

TROUBLES  
SWAPPED FOR  
SOMETHING  
FRESH



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MANIFESTOS AND UNMANIFESTOS

EDITED BY RUPERT LOYDELL



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# FOREWORD

1. I have always hated manifestos.
2. I am editing an anthology with the working title of *Manifesto!* for Salt.
3. I offered.
4. I would prefer new, unpublished work, but will also consider previously published work.
5. I am looking for poetry, poetics and poetical manifestos, in the form of poetry or [poetic?] texts rather than critical articles or essays, but also hope for work which will blur the boundaries. I am looking for a diversity of opinion, attitude, approaches and styles: the aim is to aid and start discussion, not to offer a single argument or position.
6. Manifestos as ideas to respond to and challenge. Questionable polemic.
7. With some wit involved.
8. I really do need this work as soon as possible.
9. It is important to think. Language does not speak itself.
10. Forward!

RUPERT LOYDELL



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# NINE WAYS OF LOOKING AT A MANIFESTO

1. It's not as if  
not so long ago  
language was not so.
2. 'This baboon teaches letters.'  
Tell me, Thoth,  
what this says about baboons.  
And what does it say about letters?
3. A morning hymn to  
A sixfold paronomasic  
As the sun of a new day.
4. 'Since it is a map of anything  
Since it is the total description  
Since they banned the bon mot' &c.
5. Anonymous led from the start.  
Analysis came last.
6. He's listed all the things  
he only thinks of finally  
but there is no natural word order.  
Before transmutation  
no document's a poem.
7. All we know is this particular  
planet's being hung out to dry.  
Any day I will wake up  
speaking a language not dead but  
subject to recent legislation.
8. An emblem once put it like this:  
omen, ornament or name.  
Another said:  
presence, person or response.
9. A trap part art. Vague  
i.e. undefined  
but I know which verge it's under.  
Find me its apples.  
Wait for the applause.

# POETIC DISSONANCE: A MANIFESTO

2

ANDREA MOORHEAD

1.

attitudes bumping against logic, tree trunks still straight after all the wind last night, words cascading down the side of the house, snow or ice pellets who can tell, the grammar of expression follows its own course, riles adjective and verb the flesh seeking something other than this concrete casing, this stepping around at midnight with heavy wings drooping by the door, a wax repair sets in motion other winds, ice still knocking against the windows, the temperature holding steady at freezing, this cannot indicate a major storm, but the arteries are wild tonight and the face still wrapped in stone or is it really wool shed by a thousand clouds., the path to logic has many stones, colored and ripped out of context, the waves roll onto the sand, whatever happened to the last passage to the clipped part recording your voice, or was it really only the only of ice drumming down the house, working out the seams, letting in moonlight or the salt cracked stain of waves sheltered close to the heart?

2.

bones are manifest as ice is manifest as the rolling sound of your heart is manifest but the grammar pulls against the ribs rolls over bone and sinew can't you see the night here can't you smell the sea seeping into the inner cavities, can't you remember what we did together where we went whom we saw the sight of a lion on the far horizon or was it an antelope you say an antelope I feel the night sky is punctured, your words scrambled again, my ears are plugged up with molten wax with the lava-pressed too hard against the back door a volcano you say an eruption of the earth you say that too loudly all night long can't you admit that the sun has been crushed to these smoldering embers in your hands burning again as we try to rise and leave this place worry and resettle the weight of flesh on fire.

3.

seeds don't take up any room, they're dry and light, round or pointed, nasturtium and morning glory the fragrant lift of cosmos or marigold, my hands are stained with the wind rustling the leaves all night, putting down under the water a fragrance we can still hear haunting and the bodies are calm today, lifting up the seeds to the light, they don't take up any room, do they, and their scent has a pull we cannot deny.

4.

no body a light the source left trembling even if water has flowed around the trunk settled down by the base of the apple something haunts the mind now some kind of sound pulling out the earth moving the trembling to one side, lifting the tense of burning light the slow soft wandering of the tongue when the night wind is cool and the mind burrowed deep under, no body a light the source and we can still perceive the dim outline on the horizon, something smoldering under the rain, something fragrant pungent lavender edged and pure while the words cascade down all during the morning leaving a trace of the night wind and the sudden apprehension of something burning at peace.

# A POETICS OF ABSENCE

4

ANDREW TAYLOR

At night I think of you, I haven't forgotten.  
Is blossom memorial enough?

There is a need for change, I feel that need  
self-definition is the hardest part

At the moment of crisis, phones shift  
from being mere tools of convenience.  
They begin to create a poetry of unease.<sup>1</sup>

Is this a poetry of unease?

