



BEAT THE DUST's DWANG edition in collaboration with TANGERINE PRESS

JUNE 2009

Introduction

Beat the Dust likes to support small independent publishers, particularly those that combine the traditional craft of book-making with cutting edge underground writing. So, this issue of Beat the Dust celebrates the launch of Tangerine Press' DWANG issue 1, a hand bound, limited edition anthology featuring exclusive poetry and prose from around 50 contributors including Billy Childish, Dan Fante, The Brutalists, Tim Wells, Salena Godden and Rob Plath.



In the June 09 edition of Beat the Dust we have the latest, unpublished work from a selection of writers featured in Dwang #1. We also have Alan Kelly's interview with Tangerine's big boss man himself, Michael Curran, which includes some interesting insights into William Wantling and the workings of a small indie press.

Interview with Michael Curran, head honcho at Tangerine Press by Alan Kelly



Michael Curran identifies the things he'd like to hear read/sung on his deathbed:

Song: *Road* - Nick Drake

Poem: *How Beautiful It Is* - Robinson Jeffers

Play: *A Lie of the Mind* - Sam Shepard

Novel: *The Poor Mouth* - Flann O'Brien

Alan Kelly identifies the things he'd like to hear read/sung on his deathbed:

Novel: *Valley of the Dolls* - Jacqueline Susann

Film Script: *Pink Flamingoes* – John Waters or Play: *Festen* - Thomas Vinterberg,
Mogens Rukov

Song: *Mysteries of Love* - Julee Cruise

Poem: *Shy* - Ani Defranco (Okay, this may be a song, but I always think of it as poetry.)

The Michael Curran Interview:

Alan Kelly (AK): Michael, first off I'd like to ask how and why you set up Tangerine Press?

Michael Curran (MC): I learnt to bind books by hand about 5 years ago, Alan. I had no real plan back then. But I did know I wanted to produce tactile, hardcover books using the best materials available. I was waiting, I suppose, for a writer to come along and inspire me.

AK: What are the aims, the objectives of Tangerine Press? Where would you like to see yourself going with the imprint?

MC: Just to keep putting out great writing for the know-nows and future re/discoverers.

AK: What do you think of the current literary world? Do you think with the high quality of work available just a mouse click away, that the print medium may eventually become, if not obsolete, at least overlooked?

MC: Good writing comes through, whatever the medium. No question. But people, I believe, want that extra dimension—to hold a book, read it, sometimes smell it, feel that intimacy between writer and reader. If the book is hand bound, then you've got yourself a menage-a-trois. Then they like to put their books on a bookshelf and admire them from a chair. Maybe have a smoke and look contentedly at their collection. Suddenly jump up, flick through to page 29 of a Jeffers volume, and satisfy some urge they may have had. This unique series of sensations will never go away. You do not get that with a mouse click.

AK: With chapbooks you can download for free anyway, do you think there will exist a market for hard bound books which at a price of £50+ is a wee bit steep?

MC: I don't understand this question. Someone who is happy downloading is not going to be interested in a hand bound book. You may as well be comparing Adolph Hitler to Mother Theresa.

AK: Although there are a flood of litzines, there aren't that many print magazines. *Gold Dust* and *Succour* are two I can think of off the top of my head. Do you think there is a demand for them? Personally I sometimes prefer a hard copy, something to read while on the train.

MC: Both formats are relevant and co-exist, it seems to me, quite happily. Maybe there are not as many print mags as there were 10 years ago, but the good ones stay the distance—Alan Dent's *The Penniless Press*, David Caddy's *Tears in the Fence*. Also *London Magazine*, *Krax*, *Ambit*, *Rising*, *Smoke*, *The Stinging Fly*, many more. They all have healthy subscriptions, some running into 1000+. Notables have dropped off the radar, true—Bryn Fortey's *Outlaw*, David Brewster's mighty *Slacker*. By the same token, there are plenty of online zines that have disappeared or simply stagnated, whilst remaining 'live'. In fact, it would not surprise me if there was a resurgence in the hard copy format. There is a lot of pressure on online mags to keep updating, updating, updating. Whereas with a hardcopy that comes out quarterly, you pick it up, read, put it down. Run a bath, take in another poem. Return, re-read, etc. That is how it should be. Most importantly, the key to all formats is quality of writing and the energy and commitment of the editor.

