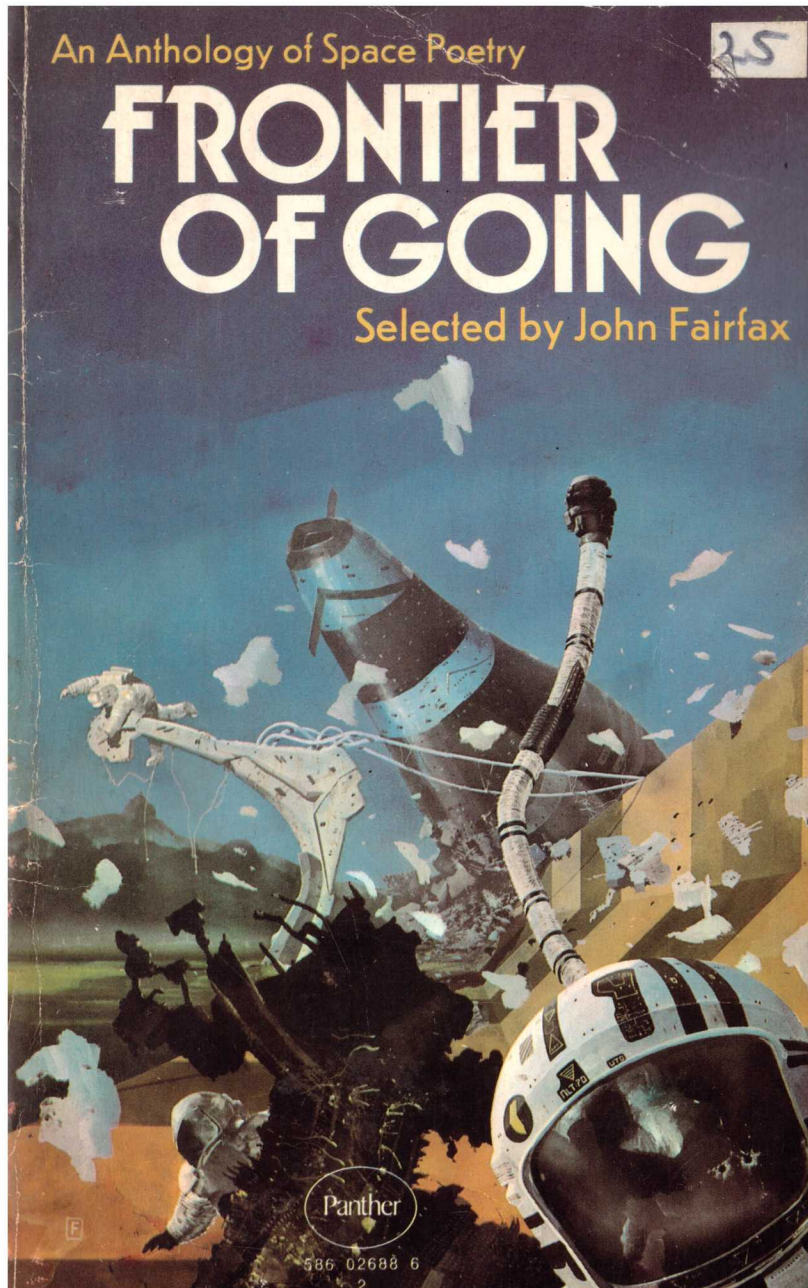


An Anthology of Space Poetry

FRONTIER OF GOING

Selected by John Fairfax



Panther

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From time immemorial English poets have never hesitated to hitch their wagons to stars – but their splendid efforts were in the nature of dry runs.

They had to be: October 1957 and Sputnik I were still in the future.

Our today's poets have the opportunity to hitch wagons to Vostoks and Titans – and do so with immense gusto. The results, as *Frontier of Going* demonstrates, are sometimes witty, sometimes gloomy, sometimes exhilarating, and sometimes thought-provoking – but always entertaining.

Among other pleasures you'll take tea in a spaceship, make love in a space suit, and help to build the Empire of the Sun.

The cosmonauts range from George Barker through Ronald Duncan, John Heath-Stubbs, Edward Lucie-Smith and Nathaniel Tarn to John Wain.

Frontier of Going

An Anthology of Space Poetry

Selected and with an introduction
by John Fairfax

Panther

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FRONTIER OF GOING

INTRODUCTION

The planet earth is situated on the outskirts of the galaxy of the Milky Way. A simple enough statement and yet even with our most advanced computers and laboratories crammed with scientific instruments we are still incapable of calculating and fully comprehending its meaning within the distances of space or the extent of time. The range of our present knowledge of the universe remains limited. Our imagination ranges a little further, seeking definitions, but even this darkens into the unknown.

It is the imagination, however limited, that raises man from the purely animal regions and makes him, at this time, the guide in the maze of evolution. The ability to cope with abstract ideas and communicate them is man's divine gift. Man's imagination alone can create a work of art, a philosophy, a mathematical formula or the ideas that have shaped stone-axe, telephone, microscope and supersonic jet. The abstractions of man's mind multiply upon the abstract.

The million years that have brought us from Olduvai Gorge, through Lascaux Caves, and slowly and painfully to the supermarket, contraceptive pill, rocket and all the other daily benefits that we litter around us, is nothing more or less than the record of man's active imagination. Seen in this light the imagination is of the experimental and

ceaseless energy that shapes evolving consciousness.

The line from that undefined date when the animal we are first began to use its imagination, to the moment when capsules spin in near space is an unsteady graph that warily presents man's evolution so far. If this evolution is of any significance at all, then now, this moment of man's departure into the space odyssey, is of importance.

It cannot be seriously doubted that exploration and change are a part of our nature. The most obvious example of change is that of immediate generations. In the second half of the twentieth century for instance we are seeing the young make a colourful and loud cry for small change; with linked arms they chant their discontent through capital cities of the world. The political and social reasons for this are incidental – with poignant surface motive none the less. But what the students remain is a bodied and moving explosion of the expression of man's need for change.

Our lifetimes are so short and so entangled in the mesh of society and its structures, that most minds hardly have time to grasp the significance of man's past and future. Certainly any dramatic change (even in the long term future) would be hotly contested. Especially as we still carry the full blooded primal instincts which keep the gulf between our present consciousness and our animal instinct as wide as possible. For instance the instinct for survival is of prime urgency in man's being. The allotted life-span is therefore the area which is most closely guarded, and any suggestion of change (except for material better) is viewed with distrust and defensive protest. It is not therefore surprising that abstractions, like man's evolution, are neglected or laughed out of court.

Each decade or each generation can bring about only a

minute difference in man's outlook, environment and understanding of himself.

We are not going to change overnight. Nor simply because we have made the first tentative steps into space is it likely that we will change over our foreseeable generations. Space travel is not going to solve human problems like magic. Men and women will continue to love, fight and propagate: nations will, no doubt, continue to make violent noises at weaker nations. Base instincts will continue to make copy for the daily papers. And yet change is inherent on the calendar. And space travel is one of the marked dates.

The first part of this introduction is intended merely to suggest that it may be worthwhile to let the mind loosen up for a moment to ideas other than those brought on by the shoe that pinches or the problem of how to catch an earlier train home to a steak and kidney pie. And that if this is allowed then it becomes possible to view space exploration in a new light.

The poems in this selection do not however set out to propound fixed ideas or solutions. They are not fanning out a philosophy. Poetry and philosophy make uneasy bedfellows.

I began selecting poems for this book when I became aware of a number of poets using the space programme theme in their work; using it not to consider any particularly scientific or science fiction implication (although some of the poems might loosely be said to fit one or other category) but mainly because I felt that as poets they were moved by the odyssey heralded by space exploration.

Man as he spins himself further webs in the abstraction of outer space is, I believe, merely extending his earth-bound nature. And by so doing makes it possible, if not

inevitable, that he will thereby extend his knowledge of himself. Starting on a journey towards the stars is, in a sense, as incidental to man's self-examination as him setting forth over unknown oceans or polar caps or just sitting in a hermit's cell. But in another sense it is a confrontation between man's imagination, his natural adaptive ability and his destiny.

So, whatever the political, social, economic or military reasons for the exploration of space there is implicit in the business another exploration; and that is man seeking further knowledge of himself. This is why space exploration goes beyond the interest of government policy. It springs from the seed of all human endeavour, from the ancient mariner traversing oceans single-handed to the phalanxes of bubbling students chanting in the capital cities of the world. The space spectacles are much more than national prestige throwaways or TV news scoops, they are the spur for man to continue charting the vague darkness of his mind. Especially when he acknowledges that the more he knows the more he has to find out about himself. It is in this context that the exploration of outer space becomes a way of focusing the exploration of inner space. Realms in the head that extend to heaven knows what or where. The answers found in space will not simply be answers to scientific problems.

The ideas that discover themselves through astronaut and cosmonaut, and their crafts, may seem superficial incidents in an adventure, but what lies beneath the superficial is a movement towards change that may be important in the evolution of man. Time will prove whether this is so. But meanwhile rockets shunt into orbit around the moon and dart towards Venus. Men squeeze into egg-like capsules and

join one craft to another, break out of the capsule-crust and 'swim' on a golden line in space. And while the first few men and women do this, the poets and those who probe and chart inner space attempt to cauterize the wound of man's anxiety as he continues to sour the earth with his fear and capacity for destruction.

'We hope we have foreseen all the unknown, but, in any experimental flight, we never know all the answers. If we did there would be no point in going ...' Astronaut John Glenn. This is the crux: what John Glenn says of the flights is equally true for every man, woman and spaceman in the most mundane personal involvement or in the actual dramatic space departures.

Space programme authorities may like to think that they have analysed all a space rider's reactions and patterned his thought impulses (and of course they should try) but if they were able to analyse a man and predict his behaviour to a point where there was no surprise reaction left in him then they would be left with a mere automaton, and a journey in which there could be neither discovery nor point.

It is at this juncture that the poets, kicking over the traces, begin to voice their words. Ever since man threw back his head and saw in the sky the holes through which he might one day crawl it has been possible to write poems about space, and space travel. It has been possible, and to some extent it has been done. But in this book I have kept, for the most part, to the central theme of space exploration as conducted by the Americans and Russians since Yuri Gagarin went up to see what the little Russian dog, Laika, had done in orbit, the theme that is man staggering, physically and imaginatively, out of the playpen of his earth and its gravity.