The excitement is in producing the unknown.  
The city seduces  
    the proximity of memory

Communication with oneself is essential

The field of the poet's experience was democratized  
to a degree that levelled it to one enormous field of  
closely observed particulars—both physical and mental—<sup>2</sup>

The present is being eaten by the past  
belief and proximity are connected closely

From the heart  
    despite cliché  
        a fear of drowning

Poetics steals from anywhere<sup>3</sup>

A distracted geography  
 home from distance  
 you were so beautiful

from 'Catalf':<sup>4</sup>

Gone my friend      grief will make her heart burst

*Can we go on like this with our hearts tied to the land?*<sup>5</sup>

*There is no comfort in this world that's why I love you today*<sup>6</sup>

Must you be on your way?

There are too many ghosts of the past in my life living with me<sup>7</sup>

Communication the everyday  
 broken soul loss heartache  
 no desire to win competitions

a discourse of the normal with clarity  
 reader's desire poet's intention

creation and interpretation  
 dialogue with myself  
 irrelevance of intention

The canvas spotted with paint and glitter: *It was a bad painting and it's getting better*  
 Memory is key no matter how old or recent

Loss is key

from 'Poetry and Skin Cream':<sup>8</sup>

When the fog lifts and you walk away  
I hope that you'll glance over your shoulder  
and wave from the built up distance

from 'Catalf':<sup>9</sup>

Things will never be the same  
again light will angle differently  
cold will eat summer

How things will be after event  
how things will sit

Come to me once more my love<sup>10</sup>

A sense of passing with hope

Writing the self the self is writing

If I knew there was any other way to you  
I'd walk sand and miles any other way get close to you  
and everything I have to say has probably been said many better ways  
Sometimes I have you in my head and loving with you I am happy  
I think of things to say to you of evenings we spent in another place  
I sit alone and take care of my head all the feelings that I have in front of me  
Changes that we could have made all the things we could have done together<sup>11</sup>

The commonality of language. A woman in Chile, and a man  
in Manhattan can read poetry from Liverpool <sup>12</sup>

Is the ultimate poetry created out of personal pain?

Writing is a way to trace hunger and hunger is nothing if not a void <sup>13</sup>

Is this a poetry of experience? One of personal anguish?

Join images as they are joined in the mind: only thus can two images connect like wires and  
spark <sup>14</sup>

Buildings absorb memories they are stored  
upon return these memories come alive

Photographs recharge bring closer to mind events  
After a death it is common practice to gather photographs

‘You Should Gather the Photographs Together’: <sup>15</sup>

Back to her streets and familiarity: 1950s Gladys,  
Ocean Fleets, buildings in need of smog damaged  
sand blast.

Camels on the Mersey. Elephants at Lime Street.

Hanker for past. A purer city. Billboards painted  
on walls: ‘Phillips and Charles’ viewed from Costa’s  
first floor window.

In parkland near Port Sunlight, a fallen tree is chopped  
ready for firewood.

She consumes me, desire to return to her welcoming arms.

Events imagined or real events as told?  
It's odd that I can walk streets  
that my Aunty walked when she was young  
Do her memories interfere with mine? The city is never far from mind

Objects become muses of memory<sup>16</sup>

The creation of the unknown  
Do dreams seep into walls?  
The morning chimney light  
proof of existence  
Do you remember mornings shared?  
Do you understand my language?

Is it about communication or the ability to communicate?<sup>17</sup>

We are born into language but a language not our own<sup>18</sup>

Through acquisition we share  
a common language  
shared words shared meaning

A walk leads to sadness back to  
a garden and

*Summer's Arc of Sun:* <sup>19</sup>

Red brick lit from light summer's arc—of sun  
rook sat on chimney stack  
peaceful gaze shattered by swallow's  
fighter plane attack, rook shifts

he played amongst the lavender  
like velvet to be coaxed  
I catch the essence  
that lingers

How I wish you were here with me now <sup>20</sup>

*It is in the lines [ . . . ] it is in the coldness of Cathedrals* <sup>21</sup>

The power to create the power to invent

Technique over content content over technique  
poets are writing machines

Be open to the poem's approach  
let it wash over you sense its inspiration

An active compliance the poem is the poem

Accept the lineage

One of the limits of inspiration may be its very spontaneity <sup>23</sup>

Revisiting may be painful but productive

words appear different upon reflection

The authenticity is in the spontaneity—the spark of an idea  
and the generative notion of poetics

the poetics of pain

4 Real

Dust settles on papers stacked

Poems are understood when they are achieved <sup>24</sup>

Mourning works a terrible logic. It is a monster, like Time, and akin to Death — perhaps a younger sibling — that devours and rebuilds only to devour again. For that, it is like poetry as well. Poetry is itself another monster, a murmur, as some philosophers would have it, between worlds, if not between the living and the dead, than between the possibilities of each <sup>25</sup>

Perhaps it is anticipation

like journeys along the Welsh coast

A poetics of absence

where clouds form patterns on grass

Can the reader share in the experience?

