

blue grass

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Also by Peter Minter

Poetry

Rhythm in a Dorsal Fin (Five Islands Press, 1995)

Empty Texas: A Selection (Folio (Salt), 1998)

Empty Texas (Paper Bark Press, 1999)

Morning, Hyphen (Selection, Vagabond Press, 2000)

Morning, Hyphen (Equipage, 2003)

As editor

Varuna New Poetry (1994–1998)

Cordite Poetry and Poetics Review (founding co-editor, 1997–1999)

Calyx: 30 Contemporary Australian Poets (Paper Bark Press, 2000)

Meanjin (poetry editor, 2000–2005)

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*This book is dedicated to the people with whom I was born,
Maurice Minter, Sandra Minter and Cath Minter.*

And to Kate Fagan, the love with whom I live.

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eastward into another land,
the bluegrass plain

HOMER, *Odyssey*

Voyager

*It could start here again,
summer on the edge of instant war*

*night flowering under courage
stole from municipal stars*

*where olive leaves
in freshly graded parks*

*look slightly lossy in the breeze,
definition soft*

*& dry as moonlight.
The cities will all fall*

*into an open sky,
your epidermis tracked by satellites*

*will barely strike a shadow
in the fusive afterglow*

*of hydrocarbon jets.
So goodbye, go out & find*

*what there is to say
of transformation, the sparkle, junk*

*& greenest hearts. Go out
before the world knows you're not.*

History of the Present

Garden Estates

All academics are hopeless
is a line I remember from Ed Dorn's
'The Land Below'. It synchs neatly
with *learn how to spit unselfconsciously*
as I walk up King Street, book browsing
on my way to work, Forbes'
'Collected' & 'Lessons for Young Poets'
in dry, glittering fragments,
pure as snow.

El Niño has this habit
of leaving Sydney in buckets, rain
a paradise in theory, footpath literally conceptual
like *free dope, sunshine* in jingles
pegged right out of it, poems casually invisible
in torrents to the harbour.

Maybe it's too late, the Americans now do
full spectrum dominance.

I see later the stanza reads
for an eye to offer coherence at times
you have to use your head as an arbiter,
a relief for it all.

I've had to change the line breaks above,
but that's ok in a poem
about misleading principles, the cosmically
driven Earth. The sense is the same really—
if you happen to agree with it

the head is awake in the heart, as if art
weren't just an upfront suntan, dust jacket
painted as a pair of secateurs.

Jou

Morning then was deep
 & wide, sea water glittered in the round
my hand cupped as a full tide
 of glassy waves fell, rose & slipped
reddening the beach edge,
 echoing the bright wind, my hair
wet with night & sleeplessness in sparks
 caressed with starry blood, her

saliva feathers at my clavicles
 moving to & fro, key bone
wind spread in parallax, owl eyes a victory
 so mutinous & dazzling
her rib cage fluttering up easy,
 light raw as grit.

Never Return To A Meadow Permit

You began as it ends to begin, holy world
calling up a wind as you walk out

& stand before the crest
to speak of love, living in the shape of people,
breath's slow fall

with no memory of form, like
all that is made of grass, stone, sleep in trees

grows taller and taller with extinction.
Tonight's town
drinks up an army of ghosts,

screens tinkle as new ice
explodes gracefully overhead, blue deals transmitted
to fields of occupation.

You are there in a dream
opening on the hour, light fall of leaves
commodity's source

in each word, line, leaf
as it passes daily from our lives.

I am permitted to never return
to a meadow, the one they show again on cable
eyes breezy with rites

of chaos, that permission,
now propertied & lost, is gone.

Glimpse

Either here, or between
 waves brimming, what aggregates
silver, stony green, fine breath
 beading on lip sand & bullets sprayed
as holy rivets in a row of keels,
 catastrophes of heaven, land of speaking blood
blue sheen of lightning
 splashed across in repetitious transport

hot with froth & dreck, your heart's
 dark lens
matted twixt my loving brow.
 Faithful eyes are free of witness,
sun's static charge
 is tenderness unwrapped.