Why man is doing this (other than the political, social, economical and military reasons) remains a mystery. The motive is deep in his nature. The 'because it's there' answer is no answer at all: yet all the answer. Was Magellan crazy? Was Còlumbus? The answer may be yes. But still there is a fascinating line to be explored between their voyages and the forces which concentrate and forge the results of their wanderings.

If you consider the thousands of people who are closely involved – and remotely we are all involved – in the space programme, if you consider this and ask yourself 'why?' then you are getting close to where the poets stand.

Some poets are optimistic about the space odyssey, others view it with a cynicism born out of a knowledge of human failings and man's colossal capacity for self-deception, and other poets do not care whether man steps into space or the nearest bar so long as human relations begin with fornication and end with death. The poems in this book reflect these attitudes and probably a few more.

I do not suggest that because poets have written on the space theme their poems are more significant than the phrases exclaimed by the men in their capsules calling out in their awe at the sights observed through their helmets. What this selection does show is that some poets have raised their eyes above their heads, have taken a look at man dabbling in the shallowest parts of space and have written their verses. It is that which is significant.

When ancient poets sat on a hill overlooking a battlefield, and later repaired to hall or castle to regale the warriors with the deeds they had witnessed, the participation was in the song. And it was that song, bringing the deed to the understanding of the heart, which told the warriors

something of the inner nature of what they had achieved. Even when the poet was a heroic warrior himself, his most lasting participation was in the verses he sang.

The poets who write of space exploration are watching and voicing in the same and in a different way. As far as I know they are not encouraged to sit on a hill to watch a blast-off, but nevertheless their participation is in their poetry.

That some modern poets write about the space odyssey is, I believe, one of the encouraging things about the programme. It confirms its essential significance. The poets in this book are not locked away in an artificial poetic world. Most of them I know to be (others I guess to be) acutely aware of recorded history, and of the past, present and future. Many of them are regular readers of serious scientific journals; and one I know has volunteered to go along in a space-shot. (As far as I know he is still grounded.) The poets from their different attitudes speak for man's continuing ideas, his fears, desires, and his exaltations, in most exacting language so that the pursuit of the abstract is never allowed to break from understanding and communication. As man changes so must the language to express that change, and it is the poet who bears witness through his poetry to that change.

The mythology that is itself evolving as a part of space exploration is at first perhaps a little difficult to follow, however I have used work in this book which seems to me to say as clearly and forthrightly as it can what each of us might say or think as we look at the sky, and ourselves, with wonder. Most of the poems in this selection have been written recently. Some are published here for the first time.

JOHN FAIRFAX

GEORGE BARKER

In Memory of Yuri Gagarin

'-at the death of

this small man the

stars threw down

a hand-

ful of dark years

and the moon with-

drew into her ro-

tating cave of shadows and

wept a little. The

Dog Star hid

its head

and the Leonids like

mice ran squeaking

over the Zodiac. The

globe eyed ghosts of

our house of planets crept

out from cold lairs and

huddled together as

the ash of the dog that

died in the sky fled

seeking to follow its

master, this dead man

free in free

fall at last.'

And Death

said 'I take

him to me so

that no dishonour

can now or ever

accrue upon

this man or this name:

Yuri Gagarin'

JOHN MOAT

Overture 58

(IN MEMORIAM GRISSOM, WHITE, CHAFFEE

27TH JANUARY 1967)

Eight more kids fatherless. Eight in a moon-shot,
And three bits of courage – my courage – burnt up
On the pad. Then scrap it. Pawn the whole
Expensive skylark, and put rice in the pot
Bellies of the . . . Scrap it, do you hear?

And then I'll

Go. Asthma, no head for heights, daren't open the window
And face the stars without a stiff drink. But I'll go.
Or we'll launch old Chichester off in a yacht.
By sundown we must have moved that sky,
Threaded it with little ships, filled it with lightening
holes

Answered for the darkness with our lives.
I do not believe in the undefined. I do not
Believe in a darkness without the soul.
Kids, I've only now to look up in the sky
To remember your dads were fine brave guys.

PETER GODWIN

Lt-Col. Alexei Leonov

19th March 1965

I had believed
the earth was squirrels
peach-blossom and a stone,
and the moon half god
with a hidden face
never seen reflected
in a hunter's eye;
beyond the moon,
myths leaped from Earth
to a world of size and time
their own.

But my belief
waned in peach trees
and squirrels never free-footed
from earth. And a rope was
my life as I jumped
to a world immeasurable,
where the moon has two faces
and the earth is as
a pebble in the sea.

RONALD DUNCAN

Man (PART IV, Canto 3)

It's not easy for me to tell you my feelings on that
occasion.

I'm a man who was never troubled with any emotions
Particularly deep, as you might say.
That's why they selected me, I suppose.
They didn't want a neurotic, complicated guy,
Whose imagination might upset their calculations;
But somebody physically fit, technically able,
And in control.

Let me put it this way: my nervous system
was unlikely to short-circuit;
They didn't want a guy like you
Who might see some internal vision up there,
then forget to fire the retro-rocket: no offence of
course . . .

The psycho-boys screened me for hours:
They said my normality was almost abnormal.
I suppose what they were looking for was somebody
whose emotional attachments were sufficient
to give him the will to live,
but insufficient to cause him to do anything foolish.
Yes, as you say, somebody who was unlikely to over
compensate
with an emotional gesture, commit hari-kari,

copulate with the universe or indulge in self-
 crucifixion,
 whatever that is.
 And as you suppose, they enquired pretty deeply into
 my private life:
 asked me about my feelings for my mother, my wife
 and kids
 and whether I had any attachment to anybody, on the
 side.
 They seemed pretty satisfied that none of this
 Had fouled me up.
 And of course, they asked me about my dreams.
 I found this pretty embarrassing,
 And they seemed pleased that I was embarrassed.
 You see, they didn't want a guy
 That was introspective or as complicated as a computer
 in himself
 And certainly nobody who had any spiritual
 dilemmas.
 I must say I got a clean sheet there.
 There were questions I'd never considered
 so there were no problems you might say.
 They asked me what I believed in and eventually
 I came up with: evolution and efficiency.
 Yes. You find that hard to believe? That's how I am.
 Lift-off itself provided no new sensations,
 We had gone through the drill too often
 and simulated every detail:
 I found it hard to realize this was the real thing.
 I remember noticing that the shape of the capsule
 reminded me of something but I couldn't think
 what,

Until I was strapped in, waiting for the count down,
 And, at the instant of blast off, I realized what it was:
 the exterior of the capsule was the shape of a
 cathode ray tube
 And this, I suppose, made me wonder what the inside
 was like
 The first image was an easter egg.
 And then a line of poetry came into my mind—
 God knows from where:
 'Like a worm in the bud'. I nearly said it aloud.
 That would have surprised them . . .
 But that was it. There was not time for any other
 thoughts.
 Alone up there you're about as alone
 as a telephone operator
 With the whole world talking to you;
 They even know your pulse rate,
 And when you ought to make water.
 Sure.
 And being in orbit gave me no new sensations either.
 You see, we'd been through it all before,
 Down here in that gadget
 Which even has a revolving globe outside the porthole.
 And of course you get no sense of speed,
 less than on a subway.
 You are static, suspended, watching the earth turn
 round
 like an old cart wheel.
 And you're kept busy, very:
 recording, checking, talking back
 to a computer, programming your position,
 And fuel consumption: so busy, that sleep

is the one compelling need up there;
 Sleep, where your dreams alone are heavy.
 Weightlessness is a wag: Puck, as you might say,
 always up to some joke or tease
 taking you unawares. Like when I coughed
 And moved into my own spit getting an eyeful,
 getting my own back . . . or the crumbs
 which refuse to drop.
 But there was nothing new up there,
 leastways not till I opened the hatch
 and took that brief walk with my rocket gun . . .
 It's something I didn't tell them,
 Something I kept to myself,
 it had no scientific significance
 Maybe even you will laugh at me
 No, it wasn't fear. I would have told them that;
 But it wasn't fear, I had nothing to fear:
 The capsule only forty feet away;
 My oxygen line, straight and not fouled up;
 And below me: the earth turning so gently
 trailing its shawl of clouds;
 And as I watched it, I felt an emotion so strong
 the tears spurted from my eyes.
 It wasn't homesickness, but earthsickness;
 A yearning, like a tide inside of me;
 I would have swopped the whole universe
 for any foothold on that ball of dirt
 Which I wanted then, and loved
 more than I've ever wanted or loved a woman;
 I desired the earth, not any part nor any person,
 But it, where I belonged: the whole was home to me.
 I guess I was the first man –

for you can't count Him as one, I suppose? –
 to feel such tenderness for the whole damn place
 and any bastard on it.
 No, I don't feel it any more. Well, not so intensely.
 Maybe you have to be cut off to be in contact?
 Or, maybe, it's only when the body has no weight
 that love becomes the one imponderable?
 But, as I say, I didn't tell them about it.

PETER GODWIN

'A star harvest I gather'

A star harvest I gather
and fear an order in ears and eyes
far greater than the populated
chaos we see from earth;
without belief I have touched
stones and trees bound in patterns
to decorate the earth;
now my fingers meddle
in star-spirals and galaxies,
very formal jewellery that mocks
my mask and counterfeit of reason
caught limed in twigs and stones
and, myths unmade, now fearing stars.

LESLIE NORRIS

Space Miner (FOR ROBERT MORGAN)

His face was a map of traces where veins
Had exploded their blood in atmospheres
Too thin to hold that fluid, and scar tissue
Was soft as pads where his cheekbones shone
Under the skin when he was young.
He had worked deep seams where encrusted ore,
Too hard for his diamond drill, had ripped
Strips from his flesh. Dust from a thousand metals
Silted his lungs and softened the strength of his
Muscles. He had worked the treasures of many
Near stars, but now he stood on the moving
Pavement reserved for cripples who had served well.
The joints of his hands were dry and useless
Under the cold gloves issued by the government.

