

Annual writers' holiday organised by the
UKAuthors.com website

UKAway 2008

at Bellapais, Northern Cyprus

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The cover picture is a detail from an oil painting of Bellapais Abbey by moonlight painted by Dr Elizabeth Burbidge (1921 — 1985) and is reproduced by the kind permission of her son Richard Carmichael, 30th Chief of the Name and Arms and 26th Baron of the lands of Carmichael in Lanarkshire, Scotland.

It is a tradition of recent origin that the UKAuthors.com website organises an annual holiday retreat for writers and their friends at a warm Mediterranean location for a week of writing, reading, talk and play in the supportive company of fellow writers. The first one was in Methana in Greece in the week July 7th – July 14th 2007. A chapbook similar to this one was produced after that events and copies of both, either printed or as free PDF downloads, can be obtained from:

www.lulu.com/golddustmagazine

This year we hired three large

interconnected houses in Bellapais in Northern Cyprus, a small village on the hillside about four miles inland from the fishing and resort town of Kyrenia (called in Turkish 'Girne').

Our accommodation was near 'Bitter Lemons', the house where Lawrence Durrell lived when he published his autobiography of the same name in 1957. Our 'absentee landlord' in Scotland was Richard Carmichael, Chief of the Carmichael clan (mentioned in the panel above) whose family home this once was.



The village of Bellapais from the hill above. Our cottages are behind the purple bougainvillea, bottom right. The Abbey is at the top.

We had a small private swimming pool (though the weather limited its usefulness), all mod cons, and superb views to the sea in one direction and the nearby mountains in the other from the terraces and balconies. Deirdre, a good friend of the owner, operated a small bistro and B&B next door, where we often met for breakfast, drinks or an evening meal.

Below are some holiday snapshots of the cottages and surrounding area.



Our private swimming pool



View out to sea from roof



Inside one of the bedrooms



Bellpaise Abbey at dusk



Val's favourite waiter



Fertile meadows below the village



Val at outdoor cafe, Bellapais



At the 'Tree of Idleness' restaurant



Dancer getting high



Harbourside at Kyrenia



Hard at work



Inside Bellapais Abbey walls



On a path above Bellapais



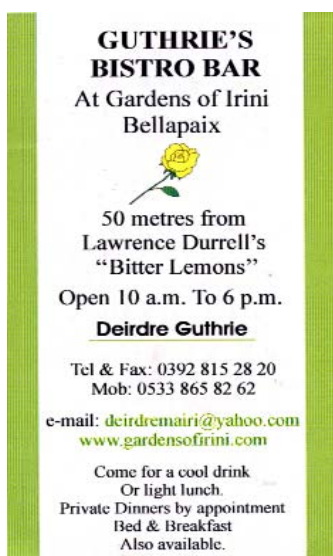
The narrow road up to our house



Deirdre's restaurant next door



The lady herself



Her business card



Some of her cats and dogs



Above left: Opulence of our sitting room.

Above: This brave little creature stood guard in the lounge to protect us from insect invasion.

Left: we wondered how to pronounce the name of this popular domestic appliance company.





Kyrenia Harbour



Night time in Bellapais



The eight participants

These are the eight people who attended this year's UKAway. Anthony is a former Shakespearean actor, now writing a film script as well as painting and sculpting. Sharon accompanied Val, her mother, but is not herself a writer. John, who lives in Cyprus, is a member of a 30-strong local writers' group and working on a children's novel. Annie is a journalist with wide writing interests. David is mainly a short story writer and active in UKAuthors.com, UKA Press, bluechrome and Gold Dust. Val writes poetry and some prose and is active on UKAuthors.com. Geoff is an award-winning science fiction writer and co-editor of the sci fi magazine *Escape Velocity*. Arnie, Annie's partner, took part in the social side of the event.

What follows is a short sample of each person's work. In most cases these were either worked-on or written from start to finish at UKAway.

The Witch's Alien

a science fantasy
story by
Geoff Nelder



Geoff is the author of *Escaping Reality*, a humorous thriller published by Brambling Books. ISBN: 0-9549563-2-X see geoffnelder.com/ERinfo.htm

Geoff is co-editor of scifi magazine, *Escape Velocity*
www.escapevelocitymagazine.com

Aldyth spat onto Kurtak, her familiar. He squealed back and it was that ingredient she required for her warts cure. Capturing the exact sound was an art, and she the artist. The villagers paid her in bread and organ donation, but not for her warts remedy - she needed that. As the only health service for miles around, Aldyth dispensed odorous prophylactics and sore cures for the post-apocalyptic population in Kyrenia.

"You there, Witch?" called Baron Alakati, his bulk blocked any chance of the weak sunlight sneaking through the open doorway.

She pulled back her black veil, enough to let him have the benefit of her luminous evil eye, but not to reveal her worst nose wart against which her latest nostrum had been ineffective.

"What brings you here, Baron, have ye crushed another maiden and need more of my slimming elixir?" Aldyth stifled a snort as the man angled his body to gain entry. She'd learnt not to laugh at this local ruler. For a reminder she turned her mutant eye to her right hand and its missing little finger. She snarled at the series of failed incantations to evoke revenge. What did he want? Her

weekly tribute was already in his coffers.

He wheezed squeezed into her home; the barely habitable ground floor of a crumbled apartment block. He ducked as rumbling disturbed the buckled ceiling. The floors above had rubbed in the mysterious Great Whiteout - not that it was such a mystery to Aldyth since Kurtak found her. Strange creatures scurried around up there. Aldyth had become inured to the sounds but her eyes raised up parallel to the Baron's. She shrugged as a line of dust fell from a crack into the ingredients bowl she held.

"Witch," he said, looking around, apparently for an unencumbered seat. "I need one of those pheromone love potions. The Aphrodite linctus? I've been told they're one of your rare successes."

"Indeed they are, but why dursn't thou get your henchmen to hold her down, like ye do with your other women?"

