANCE POETRY, MUSIC, DANCE

TUESDAY: CAFE JAMMIN, Cnr Armstrong & Richardson Sts Middle Park
 THURSDAY: RAGLAN, 34 Errol St., North Melbourne
 SATURDAY: LIVING ROOM 62 Bridge Road Richmond

ART

*T*his page contains skeletons
 who dance black puppets
 trained to walk tightropes
 housetrained, domestic

These lions are a prism
 shooting at light's birds
 where sun is a cutlass
 night of the Moon

These ribbons are bandages
 wrapped round a Pyramid
 Leaning to the Left wing
 you can see Heaven

These syllables are dumb slaves
 They bank the canoe
 to explore your hair jungles
 your sleeping rivers

These snakes disturb silences
 hissing on sand
 Why repair deserts?
 Head's rainy dreams

These paintings hang raindrops
 crimes of the heart
 Words are now poems
 Feelings Art.

Street

Poetry

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W

DAS BOOT

We are on a ship
Lights twinkle of varying disposition upon the shore
Vicissitudes of circumstance determine morality
 We are pumping and rowing, rowing and pumping
 We stroke the ship's cat
The cries of refugees can be heard in the water -
 we ignore them
Various drunken sailors seek to enlist at every port -
 we refuse them
Regularly our ship is plundered by pirates -
 we enlist police
Sometimes rainbows float on the waters -
 - delightful feasts for our eyes
Sometimes birds of prey come to squat in the crow's nest
 for a while
 Sometimes scavengers come to see what they might
 carry off
The wind is sometimes furious at our progress
Sometimes we are so still we do not think we are moving
 at all
 Sometimes we worry about the direction and accuracy
 of our navigation
 Sometimes we simply do not wish to arrive at any
 destination
This ship has many compartments/we have only seen some
 of the passengers
Buster Keaton is on board, and Errol Flynn,
 and many others
 They watch movies of the passenger list on video
We are not Titanic, nor Bismark, nor Poseidon Adventure
We can shoot rapids as well as skim on lakes
Sometimes we are assisted by smiling crewmates
 Sometimes we sit on deckchairs and luxuriate
 Our ship is always cruising the Pacific
We leave many small boats in our wake
 Sometimes we hear MAYDAY on the radio
We send up flares and answer distress calls
 Sometimes we yacht and skiff and frolic in the waves
 Sometimes like Murray River paddle boat steamer
 we plough away
 Our ship has the finest crew of any fleet
 Though some would say our purpose is obsolete
Think about our ship next time you see us on the street
Because without you our voyage will never be complete.

BEYOND YOU

This is a world of poem and song
 a chorus for those who would sing along
No-one is ever quite alone
 They sing of rainbows, those who worship sun









Day falls to innocence and heart's delight
 Music does praise the stars of darkling sight
Watch as the scattered bird wings take flight
 They hear the change as day clicks into night

This is a story old as timbermills
 Trees of wisdom, ancient histories
You scratch down leaves in autumn rain
 then watch as even forests must change

There is so much to see and feel and say
 This world is art, watch the gallery
Today the painting changes to a film
 We are all actors, mumbling our lines

Listen as time steals breath from life and love
 Watch as smoke rises from the fire heart
Wait for change as fire comes from spark
 Know your song will fly, once you take part

This is a world of poem and song
 A chorus for those who would sing along
No-one will ever live quite alone
 Then sing of rainbows, you who worship sun.

	PERFORMANCE POETRY, MUSIC, DANCE	
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	Thursday: RAGLAN, 34 Errol Street North Melbourne	
	Saturday: Living Room, 62 Bridge Road Richmond.	

Your skin reminds me
what we lost by not talking
Tears are no bridge
Touch evaporates
Your eyes assign me
a target a ticket
a carriage in a siding
rusting unremembered
Your words accuse me
for love under flags
Armies of emotions
in deserts double beds
Your silence is lip stone
No persuasion
No salesperson
dare foot in door
Your stillness is willow
reed in the river
Breathing clear air
escape from the shallows
Your presence is magnets
waves of moon water
for clouds to start crying
umbrella conventions
Your tears are now silver
Your smile a river
Your laughter a mountain
Your love a cottage
I walk on your brown earth
remember those fires
clean sheets and skins
giggling children
Fog mixed with smoke
obscures these mirages
I'm drunk and I'm dreaming
sailing, drowning
Our life was a movie
coloured as ribbons
raindrops in water
it slipped through my hands.

*If it were not real, this story would be funny
You are welcome in Queensland for the colour of your money
Things won't change this rural economy
would not function reliant on the real and the free*

Some people strip searched, allegedly for drugs
Some Aborigines beaten up by plain clothes thugs
Some busted for no reason and planted with dope
Small wonder young cynical have given up hope
Straight is the fashion, disco the scene
Cloudland was a vision - now demolished dreams
FM on the campus sings stereo screams
White children all deny what it is that they see.

Few protest, knowing nothing will change
The best they can hope for is that they will stay
To survive in the Deep North is a victory for some
The worst evil to be is a new-arrived Victorian
Resentment of people who come from the South
The first words that utter from a Queenslander's mouth
"You Victorian?" Like Peter you deny
Your own voice betrays you so why bother to try?
Speak slowly and talk of the weather and such
Praise Bjelke-Peterson and his Brown Shirt Policeforce
Curse Japs and Victorians, and Hippies and Reds
Curse the horse that lost, Aussie Rules and bad bets
Say that Queensland is tops and always will be
No matter that unemployment is growth industry
Religion will blot out all that is real
Suppress all you are thinking, repress all that you feel

So drink a beer to the state of the nation
Advanced in skin cancer, VD, unemployment, inflation
Queensland is the place to go to die
Grab yourself a piece of pineapple - Pie in the sky!

PERFORMANCE POETRY, MUSIC, DANCE

Tuesday: Cafe Jammin Cnr. Richardson & Armstrong Streets,
MIDDLE PARK

Thursday: Raglan Cafe 34 Errol St., NORTH MELBOURNE

Saturday: Living Room 62 Bridge Rd., RICHMOND

FOLD