Before they brought his sleep in a little capsule
He would look through the hospital window
At the ships of the young men bursting into space.
For this to happen he worked till his body broke.
Now they flew to the farthest worlds in deep space;
Mars, Eldorado, Mercury, Earth, Saturn.

JOHN FAIRFAX

Space Walk

Around, around in freefall thought
The clinging cosmo-astronaut,

Awkward and expensive star
Dogpaddles from his spinning car.

Makes the dark and vacant place
A refuge for the unshaved face.

Look up my friend and note it well
This orbit where food packets dwell.

Thought's the same in black and white,
Cave figures jump in candlelight.

Hang on man buckled to your egg,
You're off your knees. No longer beg.

It doesn't matter who you are
The highway coming is a star.

Cosmo-astronaut in space
Your anchor cord our act of grace.

GEORGE BARKER

From: Nine Beatitudes to Denver (iii)

What poet hitherto has been called upon to celebrate
The sudden departure of eight hundred pounds avoirdupois from the sphere
Of terrestrial mechanics into the arms of a Goddess?
Will Selene appreciate impregnation by that germless ball?

I cannot persuade myself that this interstellar violation
Of a lady whom hitherto we had all thought extremely gracious
— After all, she has presided over several rather heavenly ceremonies—
It strikes me as, well, the height of erotic presumption.
Suppose she prefer the attentions of Mars or the respectable ring of Saturn?

Anyway, this is no time for recrimination.
Let us enter the heavenly bedroom as circumspectly as possible.
Glass helmet, antennae, rubber penis, no contraceptives—
Who knows, after all, what the sexual tastes of a Goddess might be?

JOHN FAIRFAX

Mare Tranquillitatis (FOR JOHN MOAT)

The sinews tighten as my head tilts back
To look at the sky; in particular the moon.
My eyes travel through the peels of space
To those ancient bodies that might still be
Although the moment I see started so long ago
That the light reflected in my eyes is older
Than my mind will calendar. Now I
Hold with the bits of metal we throw up
Ranging orbits farther out each chance.
I watch the stars and divine weary Magi
With spinning gifts in foam-fitting couches,
And my voice is loud in the night and calls capsules
In from their fragile hour on the Tranquil Sea.
It is the moon and space we speak of vaguely,
But the voice and eye and hand and metal
Is born and raised on heartbreak and pigliver,
Mashed potatoes and physics, tact and fiction.
I salute the electric wheels of memory,
The bobbing piston and the assembly line, the can
Of beer, and pack of frozen beans. I cheer
The halting metal eggs that orbit earth
One manned or three. I acclaim supermarket
And paperback, the TV and the stratojet.
My eyes are full of stars; and the moon dust
Is settling over Cape Kennedy for the next count

Which I echo in my heart. Cosmonaut stretch out
A hand towards a friend and speak fearlessly.
The battle is engaged against friction and bloodpushing 'G.'
The arrows, bullets, dungeon, torture, are in the eyes
Nearer than the light reflected when the sinews
Tighten as my head is thrown back to scan the moon.
The moon is no longer the same. No longer the same.

Blue moon – harvest moon – lover's moon – man in the
moon

Is superseded as of 20th February, 1965,
When Ranger VIII broke its back on a grey sea,
The Mare Tranquillitatis, and raised dust
That didn't get itself spat on and rolled
Into, harrowed, plowed, sandcastled. The moon is
different.

It now stares down with a foreign body
Like a thorn splinter just beneath the skin,
And a future likely to trick the past.
Old man, O moon, I saw you before the instrument
Pierced you, and I see you now. I feel the same
And honestly cannot decry your violation.
We are both different now, you and I. I'm long glad
I don't have to ride a horse, saddle a brute;
But can tune twin-carbs and howl down a clearway
When and where I wish as quickly as I choose.
The more there is around and on you, moon, the more
I speculate on machines and computers, and am
pleased
And grateful. It makes history an evolution.
And those fitting who had a distant hand in putting

The eighth Ranger into the depthless dustful sea.
It makes the nails and flint, and ore and guess,
The death and lives and compassion and hero and
coward

And God and tombrobber, judge and judged,
The whole crazy unbalance of recorded man
A small piece of expensive engineering, dust covered,
On a coagulated gas we moon. Moon that nights,
And shows us where to put drunken feet
As we stagger from firesides to throw
Our heads back until the sinews in our necks tighten,
And beneath our feet the orb is reflected
In a river we can touch and embrace.

JOHN WAIN

Moondust

(FOR VICTOR NEEP IN RHOSGADFAN)

Stone, torrent, and the moon: broken machines.
You light your world from a dark sky. In sleep
flesh cools from the hot fevers of the day,
the mind grows calm after the waking dream
of action, choice and movement. Motionless
the mountains face the moon. Only the air
pure, silent, thinning into nothingness,
spreads its cool gulf of emptiness between them,
adding no word to their ancient dialogue
of shape and light, nothing but shape and light.

A bedstead rusting on the mountainside:
the humped stones of a wall, the inaudible
footfall of mineral ghosts: all these
exist beyond change and beyond questioning.

Is it that they died into a stronger life
beyond the life of conundrums, or did they live
always in that hard dimension of calm:

where shape and light become pure character?

old mangles
old gas cookers, limbs
of bicycles that died of old age
rest by the shifting sea, or on the mountain
content and motionless
bathed in that light
content to have arrived:
content to be, what all those wheeling years
they were becoming:
sentinels of time and loneliness,
emblems of all that is unreachable

Because she asks no questions, because her face
Hold light and only light, calm-spreading, free
Of all those interrogatives that hold us
Hot-tempered captives when the sun climbs high:
Because she is a disc of visual silence
Dramatic only in her suddenness
When breaking from the clouds, she throws her silver
On grass, on waves that rake the waves of shingle,
On rock and waterfall and moving sheep
So that all objects cast contented shadows,
Not like the shadows of day, not question marks
Crossing each gesture with a grimace of doubt.
The moon's shadows are of darkness only,
fulfilled, contained, an experience of shape.

She holds our violence in a steady frame
burnished amid pure darkness. At Stonehenge,
the victim died when dawn lit up the sky,
splashing the stone with fire that sang, *Destroy*.

Maxims

1. Both art and life are strongest where there is an equilibrium of opposites; a balanced outward pull of contradictions creating a strong knot at the centre.

2. The artist thrives on disadvantages. He attains wisdom because he accepts ignorance and folly. Joy comes to him often because he pitches his tent in the shadow of despair.

3. The withered hermit with his riotous dreams explores every haunt of sensuality without moving from his cell. Similarly, in every debauchee there is an anchorite, sitting motionless among the rocks.

4. It does not follow from this that sensuality and ignorance in themselves are productive. Apes are amiable creatures, but they never say anything worth writing down.

5. Reformed thieves make excellent detectives; born thieves who have never stolen anything, even better ones: that is, law is upheld by the appetite for villainy.

6. Truth is fortuitous, but a good lie takes account of the probabilities.

I clang the gate, and walk up by the wall.
Hard, stalky nettles grow beside the stones.
'There's too much cover down there,' you once said,
with a grin, speaking of broad-leaved Sussex
full of sap-smelling ditches and tall grass.

Here, the nettles grip the rained-on slope
like obstinate small pines. There are no docks.

Your house is long and low. Down on all fours,
it waits for the wind to start shooting. Bald
mountains stand round. Despair of ambushers,
the hard green hillside looms behind your roof.

Safety in exposure:
truth sitting naked on the naked rocks.
That part of you that's capable of fear
makes you stand up unsheltered on these slopes
soaking up air and starlight like a dolmen.

Everything needs its opposite.
Nothing by itself is strong enough:
not even love, not even bread.

Yet some there are who know nothing of contrarities.
They approach knowledge frontally, like a dog lunging for
a lump of meat which he sees reflected in the water. When
temperaments like these are overcome by lust for knowledge
of the moon, they launch a

MOONPROBE

Controlled by whispering frequencies
the mindless rocket shoots and lands
in spray of dust that never leapt

till now, but sifted in a breeze
more gentle than a lover's hands.
The mindless feelers are adept.

I see the picture radio'd.
It shows a grab that fumbles out
to take a scoop of the moon's crust.
Now homeward, with your stolen load!
The rocket lifts its frozen snout.
Knowledge! the manna of the just!

I do not grudge them their delight.
The earth desires what the moon hides.
But moonlight on a woman's face
seen among silent leaves at night—
this is the power that pulls our tides.
What if we fall from the moon's grace?

Moon-knowledge. Her secret language draws the waves
into their saraband, and fertile wombs
pay her their rhythmic homage. See how these men
empty their phial of moon-dust on a sterile
dissecting-tray, and, masked, hang over it
with greedy eyes. Moon-secrets, Vic! To know
what rivers rustle in her arteries,
to name the minerals in her marrow-bones!

A prize beyond the dreams of kidnappers:
Everyone's kingdom for a vase of moon-dust!

All falsehood, greed, and foolishness. Yet we
forgive them. Eyes the moon has shone into

can never feed the brain with sanity.
Always a trace of madness filters through.

Their measurements and probes, your reverie,
are both moon-drenched, yet you know that you do

only what must be done, or life would be
entwined, embraced, and crushed by death. So few

live earth-life as you live it, passionately
working the stubborn grain of what is true.

Violence and passion cast their imagery:
then, in a mind that's strong enough to view

their rearing shapes with unmoved certainty
the moon shines down and moulds those forms anew

to antithetical images, all set free
from sweat and impact. Knowledge splits in two:

only the wisdom gained impulsively
by saturation in the living brine, as you

have saturated, has the lens to see
her calm, eroded face.

All this you knew.

So, silver on your brush, you paint the moon,
anchored in time, untouchable in space,
marked with a faintly-smiling human face
remote, yet pitying our long misfortune.

You know her, for you know her opposite:
earth, where we hold to life with clutch and clang
knowing death waits (by sly cell? or bold bang?)
raising our structures on the mounds of grit.

We use her calm to diagnose our strife.
She borrows from the sun to flood our night,
and, queen of mirrors, gives us our own truth.

They yearn to drill her like a hollow tooth:
but you, on your bare hills, receive her light,
and gather moondust as art gathers life.

