

Who am I?

I started writing poetry in the 1980's after Art College and from 1992 I was published in a range of literary magazines including Lines Review, Gairfish, Southfields, Staple, Slowdancer and Oxford Poetry etc.

I moved to Edinburgh in 1994 and joined the Shore Poets and a poem of mine was used as the title of the group anthology 'The Ice Horses' in 1996. This anthology was edited by Stewart Conn and Ian McDonough and included Ian Chrichton Smith and other leading Scottish poets.

A selection of my poetry was published as a pamphlet by Salt in December 2010 as 'Last Farmer' in the Salt Modern Voices series.

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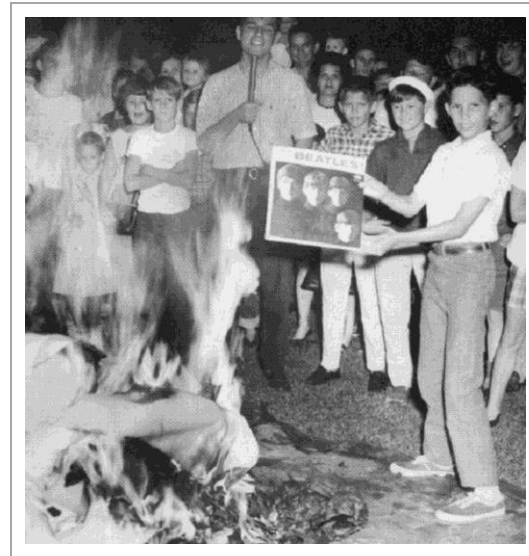
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SHAUN BELCHER
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BURNING BOOKS



SHAUN BELCHER

HORSESHOE PRESS MINI PAMPHLET No.1

Burning books and smoking guns...

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Smoking Guns

All went off in the sixties

Now it's retro and rehash and the end of things

Speculative fiction

And fantasy football

Nothing like something happens everywhere endlessly

It's called the internet of things.

Proper Poetry

I used to write proper poetry

Not the really proper stuff

You know packed full of classical allusions

Or invented lives based on obscure photographs

No I gave up on proper poetry

Because it is so fucking boring

So I write an occasional diatribe

And raise two fingers to the academy

These are the times for less poets, less experts

Less academics and more UKIP candidates

When a military chaplain's daughter from Wheatley

Is playing Joan of Arc in the Wars of Brexit

With only God and King Billy to save us.

Creative Accountancy

That's the kind of writing

You find these days in colourful EMW brochures

Not in University any more – too old school

Workshops on how to be a real poet

In ten weeks, just one easy online payment, how sweet

There's even guaranteed tutor interaction maybe

How nice that we are all a part of this booming

creative accountants economy

*“...a concern for language and for how it shapes
memory and identity.”*
Anna Crowe, Lines Review, Edinburgh.

Poem to end all Poetry

Was primed
All the software routines
Executed perfectly
But sadly
When it came to the launch
It misfired badly

Nude descending a shopping mall escalator

Was last seen
Sucking a slush-puppie
One hand grasping her iphone
She missed her footing, tripped
And drowned in the cubist fountain

The Dance of Debt

9.20 post-watershed family viewing
Not Minder, not procedural, not even faintly interesting
A fake architects, a fake accent, fake words
Playwright mechanically scraping barrels for ideas
The actress presenting a fake library plan
A new fake library in a fake world
Where a thousand library doors have closed
And a thousand more await ‘repositioning’.
A terrible dance of debt with taxpayer’s lives
The plot of a penny dreadful writ large
Every empty shelf, every skip full of books
Another building closer to a retail led outcome.
For even the palatial Birmingham Central Library
Is but a fall-back plan away from a shopping centre
Every shelf full of play-stations, candles and soap
The retail mantra sell more to sell more to sell.
More items hastily constructed in dirty sweatshops
By this century’s lace makers and nail makers
More blood from stones, poison from lead
All those who died early with no heirs, half-fed
Leaving behind that benefactor’s Municipal Library and Gallery
That developers are now re-selling to foreign hotel investors
Both built by the same dance of debt
Each brick paid for with blood, each nail timber hand-made
Every name in the ledger but one erased.

Burning Books

It was a cold winter's morning

That he struck on the idea,

Books at Poundland were now cheaper than coal

So he took a barrow down to tarn

Filled up a hundred weight

And trundled them back to his house

Then all through that January cold snap

He felt toasty and warm

As he sat and enjoyed the heat from the books

Whilst they flickered and spat and crumbled in the grate

First there was Paterson, Child and Archer

The big hardbacks of course lasted longer

Fifty shades of grey climaxed in less than fifty seconds

But at least a better end than being pulped to cream

And best of all was that special late night treat

J.K.Rowling's shite novels disintegrating, toute suite.

"Belcher cannot be accused of nostalgia or pastoral myth-making but is as vituperative in tone as Larkin"
Raymond Friel - Southfields

Bonnard's Wives

I was in this bookshop

When I read the blurb

A book called Marriage by David Harsent

An 'inspired portrait of conjugality'

Apparently

Well forgive me but

Who gives a fuck really

It's all pure conjecture....

White middle class fantasy

Another poet riffing on fabricated lives

Bonnard wouldn't give a toss

That fifty years later

Some poet was tossing off an ode to his wife

If you want to win the T.S.Eliot prize though

Just be published by Faber

And be judged by your academic colleague

Who happens to work down the corridor

Dream like Bonnard

And keep it all in the white middle class poetic family...