

The Mirrors of Thespis

Keith Robert Bray

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Second Chance

Supporting Mental Health in Performing Arts

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Second Chance
You may need it next

Introductory preface

My second collection of poems develops further the themes of identity and correlations to the past, present and the future. Hopefully the poems should speak for themselves without need of explanation or justification for their existence and open to individual interpretation. The title “The mirrors of Thespis” gives a clue to the underlying themes running like a thin thread throughout the poems. Similar to a theme and variation form in music, the opening idea is reshaped, altered and changed by a process of variable repetition; a distorting mirror where the original reflected image has been mutated into other aspects of itself. Ideas and experiences interweave without conscious intention or pre-arranged order in a free flow of continuity. Comparable to an actor’s changing moods and emotions, receptive and affected by the world within and without. A myriad world made up of a complex gamut of human emotions, sexuality, sensuality, individuality, social cohesion, connections, harmony, isolation, discord. I haven’t included within this introduction a long endless ‘curriculum vitae’ of my past creative work simply because it’s important to be in the ‘here and now’ and not to dwell on ‘what was then’ rather than ‘what is now’.

I would also like to thank and acknowledge Tara Fleur and Ingrid Andrew for originally putting my name forward for publication, and for all their encouragement and support.

Extract only

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The Mirrors of Thespis

I am an inhabiter
Of souls
With no name to call my own.

Unbiased neutral observer
Noting every detail
Of human expression,
Absorbing idiosyncratic
Quirks of personality
Human foibles, fears.

A mirror
Reflecting back
The hidden face
Of another's inner world,
Taking time
To absorb all the nuances
Of corporeal behaviour.

Perceiving in others eyes
The truth behind the masks
They wear to conceal
The vulnerable
Fragility hidden within.
Unstripping
The tangled webs
Lying deep below
The outer surface of reality.

I am Dionysus
Goat horned even-toed
Cloven hooved
Thespis transformed
Into incarnate skin,
Communicator of emotions
Interpreter
Of signs and symbols
Touching on the recognisable
Within us all.

Serpent woes

Serpent recoils
Outer skin palpitating,
Slides slithering
Back to the wilderness.

Perpetrator of base desire
Fallen from grace
Severed from the source
Of innocence irrevocably.

Wiggles and writhes
Over moist earth
Across the protecting rock
To a world curtailed by limits.

Banished from the kingdom,
Exiled from the gardens boundaries
Driven, purged and ousted
From the shores of paradise.

Sheds and casts off
Its tired scaly
Arid eroding hide
Bursting out reborn alive.

Shape shifting inner shape
Mutated into human form,
Stands up straight-erect
Fully mortal formed self aware.

Moonlight Flitters

Moonlight flitters
On the run
Caught on the hop
Down on their luck,
Bags full of sorrows
Vans packed to the hilt.
Hit the night
With all they've got,
Fast foot on the accelerator
With tanks full of gas
Vanishing in clouds of confusion
Like a conjurors trick
All gone in a flash.

Moonlight flutterers
Slipping away
Right on cue,
Cunning foxes
Slinking out of view.
Take a look at them
Taking that gamble
Taking it all the way,
Ducking and diving
Hell for leather
Freedom bound
Heading for the nearest motorway.

A touch and go story
We've heard so many times before
On day time television repeat,

One step ahead of the game
One step ahead of the law,
Never certain
For certain never sure.

Moonlight bandits
Sea crazed romantic corsairs
Thinking they've got it made
All sewn up, tacked and nailed.
Dressed in wolfs fur and ermine
Clawing at the palace walls
Then digging their own graves.
Saints and sinners
Going head to head in the ring,
Go hedge your bets
Whatever the odds
The loss or the cost.

Moonlight critters
Escaping town
Searching for a new deal,
Something resembling
A heaven or a home.
Drive into the sunlight
Out of the gloom
Breaking free
Of the moulds that shape them
In die hard social constraints.
Proceed afresh with clean slates
A new set of brushes and paints
Filling in the blank tabula rasa
Starting to come alive once again.

Go burn brightly

Somewhere anywhere
Where the land meets the sea,
Where the sea
Meets the sky
Is somewhere we should be.

Somewhere anyplace
Where the rock meets the tree,
Where the tree
Meets the river
Is somewhere we need to be.

Somewhere somehow
Growing wild
Flowing free,
Souls burning brightly
Knowing how it should be
Could be.

Somewhere out there
We can call our own,
Built in stone
Outside
The confines
Of the dividing horizon line.

Somewhere someplace
Whatever place
It doesn't matter where,
Just to feel

The moment
While the moments there,

Somewhere to thrive
Breathing in the air,
Satellites set alight
Moving together
Flaming on fire
Truly alive.

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