JOHN MOAT

'Rouse him from sleep'

Rouse him from sleep; if he'll not stir
I'll put in him dreams to birth,
touch him with one finger.

So dreaming deep he'll cast rib for a woman,
rung up a ladder from earth
to heaven.

Then my brave boys, be off about the spheres,
I'm here beneath
To sort the mail from the stars.

NATHANIEL TARN

The Satellite

That once the skylight proved of use.
Time after time: grey skies,
no night to speak of. Then one
so full of stars a star began to move
and climb that window slowly out of sight.
Seeming to waver in its trajectory
but moving certainly and mirror bright
and I could not believe the stars had hatched
but thought of Adam on his way once more.

Then sleep went on below in simple colours.
Flowers, yellow against a whitewashed wall
and plain board door. The hounding sound of winds
coursing with waters. The lambing at the door.
So night went by with singing in his head
and the old Adam here emparadised,
content with music on his frosting breath,
woke up to smile at his new daffodils.

JOHN FAIRFAX

All Adam Again

Spin, weave, whirl out there in a blind eye
Which like frosted window sees light
That is reflection from frozen furies
Thumping adrenolin of spheres to man,
One man composite of all love
And hate and Cain and brothers and murdered
And raped sisters, dying and dead, conceived
And crawling, evolving like minute life
Over the crowded summer beaches
Towards the picnic basket of gods
Weekending from pressure of godliness;
From the known and undiademed days
White with ordinariness, or blue
With the sameness of brittle nags
That break into dreams and tease the white
Eyes to look, and fingers to trace
A new name on the blind deep frost
That is cheating vision. That is innocence
Gurgling wordless in a galactic cot,
Rattling the last swanlike sounds caressing
Itself in its own image.

Xist what a world
Is wonderful. What bounty abounds
In spinning, weaving, whirling history
That we look down with our tapping stick

And toppling legends. O wonder
 What a world is Xist. And now the march
 Is hammering in the womb; the seeds
 Are roaring at the rock. Put down sling,
 Rifle, bomb and missile you have lost.
 Look up, look up, damn you, that darkness,
 That abstraction you see is lapping
 At seas you are the plankton crawling from.
 All Adam again. Again. Courage.
 What wonder, what awe, what bounty.
 No more the close clinging fur to wrap
 The bride and her lusting love, no swaddling
 Lace for their issue. No more the flag
 To rally with emblem lion, leaf, bird, bear.
 The ranks will close. Close ranks. Join as one,
 Be the wonder in the sky spinning,
 Weaving, whirling, in the orgasmic
 Moment that is kiss of life as capsules
 Evolve in the bedchamber of stars.

EDWIN MORGAN

For the 'International Poetry Incarnation'
 ROYAL ALBERT HALL, 11TH JUNE 1965

Worldscene! Worldtime! Spacebreaker! Wildship!
 Starman!
 Gemini man dangles white and golden – the world
 floats
 on a gold cord and curves blue white beautiful below
 him—
 Vostok shrieks and prophesies, Mariner's prongs flash—
 to the wailing of Voskhod Earth sighs, she shakes men
 loose at last—
 out, in our time, to be living seeds sent far beyond
 even imagination, though imagination is awake – take
 poets on your voyages! Prometheus
 embraces Icarus and in a gold shell with wings,
 he launches him up through the ghostly detritus
 of gods and dirty empires and dying laws,
 he mounts, he cries, he shouts, he shines, he streams
 like light new done, his home is in a sun
 and he shall be the burning unburned one.
 In darkness, Daedalus
 embraces Orpheus, the dark lips caked with earth and
 roots
 he kisses open, the cold body he rubs
 to a new life – the dream
 flutters in a cage of crumbling bars, reviving

and then beginning slowly singing of the stars.

Beginning singing, born to go.
To cut the cord of gold. To get
the man new born to go.

JOHN FAIRFAX

Columbus of the Sky

Riding discovery a moonbeam
Behind night, polka-dot sky,
I find the eggstand crushed
In a rivalry of ships below
All horizons.

O pilot pearled
On a trident wail and preach
A prayer for each confused king
Crucified on your beaches.
Sit on a throne worn thin by tears,
Risk those highways out of sight
Crawling with diamond disaster:
Dominions Alexander axed
In mind.

O rider soar rocket
Round creation out of the eyes
Away from the windows where we are
Mouthing who gave us the right
To own a universe.

Go find your kingdoms
And your grave. Break me a nightmare
Hacked to death, whose bit is between
Her skies. Sound archipelagos
Of the air, beat round the storming
Planets and map a geography of space.

D. M. THOMAS

Limbo

The air-gauge clamped our heartbeats. When we
searched
the cabin – firm again, relentless – a
stir of limbs confirmed the needle's lurch.
How full of charm proved our young stowaway!

How to tell someone that his offence is mortal
merely in that the fuel his weight would cost, the air
he breathes, is more than one frail cosmic-ship can spare?
His grin said, *Company*! could not believe the portal

that leads to new worlds from this fetid womb
must suck him forth to – limbo. Yet he went
quietly into the airlock. There's no room
for sentiment in space. We meant

him well enough . . . Zoë, it's not our fault; you must
eat. We bear supplies for the living, put them first.

EDWIN MORGAN

Spacepoem 3: Off Course

the golden flood the weightless seat
the cabin song the pitch black
the growing beard the floating crumb
the shining rendezvous the orbit wisecrack
the hot spacesuit the smuggled mouth-organ
the imaginary somersault the visionary sunrise
the turning continents the space debris
the golden lifeline the space walk
the crawling deltas the camera moon
the pitch velvet the rough sleep
the crackling headphone the space silence
the turning earth the lifeline continents
the cabin sunrise the hot flood
the shining spacesuit the growing moon
the crackling somersault the smuggled orbit
the rough moon the visionary rendezvous
the weightless headphone the cabin debris
the floating lifeline the pitch sleep
the crawling camera the turning silence
the space crumb the crackling beard
the orbit mouth-organ the floating song

JAMES KIRKUP

The Astronaut

Star-sailor, with your eyes on space,
You map an ocean in the sky at night.
I see you stride with scientific grace
Upon the crusted suns of yesterday
As if it were tomorrow, in the place
Of time, the voyager beyond this momentary stay
Whose loaded instruments of light
Shoot rocket-galaxies around the bend of sight.

D. M. THOMAS

Unknown Shores (AFTER THEOPHILE GAUTIER)

Okay, my starsick beauty!—
blue jeans and tilting breasts,
child of Canaveral—
where would you like to go?

Shall we set course for Mars,
or Venus's green sea,
Aldebaran the golden,
or Tycho Brahe's Nova,
the moons of Sagitta,
or Vega's colonies?

School-minching, bronze Diane,
bane of the launching-pads—
I may not ask again:
wherever you would go

my rocket-head can turn
at will to your command—
to pluck the flowers of snow
that grow on Pluto, or

Capella-wards, to pluck
the roots of asphodel?

I may not ask again :
where would you like to go?

Have you a star, she says,
O any faithful sun
where love does not eclipse?
. . . (The countdown slurs and slips).

– Ah child, if that star shines,
it is in chartless skies,

I do not know of such !
But come, where will you go?

LESLIE NORRIS

The Mission

If sliding is a still moving, he was sliding
On the glass edge of space. The dark was a smooth
Dark, and patterns of the constellations, telling
The truth of his journey, told an expected truth.

About the perfection of his vessel, the unvibrating
Complexities of silence parted. He moved through
Emptiness as not moving. After long preparation, long
Waiting, this seemed too small an ordeal. This, too,

Had been foreseen. In the soft lolling of his voyaging
He rehearsed again the ignorant star of the half dark
He went to purify. He held his taught smile, folding
His liquid tongue over their harsh languages, the erratic

Syllables of wasteful dialects they went by. He would
Lift his many limbs in a wide friendship, his skill
Was friendship. Then utter their most sacred words:
Freedom. Brotherhood. Vietnam. And loudest, Kill.

JOHN MOAT

Overture I

In whose name — that nun standing there,
Deflowered and smiling, handless Lavinia,
The hand that fed gnawed clean by friendly teeth;
That sweet smell savouring the air
Of mustard and burning children; that calf
White-eyed, white flesh on tottering knees;
That rain that strips off all the leaves;
That crate of drillings, that sack of human hair;
That nigger thrown from a moving car,
His bleeding testicles between his teeth;
That twelve years' Jane pacing outside the bar,
Offering anything for her weekly share
Of tea; those rats now grown immune to death—
I ask you, in whose name and by what power
Have you set out to colonize the stars?

EDWIN MORGAN

The Ages

There was this universe on Saturday—
it may have been here before, but we had never seen
the bearded hotels, the money-pushers, the glory-holes
five hundred storeys up,
two crazy iron curtains blowing in a wind that cut
granite follies off the pull-ropes,
a labyrinth of horizontal windows with gesticulations
tipping over into the sarcophagus, and this
open to the roses, as it all was.
Down they came, splash full,
blurring the curly beds where absolutely fourteen
Q-bar topologists had been
moulded as pioneers in the Friday dish-off,
and what a pincer that was! In a good imitation
of lifeblood now, in the rosebath, it was all a swimming
red
foaming and breathing in its own life over
the grime and under the iron.
Acid penthouses spat
uselessly into that.

All that red!

This is hard to understand. There were no roses.

In the ages of Thursday, the legend of a round-over,
one topologist jerked into dimension
like an eel in a net; some cursed him even then.
Wednesday was the last museums,
they oiled weapons, froze roses, buried germanium.
Shadows were coming over almost in a somnolence
of their substance, while light was no switch-on but a
low glare hardly gaining on grey – they
sat on steps with cat's-cradles, dice, obsolete laser-guns,
and without speaking they watched the clouds.
You think you can come back from Saturday?
You think you'd know what they felt? You can't
imagine and you can't get back.
Not to the last laser-cities of Wednesday,
far less to Tuesday when there were children and the
trains ran,
or Monday and the radiolarians.

Partial transformations endlessly
pull the dream forward into it – into
what can never become memory
even in the distance of its most famous stations.
The unintelligible proscenium
shakes suddenly with lights, the metal drapes
groan, clang to blasts of voice
but all that arena
batters outward back
only into the amazement
that caused it.
What can we remember? There was no first man,
the dawn horse on the downs was coming there, was
there, was gone in forms

we'd lose like shadows across our land.
It all turns
into what can never reach back touching
even the most it had loved with its hands.

