

Dear Writer.

Hello!

Welcome to the pre-release materials for the 'No Rhyme, Some Reason' workshop with me, Luke Palmer, as part of this year's Camp YA.

Thanks for joining. I'm glad you're here.

I thought about what I could do in this session to 1) have fun with words 2) generate some great writing and 3) give some tips that are useful for poets and prose writers alike. I landed on the idea of **objects**.

We all write about objects, for all sorts of reasons. From humble, everyday items littering an MC's apartment to elusive repositories of old magik at the end of an oft-blighted quest, we can't get away from writing about *stuff*. So in this workshop we'll look at various ways that various poets have done the job, and see if there's anything we'd like to borrow from them.

So, in this pack are four poems from three different poets. You can read them in advance if you like, or save them for the day. That's up to you.

We'll talk about them at the workshop, and have a think about how they might prompt or improve our own writing.

See you there!

Can't wait.

Luke

Crate

BY FRANCIS PONGE

TRANSLATED BY JOSHUA COREY AND JEAN-LUC GARNEAU

Halfway between *crib* and *cage* the French language puts *crate*, a simple slatted box for transporting those fruits that fall ill at the least lack of air.

Built in such a way that it can be broken down effortlessly after use, it is never used twice. It is really more perishable than the deliquescing foodstuffs that it carries.

On the corners of streets that lead to the markets, it gleams like white wood without wood's vanity. Still very new, and slightly surprised to find itself in this awkward position, having been thrown into the gutter without hope of retrieval, it remains a most likable object on whose fate we will not dwell for long.

Source: *Poetry* (July/August 2016)

The Match

BY FRANCIS PONGE

TRANSLATED BY WALLACE FOWLIE

The fire made one body with the match,
a living body with gestures, exaltation, a short life.

The gasses emanating from it flamed up, gave it wings
and dresses, a body even: a moving, pitiful form . . .

It was brief.

The head alone is able to burst into flame, on contact
with a hard reality,

and then you hear the sharp noise of the starter.

But as soon as it is *on*, the flame,

in a straight line, quickly and its sail lowered like the
boat of a regatta,

covers the little piece of wood

which, slightly veering,

it leaves at the end

as black as a priest.

Source: *Poetry* (Sept 1952)

I FELL IN LOVE WITH A BRAUN ELECTRIC SHAVER

I know what you're thinking
and, sure, I'm married.
But you didn't see the way
this shaver was looking at me.
The way it would hum longingly,
whilst gliding over my husband's face.
Always vibrating – it seemed to me –
in my direction.
Made me feel kind of special.
And this little guy was a series 7,
so unbelievably smart;
the way they interpret the beard
and adapt to a man's face.
I didn't believe that was possible.
Once you see a thing like that in action
you can't exactly unsee it, if you know what I mean.
And once I discovered that it shared my love
of French cinema, there was no going back.

by **Vik Shirley**

from *The Continued Closure of the Blue Door* (HVTN Press, 2019)

Rope Bridges

Your land of love consists mainly of rope bridges
criss-crossing the sky like a cat's cradle, strung
between mountains. For each time you've moved on,
'gotten over' something, a rope bridge hangs
as testament, the last remaining thread of a thought.
Some are twenty-five years old, woven from dolls'
hair and nettles. Some are wholesome and beautiful:
vines planted on opposite sides of the river
naturally grown to span the gap and weave together.
Some are elaborate, pre-planned, constructed under
high tension and enshrined with laminated photographs.
The latest is narrow and rickety but you're crossing
in style. I look up from my inflatable raft
to see you gliding above me, passing into a cloud.

by **Caroline Bird**

from *The Air Year* (Carcenet, 2020)

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