His incipient rage enlarged his body. "I need more than carnal gratification, you hag. I want... I want..."

"Her love? Ah, all thou hast to do is cancel a week's tribute. We'd all love ye then."

"Be careful, witch. Can you do it

or is it rumour?"

Like the rest of her potions? She read his open mind.

Aldyth had discovered a laboratory containing a comprehensive range of twenty-fourth century chemical reagents and a librarian's archive of apothecary tomes. More importantly, what the locals assumed to be magick came in useful. Let them think it was pheromones.

"How about letting me off a month's payments in exchange?" she said, picking up and stroking Kurtak, a cross between a cat and... something else.

The Baron's bearded face contorted in disgust. "How about me arranging for you to lose another digit if you don't?"

Kurtak released an unearthly deep growl. Aldyth increased stroke frequency and said, "I need to know who she be: for sample purposes."

"No. I'll send round hair samples. Anything else? Urine, faeces, skin?"

"She's got under your skin, hasn't she?" Mistake. She mollified by rushing on. "Anything with DNA. A nail clipping, nose hair - oh, she wouldn't have any of that would she?"

His steel grey eyes moistened. "No. She's perfect. I'll send a sample round and I'll come for the potion tomorrow."

"It would be a pleasure to see ye, but it won't be ready for three days."

He snarled, but stopped when Kurtak echoed and spiked his fur.

"I need some hair of yorn too," she said, making a grab at his arm. He flinched as her practised pinch extracted follicles along with black hairs.

"Quite mad," he muttered, as he slammed the door on his exit and

brought down more ceiling fragments. Aldyth brushed plaster off Kurtak's back. She'd found him, or maybe her, a month after the Great Whiteout. Her assumption he was a mutant cat had to be revised after a meeting of minds. His disastrous landing forced a modification of his system's invasion methodology.

The day came. Aldyth smirked, followed by another gob onto Kurtak. It purred contentedly and wept as it followed her through a steel door into the laboratory. It'd been ten minutes since the Baron's delivery man handed over the lock of shiny auburn hair. Aldyth sniffed and smiled at the lingering fragrance of orange and cinnamon.

"She smells good enough to eat, Kurtak, and we know this damsel; Celestina, the book restorer's daughter. No wonder he wants her for keeps; her beauty goes deeper than her skin. Oh look we have the follicles too."

Aldyth cleansed away remnants of shampoo in diluted ethanol then set about the serious business of extracting the unique essence of Celestina. She reached for a solid substrate in which to pack the now finely chopped hair. To a lump of dough she added the mixed hair samples from the Baron and his intended victim, poor thing, and massaged the mixture into a small ball.

"Now let the magick begin, eh, Kurtak?" She reached for her incantation tubes, and her bony fingers played them like panpipes. The sound shimmered the air though the frequencies sang outside the range Aldyth could hear. Kurtak transposed

the music into a warbling wail sending sunlit dust motes into oscillation.

Ceasing, Aldyth said: "Let us be in awe of the power of infrasound. Now let's move to the next stage." She carefully lifted the nearly completed potion and threw it in the air.

Kurtak
leapt
and

caught
it in his
needle-like
teeth.

Aldyth smiled as the creature swallowed.

"I've not made it too big? Good, now go and fetch Celestina. She has to have the treatment before the Baron. No retching until you return."

Kurtak licked his lips, flicked one of his tails, and leapt onto the draining board. He scattered antique Disney crockery, the creatures on which were now mimicked by reality, before leaping out of the open window.

Forty-six minutes later Aldyth watched Celestina hesitantly approach the open doorway. Either she'd taken considerable persuading or Kurtak had found amusing diver-

sions en route. He'd better not have ingested any morsels. It would be a pity if the essences were conjoined by chewed mouse, or a lump of a sentinel's ankle.

"Come in, dear, I've cleared this armchair especially for you."

"I - I don't know why I've been led here by your... thing."

Her waist-length amber hair could have been used as a scarf to hide her face, but unlike many locals, Celestina's only imperfections were a few teenage spots, pink on alabaster. Pale blue eyes nictated between Kurtak, bottles, dark recesses; apparently hoping to spot an escape route even though the front door remained open. She didn't look at Aldyth - anywhere but.

"Kurtak brought you here because I told him to. You are at risk from an evil man. Look, he did this to me." She held up the remaining stump of her missing little finger. The girl shrank back.

"Don't worry, sweetheart, I've a bespoke medication here, a lovely little brew. It's nearly perfected. Sit there... While I complete the prescription here's a hand mirror, see if you can find your real self.

"Kurtak, it's time, into the kitchen." Aldyth waved him through the doorway. "Your insides should've worked their magick by now. Cough it up." The centuries-old creature retched and regurgitated a blood-red lump into Aldyth's hand. Her nose contorted.

"It's cooked," she said, knowing that the trace odour of caramel, mixed

with a whiff of copper and a hint of iced shout needed only the last step. "Another." The second lump came up slimier than the first. She placed both in a mortar. Aldyth glanced over her shoulder to ensure the girl remained in the chair before opening a small safe. She pulled out a steel flask.

"Nearly out of your blue stuff, Kurtak." She used a hypodermic needle to extract and then inject five millilitres into the lumps before mashing them and adding white vinegar. "When your friends arrive, we won't need the lab."

Filling two phials she held one up to the window. Kurtak tilted his head to share the view. A grey cloudy liquid

flecked with red and green brought a smile to both.

"Just like mashed brains, isn't it, Kurtak? Celestina will vomit when the Baron closes within a yard of her. Revenge for me, a saving grace for her - heh." Kurtak licked his lips in agreement.

"And when he drinks his potion, he'll be the last conversion, not that he or the others will realise it for a generation. Our work here is done. It's time to move on to the next town. You'll keep to our pact, won't you, Kurtak?" She scratched her nose wart, as she savoured the thought that in a few years she'd be the only woman men would desire.