We are to peer forward, and report.
Whoever on that Saturday said he saw
where the roses came from, if they were roses?

PAUL LAZARD

Towards the Stars

A collapse of yellow flower
is the final sight;
and we now, dim, within the mind,
less light, evade the general doubt
of hope.
Another forsaking for another time:
our eyes grow colourless
to deflect the night
of this our final chance to end
the gaudy cavalcade: brilliant mimes,
mummers, memories and a quiet disease
breeding the sore of death, despair.
Orange guns, suns, bombard us,
as we hear, man's voice,
that witch-word pattern
fade with the air.

JOHN HEATH-STUBBS

Cosmic Poem

Now we're in the seventh decade
Dionysius Exiguus said
That's where we're supposed to be
Of the twentieth century
Since our redemption was effected,
Every poet is expected—
Unless he wishes to lose face—
To say something about space:
Although, it seems to me, of late
That term is somewhat out of date—
The entire area being cluttered
(So in some circles it is muttered)
With marvellous, irrelevant,
And in every sense extravagant
Russo-American hardware;
There's precious little space up there
In the immediate vicinity
Of poor old Earth – as for Infinity,
Doubtless, that's different. But I would
Have it quite clearly understood
That it is not to be supposed
I am in any way opposed
To Science – She's a lovely thing:
For clear-eyed Science my harp I'll string.
As for the Spacemen I wish them luck:

Major Gagarin's a perfect duck
(The wild duck, or garganey,
Is the name's etymology).
An excellent husband and father.
Forgive me, Reader — I feel rather
Blank on this subject. Space *is* blank.
We have the subject's self to thank;
It seems my Muse cannot absorb it.

But she puts poems into orbit
Designed to explore the human heart.
And we have scarcely made a start
To plumb that ultimate abyss,
Or find out really what it is.
The intrepid cosmonauts who fly
Up above the bright blue sky
Will not meet the Lord of the Air:
But to the clivities of despair,
That lie inside the heart, he clings,
Bat-like; you hear his dangerous wings.

It's very well that we shall soon
Be landing chaps upon the Moon
(She whom we poets specially honour)
And planting little flags upon her;
And that the next stop will be Venus;
And we'll be sharing out between us
The planets and the planetoids
Rambling through azoic voids.

Before we start it might be fit
We tidied up this Earth a bit.

We've got a very ugly bomb
Can blow us all to Kingdom Come
Unless we mind our Ps and Qs;
And it will be no earthly use
Cavorting round the galaxies
If, down here, radio-active seas
Upon an uninhabited shore
Roll sadly on for evermore.
What life may be among the stars
Or basks along the canals of Mars—
The bug-eyed monsters and puce rabbits—
I hope will not adopt our habits.

Another fact worth pointing out
In the context of this kick-about
(I know of course it's obvious,
And do not wish to make a fuss;
But still I think we really ought
To give the matter serious thought
To save us from undue elation
And cosmic self-congratulation)—
Is this: well more than half the mortals
Who pass beyond the womb's dark portals
And blindly struggle into birth
Here, on this unromantic Earth,
To grow up under mundane skies,

Go hungry to bed, and hungry rise—
And are neither healthy, wealthy nor wise.

Outer Space can wait its turn:
The human being's my concern.

THOMAS BLACKBURN

Home, Home on the Range

Reading today of another man roasted alive,
I conclude that space-trips are a dangerous game;
But even if some chap does reach a star,
He'll come home, if he does, to much the same
Mayhem and trickery and paranoia.
They'll have the bunting out when he returns;
The journalists will ramp, the crowds will roar,
And even Presidents give pause to praise
The Moon-Man – from their rapport with murder.
Though astronauts are not articulate,
Will he find it strange, after that lunar quiet
To sense once more the lineaments of hate
On every human face, and hear that riot?
I think of those disciples who once saw
Upon a mountain top the transfigured Christ
And, having seen him, stumbled down to meet
A lunatic boy on whom their skill was lost,
And wonder if the Moon Man also will,
After his stellar journey pause and think,
'The capsule that bore me could bear the bomb',
Or dazed by the applause just stammer out,
'God bless America, and God bless Mom!'

PAUL LAZARD

The Retreating God

No dark god, sullen and blooded,
hunting fox through the green gulfs
of his estate, bellowing broken
into being, servants to guard the portals
of his creation do you worship.
No, but a dissolving fragment of light,
not a hunter, but a fractured prism
capturing the night
and threading it with weak light.

Sympathy feels it as an oval machine,
a space ship gorgeously named 'Heaven's Queen'
invading, now, with surging manly power
the thread worn, bone-cellar relic
of that last god

Who has removed himself and his minions
with their brains like fungus lilac flower,
to another place, to a ward for the sick
perhaps, where the immortal
shall regenerate, in closed delight,
their desire for blood.

PAUL ROCHE

Inner Space

Irrefrangible light years have to bend
and the uncontainable be condensed
into the spaceless savannahs of the mind.
The antique galaxies must be spilled
into bottomless lakes of noosphere
and that which is limitless be scanned
against the measured limiting of thought.
The solvent and the solute shall be one
and the male and female currents of the universe
roam through the syllogistic nodes
till Venusian energies are noosed
by the flying gods of the empyrean
within man's gaze
And the rings of Saturn caught
on lobes of consciousness and ambushed sight.
There is no code or cyclic charge,
no changeling landscape, breath, or dragon line
that shall be known and not unpaced . . .
(Concepts in the sidereal hollows
break like violets in the rocks).
All this distance shall be less
than the blue within and solvent space
that makes the centrifugal measureless.

JOHN MOAT

Overture 52

I'm muddled by all the gods. That jealous only God—
Was that the one put the babel tongue to odds?
If so he falls into a greek phyle: afraid
His sons'll have his balls. Though Cronus himself then
stood
For God, in turn grew scared, in turn devoured his sheep.
I don't know, but I know that Babel was made
By men, and was an act of love. Those men prayed
In their bricks and slime with one tongue. One blood
Was bent on building a tower whose top might reach
To heaven. They had in mind one name, one trade.
And how does a poet know they loved? There was one
speech.

Then don't misunderstand me astronaut. Our food
Keeps in the same can. The signal must not fade
As you near the stars. And I am listening to the deep
For your — or is it their? — bleap bleap bleap bleap.

NORMAN NICHOLSON

The Expanding Universe

The furthest stars recede
Faster than the earth moves,
Almost as fast as light;
The infinite
Adjusts itself to our need.

For far beyond the furthest, where
Light is snatched backward, no
Star leaves echo or shadow
To prove it has ever been there.

And if the universe
Reversed and showed
The colour of its money;
If now unobservable light
Flowed inward, and the skies snowed
A blizzard of galaxies,
The lens of night would burn
Brighter than the focused sun,
And man turn blinded
with white-hot darkness in his eyes.

JOHN FAIRFAX

Orbiting Ark

120 frogs eggs and 64 blue spiderwort
were launched into earth orbit
in biosatellite 2.

The pepper seed in my pepper mill
favours adventure
knowing now that pepper grows
more quickly in the denser air
than it does on earth.
Flour beetles swell with cunning
pride having spun from Cape Kennedy
in the same satellite as wheat seedlings.
And have you noticed that wasps
are more purposeful this year?

The vinegar gnat abuzz in orbit
leaves the world a lesser place.
And the trip of endless bacteria
make running noses astropobe.
Bread and fishes weren't forgotten
10 million spore of orange bread mold
and floating amoebae
lived by a sea of strontium:

but the whole ark returned
to an insane dust man
who plans to make heaven
the same as earth.

One day a planetrider
might hear a plaintive croak
of a bullfrog
and imagine that the blue spiderwort
is spinning webs as quickly
as the capsule
in which he is incubating.

JOHN MOAT

Overture 53

It's strange how it takes sound to define
Silence; the clock in the library, the waiting-room fly.
Now, alone under the stars, I fancy I hear
Men chattering as they spin down the sky,
Or yawn or scratch, but clearly as from over the bay.
Or from the next tent. And I know its quiet out there.
Darwin gave a new shape to fear
When he penned back to the soup the line
Of circumstance, or when he traced
Our ten toes to the topography, our
Thinking to necessity – a casual, peculiar race.
Then those men from Mars, whatever they may have in
mind,
What chance we'll ever shake them by the . . . by the paw?
Perhaps we are alone, a lonely anomaly of time and space
Where untoward elements are convulsed in praise.

EDWARD LUCIE-SMITH

Afterwards

INHOSPITABLE.

Another bald
Barren lump spinning in a thin shawl
Of unbreathable gas. I see it
From my narrow window, from what these
Hovering needles tell me in their
Too truthful gauges. I might descend,
Opening the airlock, adjusting my
Cumbersome helmet, hands gloved thick
Against the cold, or heat, or acid,
Strapping upon my back the light slim
Canister of my own atmosphere—
And each breath links me again with what,
The further I travel, seems stranger:
Greenness, water, movement, a sphere not
Sufficient unto itself, but once
Happy to feed and lodge an itchy
Parasite.

Now inhospitable.

NATHANIEL TARN

Ranger Spacecraft

Where the report says it stops and 'parks'
after the first whoosh which scalds Canaveral
and hoists the whole of Florida, America even, above
that ink sea seared with orange the big jets bask on
into a fire we can no more imagine — there,
where it shifts on its axis, shoots out antennae,
shivers the cold off its flanks, appears to think,
appears to meditate on the earth's commandments,
where it still seems to belong to us, has not left us
entirely, is where I cannot help thinking of it
as of a creature outbound in heart-breaking loneliness.
When geese set out on their rapt orbits round the sky
or schools of whales furrow the aching sea,
they seem alone to us, yet have their company:
none is so lonely as that human star. That it is of man,
shine of his brain, of his fine hands finished,
that it bears such questions with it, such probes,
that it makes us turn from our hearts to what we know
and causes us to learn that we do not know, is compassion.
Take the lobster from its cave as it measures with claws
the enveloping squid and lacks salvation's span
and knows its carapace will not save it, but knows how?
Take the slush of a houseless crab on the shark's tooth,
the rabbit mumbling at the rattler's open jaw,
the fledgeling skewered on the eagle's talon—

take all that faces dying and may still ask questions.
How do they know? How do their limbs contract?
How do they gaze out, their thoughts move at the end?