A remnant of a mark on the forearm

a reminder

like not washing the towel like sitting alone

on the stairs like putting the red wrap on the bed  
as a reminder

Do these words detach at birth and go about the world without control?

Poem as artefact as poetics

How quickly the dead are gone into us, sealed away into their only after-life, the one of our memory, the echo of laughter shared, the quiet bonds and history of friendship that slips discreetly beyond life and death

like realising this is permanent

from 'Conker': <sup>27</sup>

The trees are losing their leaves

That goodness via tablet form  
runs through those scarred veins  
pumped slow

The tarmac catches the afternoon light

Three movements to fade  
a handshake a kiss a wave  
fades to white

You were my absence.  
Wherever I breathed, you found me  
lying in the word  
that spoke its way back  
to this place <sup>28</sup>

Connect through text  
inconceivable to be without  
such facility

futility in understanding  
two worlds collide  
the before the after

Build a soundtrack  
artefacts possessions  
what was yours is now mine

the authority of authorship

poetry should be written any way it chooses

Sadness and joy are never separate <sup>29</sup>

Early morning  
and late at night  
the spirit of silence

before the hidden track

Contemplation during  
creative lull

Is poetry love's labour?

I believe that poetry is an action, ephemeral or solemn, in which there enter as equal partners solitude and solidarity, emotion and action, the nearness to oneself, the nearness to mankind and to the secret manifestations of nature <sup>30</sup>

Poetics is ethical—it is worded beyond a man's lifetime <sup>31</sup>

to be inhabited  
and understood

gathered as memento

the sound of an ice-cream  
van merges with birdsong  
another era an interval  
given to history

Afternoon spent passing  
shared finality  
evening away lost to time

padding to quietness  
reminder behind  
left amongst the everyday

routine uninterrupted  
shaped by presence and absence

Remembering brings the emptiness, the acutely painful awareness of irreparable loss.<sup>32</sup>

from 'How Animals Work':<sup>33</sup>

    this nature of happiness  
    an extension of adequacy

    tolerable and bearable  
    search the heart of the other

Every time I see the grave, I get that empty feeling where something was, and isn't anymore, and it will never be again.<sup>34</sup>

Writing a new desk a new  
location a new approach

of difficulty  
blinds study of landscape

this letter of mourning  
an undisclosed recipient

'spots of time'<sup>35</sup>

The city seduces still  
the proximity of memory

A plot of permanence  
mosaic of memories

you remain

I cannot forget

## NOTES

- 1 Iain Sinclair, *Theatre of the City* in *The Guardian*, Thursday July 14th 2005, (London and Manchester).
- 2 Siri Hustvedt, *What I Loved* (London: Sceptre, 2003), p.177.
- 3 Robert Sheppard, *The Necessity of Poetics*, (Liverpool: Ship of Fools, 2002), p.5.
- 4 Andrew Taylor 'Catalf' *And the Weary are at Rest*, (Sunnyoutside Press, 2008).
- 5 Epic45, 'Walk led to Happiness' on *England Fallen Over EP* (Make Mine Music: MMM014, 2005).
- 6 Epic45, 'The Year Ahead' on *England Fallen Over EP* (Make Mine Music: MMM014, 2005).
- 7 Portal, 'Waves & Echoes' on *Waves and Echoes* (Make Mine Music: MMM012 2005).
- 8 Andrew Taylor, 'Poetry and Skin Cream' in *Poetry and Skin Cream* (Liverpool: erbacce Press, 2004), p.1.
- 9 Andrew Taylor 'Catalf' *And the Weary are at Rest*, (Sunnyoutside Press, 2008).
- 10 Mark Kozelek, 'Duk Koo Kim' (Vinyl Films 10" vinyl recording 2004).
- 11 Julian Cope, 'Torpedo', *Fried* (Mercury Records 1984).
- 12 Due to having my own website, {[www.andrewtaylorpoetry.com](http://www.andrewtaylorpoetry.com)} where I can post poems, usually work which has been previously published in magazines and books, I have received communications from people in places such as New York City and Chile.
- 13 Siri Hustvedt, *What I Loved* (Sceptre: London, 2003), p.365.
- 14 Allen Ginsberg, *What Book: Buddha Poems From Beat To Hip-hop*, (ed. Gary Gach) (Berkeley: Parallax Press: 1998), quoted at <http://www.poetspath.com/transmissions/messages/ginsberg.html> 10th August 2005.