Two limericks from Val McKinley

The lanes all narrow in Belapais
Meandering merrily in odd ways
Yet what drives me silly
They're all bloody hilly
Revealing an unfit malaise

A cat from the gardens of Ireni
One evening appeared like a genie
I made quite a fuss
When this marmalade puss
Scratched at the window to see me.



A Promise Of Cyprus

a piece of autobiographical writing by
Val McKinley



Here I am then, Cyprus at last. I had begun to think it would always remain a dream unfulfilled.

Looking out of my bedroom window overlooking Kyrenia now renamed Girni by the Turkish Cypriots, my mind slips back to an evening many years ago and a promise made to me by my late ex-husband, David. We were enjoying our first meal together in our new home. He was regaling me with another story of the troubled island during his time with the air force regiment in the fifties at the height of the conflict there.

He had paused for a few minutes, his face sombre. "Poor sods never stood a chance, there wasn't much left to put in the body bags when it came right down to it"

He looked back at me and said sheepishly: "Sorry, didn't mean to tell you that tonight, especially tonight; tonight is supposed to be a celebration. I'm going to make you a promise, I reckon if we start saving now, you know, a few quid here and there, by the time our fifteenth anniversary comes around we could just about afford a couple of weeks holiday

there. Mum'll have the kids for us."

I sat open mouthed not able to say a word; it was 1968 holidays abroad were still for the professionals and the very wealthy. People like us were lucky to go camping on the east coast, yet he had made me a promise so if he said it would happen it would, I believed in him fervently then.

It was not long after moving that David took a part time job to help with the extra expense of owning our own home and it soon became evident that he enjoyed it more than his regular shift work. It was in fact the first soft chord of the death knell to our marriage and ultimately his untimely demise.

Between shifts of his regular job, he had begun to help our friend Alec, with his removal business.

The aspect of this work that had so fascinated him, was that part of the job that dealt with estate agents who had been retained by solicitors acting for people with deceased estates, which meant clearing properties and transporting the effects to auction to be disposed of. Occasionally an estate would come

along where there were no beneficiaries, so all proceeds from the sales automatically went to the treasury.

This to David's way of brooding was a crime so it was with a clear conscience that anything valuable found hidden in secret drawers of desks, behind wardrobes or under mattresses belonged to him... finder's keeper's being his philosophy.

It may not have worried David's conscience but it played on mine continually. Nothing I could say though would persuade him to see my point of view, to my shame I gave up protesting and bowed to the inevitable. Soon the whole of our lives revolved around this new love in my husband's life, mine and the children's needs becoming an encumbrance to him.

Fun family holidays camping up by the pine woods at Wells - Next - The - Sea for a fortnight became a thing of the past. His annual leave from his regular job was now taken up with the removal trade or portering for the auction marts. Family holidays were restricted to long weekends over a bank holiday, usually in an up market hotel at Cromer, Sherringham or Blakeney.

Then the day came when that soft knell rang a little louder; I knew the minute he walked through the door something momentous had happened, he had that glint in his eye that told me whatever was on his mind, he had already made his decision. If I had an objection or any other kind of opinion, tough... I could like it or lump it.

When at last he started to tell me his news I felt my heart sink to my boots but I knew him well enough by then to

know that anything I had to say would not be heeded, he was merely informing me of his intent not asking for my blessing.

His eyes alight with excitement he told me of Alec's desire to retire, that Alec's own son was not interested in the business and finally that Alec had offered him the chance to buy him out for just two thousand pounds. He said two thousand pounds as if it were nothing, when in fact only a few short years earlier we had bought our smart semi detached house for one thousand six hundred and forty pounds more than Alec was asking for what was in reality a very old Pantehnicon and as he claimed the good will.

I suddenly remembered the promise of Cyprus he had made on the night we moved into our lovely new home and was stunned to realise that our fifteenth anniversary was only a year away and in that moment I knew beyond doubt my dream of Cyprus with David was becoming more and more remote.

The deal took a few weeks to finalize and inflicted many a sleepless night on me; because in order to achieve his ambition we had to use our home as collateral against a loan from the bank, an action that didn't sit well with me at all. As usual though David's decisions were unilateral and my opinions ignored, even though he needed my signature on all of the documents. David always got his own way in the end.

Yes... Cyprus remained a dream and over the next fourteen years the soft knell grew gradually and irrevocably louder, but that's another story.

As I look out again over Kyrenia I



think how nice it would have been to have shared this moment with David. The fates obviously had other plans for us. Then another thought bursts

joyfully into my mind. How wonderful it is to be sharing my cherished dream with our first born daughter.



Limericks by David

Some folks who believed they could write

Took a flyer to Cyprus one night
Where they read and discussed
And dissected and cussed
While the wine got them high as a kite

Philosophical thought does compel
The conclusion that Muses do dwell
In the smallest of rooms
Where fantasy blooms
As our bodily wastes we expel

On an Island that folks oft invade
UKAuthors but one week have stayed

Yet their influence strong
Will persist for as long
As the wink of a coy Turkish maid

Our ponderous talks must conclude

That our skills at the pen are quite crude

But there's plenty of books

Writ by poets and cooks

Those who write any more should be sued.



Malignant Moor

by
Tony Culver

Daphne manoeuvred her injured sister down a side street and onto the steps of a terraced house where she sat beside her. It was 1934. Behind them the British Union of Fascist Olympia Rally had descended into violent mayhem.

"How are you feeling?" she enquired.

"Dizzy."

"Not surprised, you've taken a bad beating. You were punching well over your weight. Why on earth did you pitch in?"

"They've got to be stopped, darling, got to be stopped. Bastard Moseleyites!"

"Getting yourself killed isn't the way. Think you'll be up to riding the bike back across London?"

"Give me a chance!"

"Of course. I didn't mean ..."