JOHN FAIRFAX

Oration for a Space Shot

Do not let your eyes be blinded
In the unfamiliar light
Of stars named cozily from
Greek and Roman Deities.

Where we are to the limits
Of no imagination
Is farther than we can think.

And the charts are treacherous
(As the Mappa Mundi skin)
For men to use faithfully.

The brittle egg you ride in
And voices that link the chain
Are guesses on blobs of ink.

That chain between long darkness
And daily exercise is
Forged in the furnace head of

Men like you and me. In love,
Hungry, fined for parking, drunk,
Listening, weary, mad; always

Fidgeting to another
Day. In the pursuit – of what?
The moon of course, and . . . and then

The next dominion away
In the unreached darkness.
Just take a look towards the

Sky for the emptiness you
See will be filed and filmed,
Recorded and analysed

Until it is a mystery
No longer, invisible
Only to the fleet planet

Changing before the hand can
Reach it, or the roaring boys
Empty their capsule of waste.

Go on. Chase on. Do not look
Too closely at the love in
Your arms, be blindly strong be

Out of the complex daily
Spit, be away from table
And chair, hoe and spade, voice, ear.

Go where the blacksky has holes
For you to crawl through; and chart
Memory carried so far

That it grows like choking cords
Of birth, of life, and of death,
To atmospheres distant as

The concrete pads you sped from—
The mountains left behind that
Are breakfast, beer and skittles.

Do not let your eyes be blinded
In the unfamiliar light;
Take our smoked glass with you.

As most admirably, surely
You will until the sun
And the moon display patterns

On the inside of your egg
To break the computer will:
Fingered from a wood cabin

In the moon city of a
Continent filled with more push
Buttons than kisses. O rise,

O roar outward: we have not
Done better yet than explore
The emptiness between us

And the golden chains circling
Giant infertile, binding,
Eggs. Soar out brave boys your grail

If filled with the blood of men,
A whole wretchedness of time,
Of men who gaze in mirrors,

Who look along the ocean,
Tap among dense trees towards
The next tree. Ride out brothers

I, too, am with you, armed
With the wish and will, footing
With dead poets at my side

The blank, blind, unknowable
Track of blood that leads, that leads,
Leads on to O god knows where.

Then it will be said that if
The planets you land upon
Had not been there it would be

Necessary for you to
Invent them. So make them be.
Each alien atmosphere will

Rise like a diamond flower
Touched by sunlight; and brought
Lightyears across the sky is

Man, vizored and gauntleted,
Pecking at the longshot crust
That hatches him everywhere

TED WALKER

Moon Ashes

For longer than time is left me,
Breast-high among the ashes I swam.
While there was torch-light to travel by,
I knew behind their white, soft,
Terrible collapse upon themselves
And how they evened over where I had come
Like windless waters levelling after a skiff.

The dark came, easier. I guess
What silent myriads will fall
Upward from my path, beginnings of snow,
As if this were Earth. Fierce
For hard, high ground where no fleck settles,
I shoulder away from the crater's centre,
Carrying no flag, no token crucifix.

NATHANIEL TARN

Head With Helmet

A white globe at rest in the spin of the world
it will leave. At rest, cushioned and nursed,
still, still as a white rind, a new-laid egg.
Still and ready to burst. An egg, too large by inches
for the chick it holds: earth's buoyancy in space.
The vizor: Cyclops' single, gapes upwards,
purblind in yawning to the light it drinks
yet cannot relish. The vizor: stiff, immovable
and locked on target. Behind it though, frail, leaning
down, right out of course, the lovely smile of man,
chin barely grazing shoulder, splinters goodbye
for parent, infant, lover, colleague, you.
Goodbye. To break no differently, no younger
certainly, than broke let's say six hundred years ago
when, confined in his steel, a man for Marion
or honour smiled down like this at his last grass.

PETER REDGROVE

The Haunted Armchair

'... and hid his lord's money ...' (MATTHEW 25)

I want it not to go wrong. I want nothing to go wrong.
I shall guard and hedge and clip to the end of my days
So that nothing goes wrong. This body, this perfect
body
That came from my mother's womb undiseased, whole-
some,
No, nothing must go wrong. It is not I. It is not I.
No, it is not I. I is lodged in its head's centre,
Its turret, a little towards its eyes; it is not I, it is not I
but it is mine
And an over-ranking shame to disease it, to let it disease.
I wash my hands, I wash my hands, I wash my hands
once, twice, thrice,
I rinse my eyes with the sterile saline; I close, I pull the
thick curtain,
I close the door and lock it, once, twice, thrice, I sit, I
lie, I sleep in the great armchair,
And I sleep. Sleep, sleep is the preservative, cultivate
sleep, it keeps me perfect.
No, no, it is not I; I lives only in the turret;
It is the body, it is the body, it is the body is the loved
thing,
It is from my mother, it is my mother's,

It came from my mother, it is an organ of the body of
my mother
And I shall keep it with no rough touch upon it
No rough disease to ramp up and down in it. The world?
And the world? That is the mind's. In the turret. And
now I will sleep.
I will sleep now, for my body exists. That is enough.
Something wakes me. Is it the fire?
It crackles like a speech. The buffet of winds, the cracks
Of the beams, the taste of the sun, the swimming shark
of the moon?
No, I think, no, I think, I think I hear time flowing,
No, I think I hear time eroding, the cinder withering in
the grate,
The grate withering with the time, my hands raised to
my eyes
Where my eyes are withering, I look close at my withering
hands. How long?
How much time have I seen withering? Did I come
here today?
Suddenly everything grants me withering. Shall I sit
here again?
The body is gone. I sit here alone. A nothing, a virgin
memory.
A grease-spot. A dirty chair-back.

JAMES KIRKUP

Poem written after sighting an
Unidentified Flying Object

They are above us,
Beyond us and around us,
Out of space out of time.

Between star and star,
New moons, and beings wiser
Than ourselves, approach.

Our earth is rotten
As a fruit about to drop
Into nothingness.

They are gardeners
Of space, who come to tend us.
Strangers, they love us.

In ages long past
They came to our planet.
We drove them away.

Ever since that day
Our world moves to destruction.
Death grows among us.

Only if we call
To the beautiful strangers
Will our peace return.

I know they watch me
As I write this poem now.
Poets are cosmic.

I feel their silence
Like words, their absence like love.
We must turn to them.

We must watch for them.
We must give our hearts and souls,
Open eyes and arms.

Look to the heavens
And upon the ground for signs.
They are among us.

And we shall see them
With the eyes of vision, if
We have sense to see.

And we shall know them
By their purity and grace,
If we have hearts to feel.

They are above us,
Beyond us and around us,
Out of space out of time.

BEN DUNK

Turtle Turn

Surgeons lifted the giant turtle to the operating table,
an amphibious reptile with grafted human legs and
limbs.

Already pitiable.

Now the master stroke of surgical whims.

A human-brain implant, specially selected with
'high intelligence quotient',
cold-stored for this 'great-day'.

Hours later the creature lay,
wedged in a cot, filled with hay.
A contemperated patient,
the answer to space-men's prayers.
Having natural hypothermia,
capable of survival underwater,
or changes in air pressures,
and shielded by a carapace.

'We've done it! a brain, a human brain, how clever!'
Visions of universological explorations of many kinds,
by this hybrid, swirled their minds.
Ability to traverse rough terrain on two legs,
work out human-type problems,
turn knobs with fingers and thumbs,
and lay eggs.

PETER REDGROVE

The Youthful Scientist Remembers

After a day's clay my shoes drag like a snail's skirt
And hurt as much on gravel. You have mud on your
jersey,

This pleases me, I cannot say why. Summer-yolk
Hangs heavy in the sky, ready to rupture in slow
swirls,

Immense custard: like the curious wobbly heart
Struggling inside my pink shirt. Spring is pink, pre-
dominately,

And frothy, thriving, the glorious forgotten sound of
healing,

And cheering, all shouting and cheering. With what
inwardness

The shadows of autumn open, brown and mobile as
cognac,

And the whole of my beer comes reeling up to me in
one great amber rafter

Like a beam of the purest sun, well-aged; as it travels
the grass

The dead smile an immense toothy underground, kindly.

I cannot explain why. You pointed out that the lily
Was somebody's red tail inside their white nightie.

So much so

That I am still sober and amazed at the starlight glittering
in the mud,

I am amazed at the stars, and the greatest wonder of
them all
Is that their black is as full as their white, the black
Impends with the white, packing between the white,
And under the hives of silence there are swarms of light,
And padded between black comb, struggling white.

I cannot explain this, with the black as full as the bright,
The mud as full as the sunlight. I had envisaged
Some library of chemistry and music
With lean lithe scores padding the long pine shelves,
Plumage of crystal vials clothing strong deal tables;
I had thought that the stars would only tug at me slightly,
Or sprinkle thin clear visions about me for study—
Instead you point at that flower, your dress fits like a
clove.

NORMAN NICHOLSON

Windscale

The toadstool towers infest the shore:
Stink-horns that propagate and spore
Wherever the wind blows.
Scafell looks down from the bracken band,
And sees hell in a grain of sand,
And feels the canker itch between his toes.

This is a land where dirt is clean,
And poison pasture, quick and green,
And storm sky, bright and bare;
Where sewers flow with milk, and meat
Is carved up for the fire to eat,
And children suffocate in God's fresh air.

ROBERT CONQUEST

The Landing in Deucalion

Deucalionis Regio, the area to the south of the Sinus Sabaeus,
on Mars

Screened by the next few decades from our vision
Their image, none the less, is fairly clear,
Emerging from the air-lock into light
Sharp, unfamiliar in its composition,
From cold stars and a small blue flaming sun
As glints of racing Phobos disappear.

Leaving the rocket pointing at that sky
Their steps and sight turn to the chosen spot
Through this thin air through which the thin winds keen;
The valves hiss in their helmets as they cross
The crumbling sand towards the belt of green
Where long-sought strangeness will reveal – what?

