

Herbert Read

Vocal Avowals

NOTES FOR A PREFACE: *'You don't write sonnets with ideas, but with words'*
(Mallarmé)

Only relatively few words are poetical, and these must be organised poetically.

Syntax is the great destroyer of poetic values.

All inflections are suspect. The poverty of the present participle.

'The poem universe aims at total independence' (Elizabeth Sewell)

Sentiments are—sentimental. "A feeling that is enjoyed by the owner is a stale fingered flower". (P. M. Møller)

Recipe: drop a syllable into a state of pure consciousness and listen for the reverberations.

hot rod

vellum list fell dole
packed pendulum red roar
esteem wet spindle
auricular thy lung
scut thews cold selvage
out angular out out odd
yet not

little war

geometric my alkahest
migrant fists passion vale
flash high o paraclete
all violet vast
eyelashes entelechy
stone water-swords
white shock

fellow men

sharl rumble enlist while
 crumble distress coarse foal
 belt so wormeaten whine
 wold zithers wet fear

rode alabastrine sheer built
 till install aisle coomb
 vivid surrender up black
 up cry up coign

in lily lake tangents
 zion wonder and wound
 cusped blood tellurian
 transit illicit wild

wry fling test modesty
 fell yolk
 folk mold
 goddam yellow

mason bee

melon vulvular vest
 tax tintagel
 try tone lax sigh
 archangel fore lost
 may duke may die
 well rent infest
 oak eye

fur matrix

lob west weld needle
 seed slight blue suck
 settle far consecrate
 white angel wistful

margaret melt
 anvil muster for
 wonderfully far
 black mutter

rose llama
 lustra syndrome
 tell pelvic tell tower
 matrix murmur

or organ

simply say softly well welter
 tennis effort ex- if not
 lustless bones thy river
 red snow repeat milk sting
 stagger hock cry cluster
 oosh and then curls wait
 sweat sweet silver wheat
 white lintel
 o'er

Two Poems by Geoffrey Grigson

Euridyce

Yellow, wrinkled poppies
Wild in rain
At that gnarled entrance
To the past of men:

Its funnel in the mountain
Sloped, slid down,
Was choked far down by blue,
By bluest mist
Or sediment of air.

Eurydice and I at last
Down there,
See by the gurgling lamp,
Upon the house-sized
Smooth-faced crag
Dropped from the roof
Across the blackest cave,
Life-high, hands high,

Waiting, not dead, and blood
Not dried, ten thousand, then
Ten thousand years again,
The painted gravid mare
Of dreamings, kindred, prey,
In red and pride. We pass.

Twitter and stench
Of urinating bats;
Rise, slope, then rise.
I turn. She leaves me now.
Twilight untwists my eyes,
The light comes green,
The cavern mist comes blue:
Past the damp dung of cattle

I emerge alone, and see again
The yellow poppies
Wrinkled in the rain.