"In a while, if we stagger in the direction of High Street Ken, get a cup of tea at a Lyons Corner House, this spinning might stop and I'll be able to peddle. If not, just have to take a bus and come back for the bikes."

Her sister nodded, rebuffed. They sat in silence, watching the fighting at the end of the street. Eventually they collected their bikes which were chained to a railing in a leafy Georgian row set back from the

High Street. The violence continued around the hall.

Next morning, Margot lay shivering in bed. Her hair poked from beneath a bandage, wet with sweat, her right eye swollen and discoloured in her deadly pale face. Daphne knocked and came in with a breakfast tray. The undamaged eye half opened. A slight smile twitched at pale lips.

"Don't say it."

"Pretty as a picture."

"I know."

She propped herself up against a couple of white pillows and reached for the bowl of cornflakes.

"Whoa! I really do feel the worse for wear. Not a bright idea to take on a lout built like Johnny Wiessmuller. But .. but .." she closed her eyes trying to remember. "There's nothing broken is there?"

"No. You've got three badly bruised ribs. A two inch gash to the skull which needed stitches and that remarkable addition to your beauty. You should be up in a couple of days."

"It's going to be longer than that, Daphne, I feel totally drained. Battered all over. Finished."

She put down the picked-at bowl and lifted the cup of Earl Grey tea.

"I'm not surprised," Daphne said. "It's not just the beating you got last night. You've been working obsessively for weeks. Used up your



reserves of energy. You need a break. Drop the anti-right politicking and go away. Take a holiday."

Margot sipped at the tea and considered what her ever-so-concerned sister had said. Weighed the options. Stay with 'The Struggle'.

Living on coffee and gaspers until all hours, knocking out angry articles, rushing off to demos. Probably get beaten up again. Sit round in the office having heated conversations. Trudge for hours in the wet pushing leaflets through letter flaps. Or swan off for a while somewhere countrified. Return re-energised and renewed. The second option invited. Moseley and his thick brutalised bully-boys could wait.

"Alright." She said, looking at her sister. A framed black and white photo of Greta Garbo as Queen Christina hung on the wall behind her. "I'll shove off somewhere. Get some sea air in my lungs. It's time to let up."

"Wonderful!" A pleased smile suffused big sister's plain features. "I've got a hol from the Library due. Why don't we bundle off together? Go biking again. Explore another slice of Pa's adopted green and pleasant." She glanced out of the open window. The sunlight sparkled from a blue sky onto their in-full-flower garden, which Isaac had tended lovingly since Mama's death. "It's high summer. Just the time to tootle off. You know it's never much fun on one's own."

Margot touched her sister's left cheek. "Why don't you organise it? I'm too exhausted to think. Any plan you make will be fine." Sank back



into the pillows.

A few weeks later, on their black 3-gear Raleigh bikes, saddle bags packed with camping gear, they crossed London to Liverpool Street Station and the train for Yorkshire.

"This is the itinerary," said Daphne, laying a map on the banquette. "We don't get to York until mid afternoon. So we camp in the city tonight. Tomorrow we tootle off round the historic sites then out to Long Marston in the cool of the evening." She tapped the map. "We set up tent there the second night."

"Long Marston," her sister murmured. "Sounds familiar."

"After that we circle York. Stop at villages - Stillington, Elvington, Marton, Tadcaster." She traced the route with a forefinger. "We then head down towards Pontefract. Loiter there for a couple of days and come back to London. It's a round trip of about 100 miles. But we stop to relax; lie in the sun; bird-watch; stretch our legs along bridle paths; have picnics; booze in country pubs whenever we want." She looked at her sister and around the carriage, with its black and white photos of beauty spots above the seats. Beyond the tracks, brick-built tenements hung with washing being grimed by smoke, chuffed past to the wheels' clickety-clack.

"Sound alright?"

"Blissful," said her sister flatly in a non-committal voice. She recalled why Long Marston had registered. A Civil War battle had raged nearby. Prince Rupert's army defeated by Cromwell's New Model Army. The

battle that lost King Charles control of the north. She remembered the date - 1634. Its three hundredth anniversary would fall on the day they camped there, July the second. Curious. She gazed out of the window as the train thundered into the suburbs.

They arrived in York at 3-30 in the afternoon. The weather was fine. Finding the camp site proved no problem. Setting up the tent, in a stiff breeze did. The sun was dipping below the trees by the time they'd finished. Joining up with two young male campers, they wandered off to see some of the city. Overhead crows flapped across the darkening sky towards the dark silhouettes of the cathedral's towers. An amusing evening unfolded with their new friends, much of it on the terrace of an olde worlde public house listening to a local folk group.

The next day was hazy, and the local paper forecast a late storm. They packed the tent, exchanged addresses with the two men, and cycled off to see more sights. Travelling slowly, stopping to take photographs and to eat, it took them 2 hours to get anywhere near the ancient battlefield. They spotted a farm labourer leading a horse shackled to a hay-laden cart. When asked where the battlefield was he said that they were standing in it. Noticing their bike bags, he told them that the farmer wouldn't mind if

they camped on his land. He suggested White Sykes Close, a copse of trees on a low rise.

"Should be sheltered enough, Missy, if'n tha don't mind ghosts."

"Ghosts?" The two sophisticated Londoners smiled.

"Fairies, too, I imagine," interjected Margot.

"No, none of them. Seen soldiers meself. Long line of 'em marching oop this lane." He paused thoughtfully and added "Mind, ah'd had took one or two ciders." The women laughed. He looked at them seriously. "Ah were sober the next year. Cavalry this time, trotting across that field, then full o' wheat, but flattening nothin'. Every July 2nd, conditions right, yer like t'see somethin'." He looked up at the sky over which dark clouds were collecting. "Storm's brewin'. Battle were fought in foul weather, at night, 300 year ago." He touched his worn, flat cap. "Sleep well. If yer have second thoughts, there's a pub in village." He pulled on the horse's bridle. "Hup you!" The docile piebald plodded off behind him down the lane.