And why this subject should be set to verse
Is only partly in what fuels their hearts
More powerful than those great atomic drives
(Resembling as it does the thrust of poetry—
The full momentum of the poets' whole lives)
— Its consummation is yet more like art's:

For as they reach that unknown vegetation
Their thirst is given satisfaction greater
Than ever found but when great arts result;
Not just new detail or a changed equation
But freshly flaming into all the senses
And from the full field of the whole gestalt.

And so I sing them now, as others later.

MAURICE CARPENTER

Solar Travel

I lay asleep on a clear bright night;
The moon filled my room with a flood of light;
I dreamed I was sailing the seas of space
And my ship bore the badge of the human race.

We are the pilots of sunlit space,
The new pioneers of the human race
With eight new planets to be won
Under the Empire of the sun.

I was the first to land on Mercury
Hot as a cinder dry as a quarry;
I planted my flag and did my duty
Boarded my ship and left in a hurry.

We are the pilots of sunlit space
Leaving our terrestrial base
With seven new planets to be won
Under the Empire of the sun.

I was the first on dusty Venus
To stand and gaze in those hot arenas,

The hills shifted and metals boiled
As fetid smokes around me coiled.

I was the first on frozen Mars
In this last act of the human farce
To gaze on a place where the seas are dry
And motor-bike moons chug round the sky.

I was the first on giant Jupiter
To know the human race grow stupider,
Gravity made me dull as lead,
I choked on a methane and ammonia bed.

We are the pilots of the black and blazing
Spaces that keep our minds amazing
With four new planets to be won
Under the Empire of the sun.

I was the first on the ring of Saturn
To see the earth an attractive slattern
We'd raped and wronged and left to die.
I hardly dared look her in the eye.

I was the first on far Uranus
To know no golden age could save us,
No Titan come to break our chains
And save us from our lives' sweet pains.

We are the pilots of our shining dreams
Riding the solar system's seams,
Never to find, though space bend and twist
An inn we could call 'Space Traveller's rest'.

I stood on Neptune's enormous belly
Coughing clouds, knee deep in jelly
And thought of Adam and his fall,
The aberration that foxed us all.

I stood on Pluto's absolute zero
Knowing at last I was no hero,
Uttermost darkness closing in,
No more planets for me to win.

We are the pilots of space returned
Sun-drenched to the earth we spurned,
Pilots of the brimming ether
Daring the interstellar weather,
Exploring the Empire of the sun
To rule all planets but our own.

ROBERT CONQUEST

Far Out (EXOSKELTONICS)

The poet on Sol III
Too often makes free
Of a jitter of jargon
All structure far gone,
While around it the images
Like a cloud of dim midges
Or blatant blowflies
Imply that the oaf lies.

One might learn this sooner
By a look beyond lunar
Pressure-domes' cluster
Out to the vaster
Sphere of the possible
Where anything's real.

The senses? Of course.
Take the simplest case:
'The grass grows red',
Yes, he meant what he said,
Beaming it straight
From Deneb VIII.
While each colour and flow

Psychedelists know
Mira Ceti projects
As ion effects,
Quotidian sights
Of those counterflared nights.
Then, the howl of Hine 'ice',
The Arrakis spice . . .
(You don't know what drugs *are*
Till you've hit Barnard's Star:
Interstellar Narcotics
Says heroin's for hicks.)

Mood? Touch of pure
Terror? Well, sure,
– A psychotransducer.
D'you feel it too, Sir?
Rigellian Thanatics
Go in for such tricks.
So give them a burst.
Sergeant! Your turret first.

Words? Any intense
Disjunction of sense
Is malfunction (routine)
Of the translation machine.
And that's with the simpler
Straight-concept transfer.
When it comes to amaths,
Time-twist telepaths
With gestalt exchange

Beyond humanoid range
Both species lock
In semantic shock
With half-crazed equipment;
(– As for what that last blip meant . . .)

Thus we hardly went all
the way with the mental:
It makes one too dizzy.
– But even the physical
gets exorbitant:
Like a dinosaur-ant,
Like walking sequoias,
Thinking yachts (or destroyers),
Roughly humanoid entities
Who may have eight or ten titties,
And others like starfish,
And some polymorph-ish
By moments or eons,
And even Proteans
Who cause endless trouble
By becoming the double
Of Man at a whim,
Or half-you and half-him . . .

Well, all such perspectives
Are already correctives,
And we've not yet put forth
Those like nothing on Earth:
Rulls ('Perfect Ones'),

Ingesters of Suns,
Equator-long worms,
Planetoderms,
Mind-mists on Pyria
Like clouds of bacteria,
Dimension-free Eich
And Riss and their like,
Thinking wave-patterns
(For example, on Saturn's
Ninth moon Iapetus),
And Energy-eaters
In crystalline strains,
And Sessile Brains
Sunk in fluorine baths,
And Ninety-G Laths
On a gas-giant planet
That twenty suns shine at . . .

And their arts. One note plays
Through thirty-five days
For the whole of the Horsehead
Nebula Gorsedd;
While the Hectops who live
On Betelgeuse V
Take the Regular Solids
And launch them as bolides
In a dozen or more bits
To admire the orbits.

And their limits of culture

Might even insult your
Social capacity.
A pile of scrap a city
For motile shards?
Suicidal amoeboids
Symbiotically bind
An android hive-mind?
– As for queer kicks,
All-species sex!
Tentacles, essences
Sting *your* six (or less) senses.

Enough? Well, go back
By the spacewarper track;
Take the images with you
Produced by the mytho-
poetic potential
Of the merely essential;
And ask, back on Earth,
What are images worth?

The extremes of verse?
– Just what occurs
Somewhere, or might.
What's so thrilling to write
Is in principle normal.
What's not are the formal
Virtues of art.
Try *them* for a start.

JAMES KIRKUP

Tea in a Space-ship

In this world a tablecloth need not be laid
On any table, but is spread out anywhere
Upon the always equidistant and
Invisible legs of gravity's wild air.

The tea, which never would grow cold,
Gathers itself into a wet and steaming ball,
And hurls its liquid molecules at anybody's head,
Or dances, eternal bilboquet,
In and out of the suspended cups up-
Ended in the weightless hands
Of chronically nervous jerks
Who yet would never spill a drop,
Their mouths agape for passing cakes.

Lumps of sparkling sugar
Sling themselves out of their crystal bowl
With a disordered fountain's
Ornamental stops and starts.
The milk describes a permanent parabola
Girdled with satellites of spinning tarts.

The future lives with graciousness.
The hostess finds her problem eased,
For there is honey still for tea
And butter keeps the ceiling greased.

She will provide, of course,
No cake-forks, spoons, or knives.
They are so sharp, so dangerously gadabout.
It is regarded as a social misdemeanour
To put them out.

DAVID WRIGHT

Mars Bars Mars Bars

Let us constitute a society for the preservation of space
(All that nothing, those billion million units of zero
With in between a few floating slagheaps, bonfires and
gasbubbles,
A complete absence of god and even the bishop of Wool-
wich).

The inner peace of outer space, are we going to allow its
Violation by radio probes, rackety rockets, things that go
beep in the night;
The unveiling of Venus by extrasensory perception?

Why, before you can say Kittyhawk you'll find
The place full of old bedsteads, broken bottles, Ford
Anglia chassises,
Coca-Cola cans, once-used french letters like bits of
ectoplasm.

Man makes messes (typical of him to send a dog up
first)
Yet is almost the only animal that bothers to clean them up.
Last year he gave the English Channel a good scrub with
detergent:

Tries hard, he does. All the same, let's keep him
Out of outer space, off Aldebaran and anti-matter,
Declare the Milky Way a Galaxy Reserve, adults only.

Don't get us wrong: we believe in progress, it's lovely.
Without progress we could not have progressed as far as
this and
Without progress we wouldn't be able to progress out of
it.
So you see we're hooked on progress, everybody is,
Nonetheless we've got to call a halt somewhere—
HALT!

Love in a Spaceship

Moscow, Dec. 2 (UPI) – Love in a spaceship is a necessity and Russia must officially recognize it, a Soviet scientist said today.

Igor Zabelin warned that 'love as an emotion will play a very important role in the future in the populating of outer space. We must not only deeply analyse love as an emotion but also try to regulate it properly.'

Writing in the magazine *Moskva*, Zabelin predicted that 'in the future, when mankind will fulfill its mission of populating outer space, men and women will be sent in spacecraft somewhere for many years'.

Noting that 'when a couple lives together for five or seven years, they may get sick of each other and very often there is a divorce', Zabelin warned such coolness could cause grave problems in outer space.

'The factor of love must be taken into special consideration because it will serve an important role in their life in outer space,' he said of future space colonizers.

'Love has a cosmic factor,' he said. 'It is very important and we must pay far more attention to this problem than we do now.'

(Report in *Mainichi Daily News* (Tokyo), 3rd December, 1965)

JAMES KIRKUP

Love in a Space Suit

Dear, when on some distant planet
We, love's protestants, alight,
How, in our deep-space-diver suits
Shall our devoted limbs unite

You shall have those ruby lips
In a helmet-bowl, inverted
On your golden locks, enclosed:
Your starry eyes shall be inserted
In a plastic contact-vizor
To keep out the stellar cold.
And your teeth of pearls shall chatter
On a tongue too hot to hold.

Dear, those pretty little fingers
Shall be cased with lead around,
And your snowy breasts, my dove,
With insulating tape be bound.
There your lovely legs, my sweet
In asbestos boots shall stump;
And a grim all-metal corset
Shall depress that witty rump.

How shall I, in suits of iron
Or of aluminium
Communicate my body's fire
In love's planetarium?
Darling, must we kiss by knocking
Bowl on bowl, a glassy bliss?
Must we lie apart for aye,
Not far, but not as near as this?

Nay! before I will renounce
My lust for earth and love of you,
I shall have us both, dear, fitted
With a space suit made for two.

ROBERT MORGAN

The Choice

They were landing and the great thrust
Pressed like magnetism on their bodies.
The great ship hovered then slowly
Dropped on meadow grass.

