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Editorial

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Editorial

Abstract

Part of the pleasure in editing this issue for Kunapipi was trawling for copy both within and outside Britain, and finding everywhere among the writers I approached a warm and generous response. The resulting rich yield includes, along with material from two recently published volumes of poetry, a good range of new work and 'work in progress', and along with writers already known to readers of Kunapipi, several newcomers to the journal - all in all, signs of the diversity and significance of the literatures from Commonwealth countries in the latter half of this century.

EDITORIAL

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Serendipity played its agreeable part, too, in these last six months or so, springing a clutch of shared themes in the contents of what was to have been a 'general' issue with the hint that label sometimes carries of a mixed bag of stuff. Especially prominent, whether in the verse or prose fiction or critical essays, are themes relating to the ways in which language – with its definition, elusiveness, hybridity, local energies, transcultural agency – makes and remakes our world; ideas which are explored and articulated through a lively variety of forms and techniques and englishes. De Quincey's 'many-langued town' finds a contemporary version in the visual realization of Liverpool by two British Sikh artists. The interconnections in the experiences and work of Bassnett and Pizarnik, traced first in the Preface to *Exchanging Lives*, are then mirrored in the structural arrangement of the individual poems and translations which follow. That 'newest mystery', which is a marvellous sense of belonging in Landeg White's poetry, rests as much upon the richly tangled words and figures he inhabits as upon the delights of living in Portugal. Finally, a dazzling image of a language the creative energies and resources of which are bound up with its cultural hybridity and rootedness in Mauritian society is conjured up for us in Mooneeram's discussion of Dev Virahswamy's adaptations of Shakespeare into Mauritian Creole.

Needless to say, it was a pleasure working again with Susan Burns and Glenda Pattenden, who contributed in inspired and practical ways at every level of the production of the issue, and to whom I am indebted for ideas on literary material, the cover design, and editorial matters.

Shirley Chew