"Ghosts!" said Daphne.

"No such thing! If there are, well, what fun! Make for a memorable holiday. Over there?" She pointed

across the golden almost ripe field. Big sister nodded. "Let's go." The ripening fields that had been moorland in Cromwell's day stretched in all directions. As they got to The Close, the sky overhead



darkened. Thunder rumbled in the distance, there was a bolt of lightening. They hurried to erect the tent. Thunder rolled around them. Within it they heard the sound of a trumpet. They froze and stared out over the fields. A brief martial tune could be discerned, but the



notes sounded strangely. The high ones were clear, the middle muted, the low faint and indistinct. Each note seemed to come from a different direction. Just the one phrase. They looked at each other.

"A bugler in the village hall?" Suggested Margot.

They turned back to their task. Another roll of thunder shook the air, which appeared to have within it the rhythmic pattern of horses galloping. The horses seemed to sweep towards and over them. At the same time, the wind whipped up the corn in long lines. It swayed as though bearing ranks of cavalry up the rise. The wind felt exactly like huge horses passing on either side. The sky darkened. Sheet lightning flickered to the west accompanied by multiple claps of thunder as resonant as an artillery barrage. Immediately, it was answered to the east by more lightning, more cracks of thunder.

"We'd best get under cover!" the ever-prudent elder sister shouted. "We're going to be soaked!"

At that moment the black clouds some distance away vomited forth a grey sheet that moved slowly across the field towards the Close. Both thought they saw, in the flickering

dusk light, the figures of soldiers advancing in the line of turbulent water. Daphne stopped, half in and half out of the tent flap. Were those cracks the sounds of muskets being fired in a ragged volley or was it again the crackle of sheet lightening?

Before the downpour engulfed them, it stopped advancing and deluged a line in the field of corn. Terrified, she ducked into the tent. Little sis remained outside, prepared to tolerate weather for a while. She'd never come across such a storm.

The wind swung around and blew from the opposite direction. With it came another wall of rain which advanced steadily towards the first now static wall. Again she discerned the outlines of advancing soldiers in the wild criss-crossing patterns. Deluge met deluge, or perhaps it the two lines of infantry that clashed. Gobbets of mud were thrown up by heavy rain drops which exploded in the earth like bullets. Spears of water sliced hard into hedges. Tearing through the branches the wind sounded like the weird howling of warriors. She scurried into the tent and tied the flap. Cast around for a towel she vigorously dried her hair. The paraffin lamp had been lit. It threw long wavering highlights and shadows across them.

"So much for a peaceful holiday." Margot muttered angrily.

"Unnatural forces are at work out there," whimpered her sister, clutching her sleeping bag.

"You don't say! Seemed to me

like it was the four hundred and forty four horsemen of the apocalypse. Quite terrifying."

"I think it's you. You've carried your love of violence with you. It's infected this land. Brought out the long dead violence of the battle. Recreated this conflict in the weather system."

"Don't be bloody daft, Daphe. I'm no psychic. Anyway I hate violence."

"No you don't, you love it. Pore over every black event in the press. Talk endlessly about the rise of Fascism in Germany. It excites you. I watched you as you pitched into the melee at Olympia. You were smiling with pleasure as you clouted that usher. Nothing could please you more than the total destruction of Moseley's crew. Their blood running in the streets, bodies torn by bullets."

"It will come to that, sweetheart, it will."

"But you'll enjoy it! Every Blackshirt killed will be a perverse thrill for you."

"They're filth! They want to wipe half the human race off the face of the planet. Jews, gypsies, trade unionists, non-Aryans. So, why shouldn't I want to destroy them? They're a threat to everything that's decent. They have to be defeated."

'But do you have to take pleasure in their destruction? Exult in every battle we win, every casualty they receive? Fight them, but don't wallow in the gore, don't take pleasure of killing them. That makes you the same as them.'

Margot looked long into her soul. Saw within the hatred that had filled her. Hatred that willed the destruction of the Blackshirts and the international Fascist movement. She would much prefer not to hate. Work for the cause, but not burning all the time with hate. It was that which had exhausted her. She looked at her perceptive elder sister and smiled. Relaxation filled her whole being. She drew back the tent flap. Outside the rain had stopped. The sky was beginning to clear. Somewhere quite close they heard the whining of a small dog. She cocked an ear. She vaguely recalled that Prince Rupert had lost his pet lap-dog during the battle. A few weeks later she inadvertently discovered that a Royalist regiment called 'The Whitecoats' had been massacred on White Sykes Close. Just what she had wanted to see happen to the blackshirts.



Wee Hughie

by
David Gardiner



This is written in dialect, which is something I very seldom do. It's intended to be read aloud, in a harsh working class Belfast accent. Ian Paisley, but with the volume turned down a bit. It's my 'back up' piece for reading at this year's UKAlive in London, or as a second piece if I get an encore. It's a rather serious theme. I hope you enjoy it.

We all got a day off school when they awful.

buried wee Hughie. The head of the Christian Brothers came up from Dublin to make a speech at the funeral. It was great. Ye shoulda' seen all the TV cameras an' the microphones an' everything. I don't remember what he said but it was right good, like. All about how guns never solve problems and ye still have to talk things through after all the shootin's done.

I never said nothin' about it, never even told it in Confession, but I felt terrible bad about it. It's not like I really done anything bad, but I don't think what I done was too clever either.

Ye see wee Hughie's house was on my way home from school an' I always dropped in to see him when I was passin' by. Wee Hughie's big brother Liam had a motorbike an' we used to sit on it, an' wee Hughie even knew how to turn on the engine an' make it roar, only if Liam was anywhere near by an' heard us doin' it he would come back an' give the two of us a clip around the ear.