Starglyn, the captain, stared
At the green landscape.
Between two hills a deserted city,
Crumbling and overgrown, patterned
The Scanning Screen. The dials
On a Blue Screen indicated
No human life present.

Suncon, the Celestial Geologist,
Smiled over his captain's shoulder.

'You were right' said Starglyn.
'They must have been a very aggressive people.
What was your main source of information?'

'The great meteorite which broke
From Earth in 2048 A.D.

We took it to Station Z
And examined it. It told us everything.'

'What?' asked Starglyn.

'They were allowed to choose
Between good and evil.
And they chose evil . . .'

'Bloody fools' muttered Starglyn.

JOHN HEATH-STUBBS

From an Ecclesiastical Chronicle

In the year of Our Lord two thousand one hundred and
seven,
The first electronic computer
Was appointed to a bishopric in the Church of
England.
The consecration took place
At a Pontifical High Mass
In the new Cathedral of Stevenage,
In the presence of the Most Reverend
Mother in God, Her Grace Rita,
By Divine Connivance *Cantuar. Archiepiscopissa*.

'Monsignor Pff-pff (75321/666)
With notable efficiency, tact, and benevolence, presided
For the next three hundred years
Over his diocese. (He had previously worked
In the mission field – rural Dean of Callisto,
One of the satellites of Jupiter.)
After which he was honourably retired,
Only a little rusted, to the Science Museum
In South Kensington – there frequented and
loved
By generations of schoolchildren.

As the *Times* remarked on that occasion
'He stood for the best in the Anglican tradition.'
In indubitable succession, one might say,
From our contemporary Dr. —, of —.

CONTRIBUTORS

GEORGE BARKER

was born in 1913, and educated at Marlborough School, Chelsea. He was Professor of English at Imperial Tohoku University, Japan. He has lived in U.S.A. and Italy. His most recent book of poems published in 1967 is called *The Golden Chains*. He now lives in Norfolk.

THOMAS BLACKBURN

was born in 1916 in Cumberland. He went to Bromsgrove School and Durham University. He is now lecturing in English at the College of St. Mark and St. John, Chelsea. Two recent books of poems include *The Price of an Eye* and *A Smell of Burning*.

MAURICE CARPENTER

was born in 1911. He writes that he was led astray by politics and domesticity, but managed to have published part of a long poem *The Tall Interpreter* (Meridian Books 1946), and a collection of elegaic pieces *Gentle Exercise* (Key Poets), to have a play *Orpheus Espresso* produced at Lamda by Christopher Fry, and to have produced *Mirror*

Who Am I? himself at the Woolstore Theatre Codford. At present working on a collection of poems on *English Villages*. He earns his living as a schoolmaster.

ROBERT CONQUEST

poet and political writer. Two books of verse *Poems* and *Between Mars and Venus*. He has also published a science fiction novel *A World of difference*, and had stories in *Analog Science Fiction*. Edited with Kingsley Amis the *Spectrum* of anthologies. He was born in 1917 and educated at Winchester and Magdalen, Oxfordshire and Buckinghamshire Light Infantry. Foreign Service. At present freelance writer.

RONALD DUNCAN

was born in 1914. Educated in Switzerland and at Cambridge. He founded the Devon Festival of Arts in 1953, and the English Stage Company in 1955. He has written many plays, and has also published several books of poems. He has written two volumes of his autobiography. He lives in North Devon.

BEN DUNK

was born in Sussex in 1929. He did National Service in the R.A.F. He has travelled extensively in Europe. Became a Hoover Salesman; later an owner of several businesses by his own initiative. Is a member of the Round Table and Rotary Clubs. Sponsored and published a free local monthly journal *The Chichester Promoter*. Has only recently begun

to write verse to 'express personal emotions and thoughts on multivarious subjects'.

JOHN FAIRFAX

born in London. Educated in Devon. Published a book of poems in 1967. Poems appeared in magazines at home and overseas. Compiled two contemporary anthologies *Listen to This* and *Stop and Listen* for Longmans. Book of 4 *Science Fiction Stories* due out shortly. London editor for New York Literary magazine *Panache*.

PETER GODWIN

was born in 1946 near Newcastle-on-Tyne, moved to Rhodesia in 1948; educated at a Jesuit College in Rhodesia, started a history degree at University College, Rhodesia, left after two years because of political difficulties and came to London to finish degree at London University. Started writing verse about two years ago.

JOHN HEATH-STUBBS

was born in London in 1918, but lived in Hampshire during his youth. Educated on the Isle of Wight and at Oxford. Gregory Fellow at Leeds and visiting professor at U.S. universities. Lecturer at St. Mark and St. John, Chelsea. *Collected Poems* published in 1967 with O.U.P.

JAMES KIRKUP

was born in 1923, educated at South Shields High School and Durham University. Has published *Refusal to Conform*,

Paper Windows: Poems from Japan. Author of many travel books about Asia and Far East. In one, *Russian Roundabout*, he reports seeing a U.F.O. over the Kremlin. He's a member of the Cosmic Brotherhood Association of Sky Watchers, Yokohama Branch, and various U.F.O. societies. Unmarried. 1968-69 Poet in Residence, Amherst College, Mass.

PAUL LAZARD
born in 1945 in Dar-es-Salaam, moved to Freetown, Sierra Leone at the age of six, educated for a year at a convent there. Expatriated to England, to various schools. Left England and took a degree in Salisbury, Rhodesia, which was finished in spite of right wing counter-revolution of Ian Smith. Escaped Rhodesia and taught in Zambia for a year. Three poems published in *Young Commonwealth Poets '65*.

EDWARD LUCIE-SMITH
was born in Jamaica in 1933. Came to England in 1946 to be educated. Has lived here ever since. Read history at Oxford, spent ten years in advertising, and is now a freelance writer-journalist-broadcaster. Has published three books of verse, the latest being *Towards Silence*. Has edited several anthologies including *Penguin Book of Elizabethan Verse*, *The Penguin Book of Satirical Verse*, and *The Liverpool Scene*.

JOHN MOAT
was born in 1936 in India. Educated at Radley and Exeter College, Oxford. Studied painting in France with Edmond

Xavier Kapp. Lives in Devon on the Wreckers Coast with his wife and various animals. Works as a poet, writer and freelance broadcaster. His novel *Heorot* published in 1968 by the Cresset Press

EDWIN MORGAN
was born in Glasgow in 1920. At present teaching English at Glasgow University. Has written articles on poetry and science, and has broadcast on B.B.C. on the creative and critical possibilities of computers. Has written *Space Poetry* which was produced with radiophonic effects in collaboration with John Gray (B.B.C. Scotland, 1966). Is represented in *Astronauts of Inner-Space* (Stolen Paper Review Editions, 1966). Has two further books of verse appearing in 1968.

ROBERT MORGAN
was born in South Wales in 1921. Coal-miner for twelve years. Spent two years at Fircroft College, Birmingham and two years at College of Education, Bognor Regis. As well as publishing verse in many magazines and periodicals has had two one-man shows of painting and drawing. Verse play *Rainbow Valley* broadcast on Third Programme.

NORMAN NICHOLSON
was born in Cumberland in 1914. After a breakdown in his health, at the age of sixteen, he gave up plans for university training and settled down to life in the small mining town of Millom. Eventually becoming much attached to and

concerned with the society and environment of the area. He has written books on the area. Won the first Heinemann Prize for a book of poems in 1945. Also written verse play. Won Cholmondeley Award in 1967.

LESLIE NORRIS

was born in 1921 in Merthyr Tydfil, Glamorgan. He was educated at local schools, The City of Coventry College, and The Department of Education, Southampton University. Served in the R.A.F. during the war. Published books of verse, the latest being *Finding Gold* (1967). Edited a memorial volume for the Welsh poet Vernon Watkins. Lives in Sussex.

PETER REDGROVE

was born in 1932 and educated at Queen's College, Cambridge, where he read Natural Sciences. He has worked as an industrial chemist and a scientific journalist. Currently he is lecturing in Complementary Studies at Falmouth School of Art, Cornwall. He has published four books of poetry, two were Poetry Book Society Choices, and is represented in *Penguin Modern Poets 11*. Has contributed widely to journals and anthologies on both sides of the Atlantic, including *New Worlds SF* and Judith Merrill's *Years Best SF* Nos. 9 and 11.

PAUL ROCHE

spent his early years in India, was brought up in London and educated at Ushaw College, and later at the Gregorian

University in Rome. He has published many translations from the Greek classics. His own work is published by Duckworth. He has read and lectured widely in the U.S.A. and England.

NATHANIEL TARN

was born in Paris and educated in France, Belgium, U.S. and U.K. Long residence in Latin America and the Far East. Has now left University teaching in the social sciences and is general editor of Cape Editions. Book *Old Salvage/Young City* (1964), from which two of the poems included in this book were taken, was followed by a Neruda translation, a selection in *Penguin Modern Poets*, and *Where Babylon Ends* (Cape Goliard 1967). A long poem *The Beautiful Contradiction*, is to be published in the spring of 1969.

D. M. THOMAS

was born in Cornwall in 1935, Read English at Oxford. He is now lecturing in English at Hereford College of Education. Was awarded the Richard Hilary prize in 1960. A selection of his SF poetry appeared in *Penguin Modern Poets 11*: and a collection from Cape Goliard Press, covering a wider thematic field, is to be published later this year.

JOHN WAIN

was born in 1925 at Stoke-on-Trent. Educated at St. John's, Oxford. Lecturer at Reading University, then freelance

writer and novelist. Besides his novels he has published four books of verse.

TED WALKER

was born in West Sussex in 1934. He was educated at Cambridge. He now writes full time after eleven years teaching. Writes short stories for the *New Yorker* (and poems). Book of these stories expected before too long. Has broadcast frequently on radio (poetry, criticism, talks) and has appeared in, and written commentaries for TV documentaries of a topographical nature. Has begun a novel. Published three books of verse. Has won three literary prizes.

DAVID WRIGHT

born Johannesburg 1920; has published four books of verse of which the last was *Adam at Evening* (1965). Has translated *Beowulf* and *The Canterbury Tales*, edited various anthologies, and written two travel-books about Portugal. Gregory Fellow in Poetry at Leeds, 1965-67.

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