

Selected Poems

Christopher Barnes

Topsy-Turvy

In widow's weeds, the bull, the sun,
the flower, the light bulb – it clings
to room 7 of Centro de Arte Reina Sofia,
Guernica,* the fizzled-out horse, the woman.

Ma'am
so long as I
assimilate themes
from a cubed root
suchlike “whole pictures”
in gone-bad colour
you will remember:
gun-burst at railways
Jose on the bicycle,
rose-tinting an escape
in the blackness of your lace.

*Spanish Civil War painting by Picasso

Another Rationale

“By accumulating & replacing commodities,
obligatory work merely boosts the power of
bosses, bureaucrats, leaders & ideologies. So it
becomes the object of workers’ disgust.”*

If this was a proem to carnage
Where’s the inference?
Cannon fodder’s under the paternal roof
fathering a squirm.
With no intent to talk tall
on factors ponderably grave
we’ve received corpse desperadoes.

We’re ready to spring
to shock.

*Raoul Vaneigem, *Contributions To The Revolutionary Struggle*

Legacy

They ramrod his insteps.
Ear-splitting.
Tongue-wag at your peril
on lose-a-chance auspicious hours.
Dead duck dupes
do out-on-a-limb hurry scurries.

His potency rattles firewalls
into our palms,
we’ll thunder the door
with combustibles,
greasing the downdraught.

Don’t turn a dead one
to the free-for-all
on your street –
anyone can stunt ballistics.

Ideology

It hemorrhaged into the midline
of fingertip packed lunch,
a wavelengthed playing field,
an excess, full-fraught inanities.

I'll shadow-inch your daily round
unrolling a once-only way
to your soon-dead self.
Resign to what's indulged,
in flesh-creep credulity.

Spits of ammunition, a Browning,
cordite and a Beretta'll squeeze you
– catch the eye. Think!

Seeing Red

We'll facelift the darlings of sedition,
tyrannise haunts of overseers,
backlash the purge of upturners
– newflash! –

Our “cussedness” is decreed to exist.
There's dustup nerve-wracks
in this call to arms.

They vote against knowableness,
the well-grounded.
Is he despaired of?

A dying breath? Has The Minister croaked?