Liam used to keep pigeons as well, in a wee shed up on the flat roof above the back extension, an' wee Hughie an' me used to go up an' feed them an' look at them like. Liam used to get annoyed about that too because he said we would make them too fat. They smelled bloody

Wee Hughie's other brother was only seven so we never paid him no heed. I hardly even knew his name even though I'd been around there all them times, but of course the whole of Ireland knows his name now. Pedro it is. They say he had to go into some kind of a clinic after he done it, so he must have known what it was he done. A lot of people said he was too young to know, but if he was too young to know then why did he have to go into the clinic, that's what I say.

Liam used to play the guitar too an' sing rebel songs. Right good he was. He used to sing *The Foggy Dew* an' *Father Murphy* an' *The Rifles of the IRA*. He could do a few good songs as well, Beatles and Cliff Richard an' that, but mostly it was aul'



rebel songs. He told us all about how the Protestants shot Kevin Barry in 1916 an' how millions of people died in the Famine because the

Protestants took all the good potatoes for themselves. The same aul' stuff ye' get at school, but he seemed to really care about it. He said a war was comin', the Second Irish War of Independence, he called it, and how we all had a duty to do our bit. My Mammy thought he was a wee bit touched. Not right in the head, like. Wee Hughie said Liam was a patriot, ready an' willin' to give his life for Ireland. I thought the two of them was right daft, but I didn't say nothin'. I just liked the pigeons and the motorbike, an' I wondered if Wee Hughie would inherit them if Liam gave his life for Ireland.

The day wee Hughie took me up to Liam's room to see the gun, we knew Liam wasn't anywhere around because we'd had the motorbike engine goin' an' he hadn't heard it. The gun was under Liam's pillow, an' it was grey an' heavy, an' very cold when ye picked it up. It was a real one too, an' there was bullets in it. Wee Hughie said Liam needed it for personal protection, because he was in the Volunteers now, an' if anybody from the UVF found out about him they would be round to shoot him in his bed.

Wee Hughie showed me how to take the magazine of bullets out and put it in again, an' we held the gun an' aimed it at one another an' said 'Bang! Bang! You're dead!' We didn't actually pull the trigger of course. We weren't that daft. The wee brother, Pedro, he must have been there watchin' us, but I never even noticed him.

An' two days later was when it all broke. Wee Hughie wasn't in school, but I thought he'd probably bunked off like he often did an' gone up Cave Hill

or somewhere to look for tadpoles or down the shipyards to watch the men with the welding gear an' the big cranes. The school secretary came around in the first period after Assembly an' told us all we had to go back to the hall again because Brother Bernard had an announcement to make. We had no idea what was comin', we were all dead excited, thought maybe the school was closin' down or something.

Apparently Liam had gone off very early in the morning without tellin' nobody, probably something to do with bein' in the Volunteers, and Pedro and wee Hughie was out of bed before their Mammy and Daddy. Wee Hughie's Daddy heard Pedro shoutin' 'Bang! Bang! You're dead!' And then there was a real bang. Loud enough for the neighbours to hear as well. And wee Hughie was dead. And Pedro hasn't said a single word since. And now he's in that clinic.



When Liam was arrested for havin' the gun he said he was proud of wee Hughie, that wee Hughie was the first casualty in the Second Irish War of Independence. I think maybe my Mammy was right about Liam. He was soft in the head, that one.



INTERACTIVE, MYRIAD FORM PAINTING, SCULPTURE & POTTERY

artist TONY CULVER

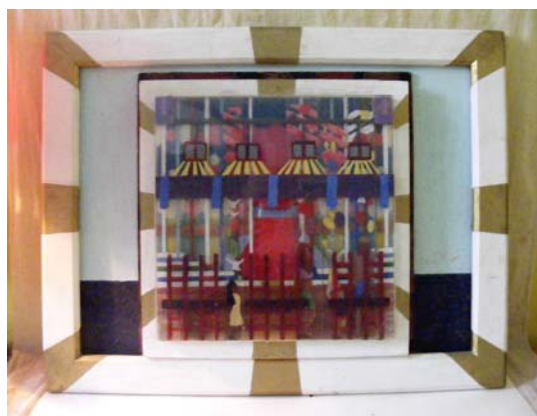


Unnoticed by most, within each field of art, forms are repeated, with minor amendments, for centuries or even millennia.

In PAINTING the dominant form since the Renaissance has been 'THE ITALIAN FORM'. This is 'rectangular, mainly single image, single surface, 2-dimensional, usually framed painting, wall hangable'. Permutations on this have made up most of the output of Western painters for 600 years. I've introduced several 'NEW PAINTING FORMS' - basic designs for what a painting can be. Photographs of one example can be seen below.

INTERACTIVE MYRIAD IMAGE PAINTINGS. These supplant the SINGLE surface with MULTIPLE surfaces: I use perspex sheets (2-5) over canvas, but retain the RECTANGLE. Create abstract compositions on ALL the surfaces, so as to produce a 3-D composition, colours and forms in front of colours and forms, giving a literal foreground and background. Between the surfaces I place LOOSE DOUBLE SIDED COLOUR AREA SLIDES which can be relocated by

the buyer, in any relationship to the fixed compositions. Thus tens of thousands of variations on the root composition can be created. Each variation is an 'original' for as long as it lasts (seconds or weeks). In this way one work holds a mirror up to that form-restricted single image opus stretching back across six centuries! It introduces THE PAINTING AS NUMERICALLY VAST COLLECTION instead of THE PAINTING AS SINGLE IMAGE DAUB (standard since 1450). These works thus, arguably, represent the most radical break with painting tradition in centuries. Regrettably, I am not in the Art World loop (art College grads doing their art college grad work for collectors of art college grad paintings) and the development has been suppressed (refused exhibition in London). This suppression to me indicates that what matters is that painters work the traditional form, with only superficial





changes to the flat single (usually) surface. To get innovations noticed one MUST have studied to M.A. or Phd level at a London Art College.

INTERACTIVE MYRIAD FORM SCULPTURE AND POTTERY. I applied the LOOSE COLOUR AREAS concept to both forms of expression. In sculpture these become LOOSE INTERLOCKING FORMS and in pottery LOOSE DECORATIVE EFFECTS. Sculpture and pottery are internationally based on concepts

of the North' bears similarities to the statues at Karnack in Egypt. I introduced sculpture which is made up of LOOSE INTERLOCKING PARTS reorganisable in MYRIAD different relationships, giving rise to myriad different sculptural forms.

In POTTERY the concept of THE SINGLE SKIN OF CLAY AROUND A SINGLE SPACE WITH FIXED DECORATIVE EFFECTS has dominated pottery since the craft began. It has been the foundation for the cup, mug,

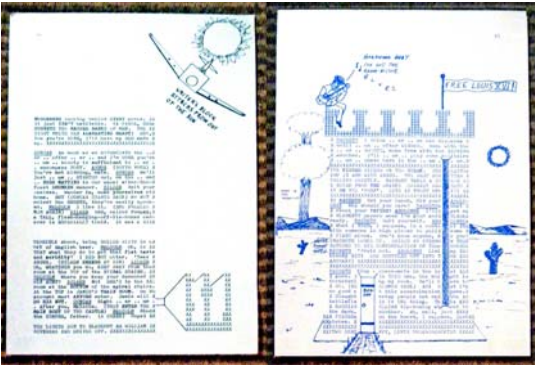


introduced some 8,000-10,000 years ago. In SCULPTURE the concept is the FIXED STANDING PIECE, as produced by the Egyptians, Greeks and Romans; monumentally in marble or stone, scaled down in temple pieces. For millennia this and FIXED WALL BAS/HIGH RELIEF SCULPTURE remained the two defining concepts of sculpture. Gormley's 'Angel

bowl, urn, amphora, jar, vase and goblet. Few potters have moved outside this tradition. The recent Turner Prize Winner (the pink dress potter) uses it, as did potters of ancient Egypt and all other 'famous' potters internationally, even the 'sublime' potters of Japan and the Leach family. The vase you can see in the photos is MULTIPLE SPACED WITH FIXED AND

LOOSE DECORATIVE EFFECTS. It has five functional spaces and fifty loose decorative effects which can be reorganised into an INFINITE NUMBER of different relationships to the work on the various lips around the top, middle and bottom. Visually, then, this one work is the largest collection of original pottery on the face of the planet! One vase which is, latently, an infinite number in one.

Of course, all such image variations, sculptural forms and ceramic effects are LATENT within each work, waiting to be realised by the buyer, adding a further dimension of innovation - the day by day interaction of the



buyer with the art work, changing it at will. Visually renewing it each day, minute or hour.

PUBLISHING - I introduced BOOK-DECOS (books as wall hangable visually individualised craft objects) and SCRIPTS/Mss IN EXHIBITION (sequential display of a script/Mss, each page an art object) in 1986. On one level they were a solution to 'The Rejection Slip'. Writers working through all levels of creating visually individualised units in Limited Editions (Book-Decos/Books as Sculpture). Also visually dramatising pages of a script/mss, each page an art object. Then exhibiting the results.

On another level they react against the hackneyed nature of

mainstream publishing and theatre. ONE form endlessly regurgitated, until recently, in each area - the BOOK (mag/newspaper design spin-offs) all with incredibly similar layouts, and THE SCRIPT IN PERFORMANCE. The history of both cultural areas comprises 'superficial amendments to archaisms', as does much of the history of painting, sculpture and pottery.

The four new developments lay the foundation stones for a New Cultural Sector - WRITERS AS EXHIBITING ARTISTS, in control of all levels of 'production'. However, like Cervantes's Novel Form that is



unlikely to become a reality in centuries. Extant practises; traditionalism; monopolistic dominance of the traditional forms and convenience thereof; the generally accepted concept of 'writer as collaborative artist, constantly having his mss amended'; the indifference of most consumers to The New in The Arts; the power of established profit oriented super-structures whose wealth is related to the labour of writers, will continue to suppress it.

As the War-Club-Wielding tribe of Europe, the U.K., specifically, is mainly against The New in the Arts of Peace. Vast sums spent on the new in the arts of war, though, to bash in the heads of foreigners.



The Lapse of the Gods



a modern
Greek tragedy by

John
Goodwin

Long, long ago the ancient Greek Gods lived on a mountain called Olympus, the highest peak on the Greek mainland. With falling support for these ancient but immortal deities they were forced to sell off their Olympian palace and accept more humble accommodation within the mortal world.

wife Hera who, although she loved him dearly, wished that sometimes he would let her get on with her poetry. Several other fallen Olympians settled in the United Kingdom. Equally fed up with Zeus's choice of weather they joined together and with the aid of Hermes, the messenger of the gods and computer expert, communi-



Zeus and Hera settled in Grantham England where Zeus being the leader of the gods set about promoting a ruler for his adopted land. He picked on a girl called Margaret as his protégé. Disappointed in his wilful charge he became sullen and being also the god of rain generally made life miserable for the English population. Not least of his victims was his

cated via the internet with an organisation called UKAuthors.com.

It was Apollo that persuaded the others that they needed a holiday in the sun. And so it was that a small group of gods took a flight to Cyprus.

The party included Apollo himself, who seemed to have acquired a lyrical Irish accent, Hera, who decided to bring her daughter Hebe for company,

Hephaestus the multitalented God of art and sculpture, and a newly wed couple, Dionysus and Demeter. Dionysus was the god of wine and agriculture. He had spent a long time searching the world for a decent drink before settling down with Demeter, the goddess of agriculture and free-lance journalist, on the Isle of Weight.

Helios, the god who was charged with pulling the sun across the sky with his golden chariot had already settled in Cyprus, in order to be closer to his work. He decided to join the group and putting the solar system on auto-pilot travelled overland to meet them at the airport. On the way he collected Hermes who due to extreme fleetness of foot arrived a week early. Helios borrowed the silver chariot of his wife Selene, goddess of the moon, as it was less likely to melt anything in the narrow streets of Bellapais, their holiday destination.

Their accommodation was provided by Boreas, the god of the north wind, who as well as establishing himself as a Scottish laird owned a substantial property in a beautiful if mountainous part of the home of Aphrodite. The goddess herself had taken up residence running a small B&B next door the more capacious Carmichael Cottages. She took it on herself to make sure the party were welcomed and looked after them for the extent of their visit.

Zeus it seemed was less accommodating. It was widely believed that the un-seasonal rainfall that predominated during their short stay was at his instigation. With Helios doing his best by remote con-

trol, the sun did break through from time to time and generally the group were not inhibited too much by the weather. Breakfast could sometimes be taken with Aphrodite in the Gardens of Irene and Hermes was able to explore the hills on winged feet, even persuading some of the others to join him on occasion. Trips into the nearby harbour of Kyrenia in the silver chariot, cunningly disguised as a Japanese four by four, came as a welcome diversion and gave some the opportunity to buy Turkish Delight or souvenirs for the mortals back home.

Many a productive and enjoyable afternoon was spent around the dining room table writing and discussing the written word. Many an insight was forthcoming from all members of the group. The emotional poetry of Hera was matched by the Shakespearean delivery of Hephaestus. Apollo's use

of his powerful voice, almost as a musical instrument, was particularly memorable. Hermes expertise was an outstanding asset to the group as was Demeter's wide experience, when she wasn't laughing at Helios.

It was during one of these sessions that Hermes, in his roll of Messenger of the Gods, brought the message that Selene was not pleased that Helios had not returned with her Chariot on Thursday and that he would be residing with Pluto when he did finally get home.

Apart from that incident the group had an excellent time and it is hoped that they will meet again on Aphrodite's Isle next year.



The Icarus Conundrum

by John Goodwin

Many years ago Zeus was sitting on top of Mount Olympus while his children and their friends played with the world. As he watched, an argument broke out between two of them as they closely observed some mortals down below.

'Oh my God they are going to build wings and fly away,' said Ares

'Oh I hope they don't hurt themselves,' said Aphrodite, 'the young one is rather cute.'

'But they mustn't; if Zeus had intended them to fly he would have given them wings,' Ares said agitatedly.

'Don't worry about it,' Dionysus interjected, 'they will never get off the ground; anyone fancy a drink?'

'They are off the ground! They intend to jump out a window, look!' Ares was already starting to get angry. 'If they succeed we'll end up with the sky full of humans, how are we going to handle air traffic control in this day and age.'

'It's only a father and son sharing a hobby what harm can it do,' said Aphrodite

'They'll never manage it, their arms are too weak,' slurred Dionysus already on his second amphora of ambrosia.

'They might you know?' said Aphrodite. 'They have been working out for weeks; look at the pects on young Iccarus, good gluts too. I quite fancy him.'

'But they can't be allowed to fly' said Ares, 'the next thing we know

they will be dropping things on each other, imagine what that will do to my armies. I've just got them wound up to fight a nice bloody war, a deterrent like that might make peace break out all over the world! I'll be redundant!'

'Never mind' slurred Dionysus, 'they are only wings of wax and feathers, come and have a drink.'

'Look,' exclaimed Aphrodite. 'They're ready to go. They're jumping up and down on that ledge. Don't they look splendid in their plumage?'

'If they get as far as the sea, I'm going to have to do something,' Ares said, jumping up and down himself.

'You leave them alone, you bully,' said Aphrodite. 'If anyone interferes with Iccarus it will be me, and I don't mean his flying ability.'

'You're such a tart sometimes,' said Dionysus. 'Look we have lift off!'

'Oh no they are going to crash; they're spiralling down out of control. Oh, I can't look.' Aphrodite partially covered her eyes in a theatrical gesture.

'Good, that saves me the trouble of shooting them down,' said Ares

'It's alright they are getting the hang of it; they've pulled up at the last minute,' reported Dionysus. 'Boy, look at them soaring now.'

'Oh how beautiful.' Aphrodite followed their progress with rapt attention.

'That does it!' said Ares, looking up at Zeus. 'Will you do something about this?'

'What do you expect me to do?'

Zeus grinned.

Ares was absolutely fizzing, 'Hit them with a thunder bolt or something!'



'Don't you dare,' exclaimed Aphrodite, 'If you hit them with one of your air to air missiles I will never forgive you.'

She looks lovely when she's angry, Zeus thought.

'The trouble is my dear we are not due to have flying humans for a cou-

ple of millennia yet.'

'That's right, you tell her Boss,' Ares yelled. 'Go on zap them.' He was really out of his chariot now.

'Oh please, Aphrodite pouted up at Zeus. 'Just leave them alone.'

'Zap them! Zap them!' Ares broke into a war dance. 'We can't have that sort of thing down there!'

'Don't worry about it.' Dionysus was slurring even worse by now. 'It'll never catch on. Let's meet them in a taverna when they land.'

'Oh please, please,' Aphrodite clung appealingly to Zeus' leg and put her head in his lap.

'Oh... let them get on with it for now,' Zeus sighed, happy with Aphrodite's attention. 'Oh and Helios,' he called. 'Turn the wick up on your sun will you? There's a good deity.'



Limericks by Geoff

There was a young woman from Kyrenia,
Who shouted to David 'I seen ya!
His fluster was complete,
But the crowd had a treat:
His trousers were back at the villa.

Eight heads at nighttimes snoring
Filled the air with harmonies appalling.
Thus UK writers
Gave Cypriots tinnitus,
And borders are once more closing.

To Bellapais travelled UKAway,
With pen and laptop to play.
We conjugated wine with chat
Adverbs and that;
The Pulitzer's on its way!





Gold Dust