AK: What is involved in the production of a hard bound book – the entire process from beginning to end?

MC: If you mean in terms of actual binding a book by hand, I calculated it is roughly 3 hours per book. Cutting 30 metres of cloth, also many metres of boards, mull, backing paper, reams and reams of acid-free papers, end bands, making up text blocks, stamping the covers, etc, etc. And the glue—6 litres of it. Then putting it all together. Each book weighs around $\frac{3}{4}$ kilo. Collating *Dwang* alone took 3 days. I only use archival quality boards, papers, conservation glue and hemp cord. I own 2 nipping presses, and I made 2 finishing presses. Plus I have a number of hand

tools. Although there are 126 copies of *Dwang* for sale, I also bound 50ish contributor copies as payment, as well as a dozen or so review copies.

AK: The first issue of *Dwang* is a commemorative edition to the poet William Wantling – with writing by Adelle Stripe, Ben Myers and others. Will each issue of *Dwang* focus on the work of a past poet or author or even musician? And why William Wantling for the first issue?

MC: Not all issues will be commemorative. This first issue is dedicated to Wantling because his writing was the inspiration to actually start Tangerine Press. When I first read his work, it blew me away. Not just the poems about San Quentin Prison (he was there for 5 years), heroin addiction and the Korean War. His range was extraordinary—one minute you are reading about a prison yard shanking, the next a sonnet on unrequited love. A genuine talent. When I discovered his work was out of print, I was compelled to republish him. With help from Ian Seed, I contacted Wantling's widow, Ruthie, to get permission and the rest fell into place. After 3 years of emails, letters and parcels, I finally got to meet her, in Illinois, last November—a wonderful experience with a wonderful woman. The 2 volumes from last year, *The Fix* and *Only in the Sun*, are a celebration of Wantling's formidable talent. *Dwang* #2 already has a special section—Kelsie T. Harder's lost cartoon gem *For Whom the Balloon Tows*. A classic—funny, sad, disturbing, human. His work was featured in Jon and Lou Webb's *The Outsider* (see next question). It took a while to find him—he is that rare breed, a web-free zone. But I did, last month. He gave his permission so I am really looking forward to seeing that.

AK: What are your own influences, what inspires and moves you forward?

MC: Wantling, of course. Also, as alluded to in the previous question, Jon and Lou Webb. They published in the 1960s as Loujon Press, based primarily in New Orleans. They edited, letterpress-printed and bound by hand beautiful publications of their seminal lit magazine *The Outsider*. They made Bukowski famous through the books *It Catches My Heart in Its Hands* and *Crucifix in a Deathand*. Without the Webbs, John Martin and Black Sparrow Press would probably not have come about. They also published 2 extraordinary books by Henry Miller. All Loujon books are now highly prized collectors' items. Jeff Weddle wrote an excellent account of their story in the book *Bohemian New Orleans: The Story of The Outsider and the Loujon Press*. I urge people to read it—they led a very eventful life, one that would be impossible to replicate today.

AK: Can I ask a little about your own background in publishing/writing?

MC: There isn't one, really. I worked in a bookshop opposite Victoria train station in the mid-90s. It is not there any more. It was open til midnight—the late shift was either very entertaining or very quiet. When it was quiet, I sat behind the till and read and read and read. I ran a book mail order company for 2 years, specialising in small press publications, called Tangerine Books. I had a little office in Battersea where I often slept. All that time I had a second job—cleaning aeroplanes at Heathrow, kitchen porter, also the dreaded telephone surveys—fucking off people at 9 in the evening asking them to rate between 1 and 5, with 1 being excellent and 5 being poor, the quality of service at their local Esso station. I wound up Tangerine Books in 98 because it was not working. It was a sad day chucking a PC and 500 glorious catalogues into a skip. Also, I have written c.900 poems over 10 years and had about 60 published—maybe one day I'll get the message. The highlight of my writing career has been spotting a copy of *The Reater* #3 (Wrecking Ball Press, 1999) in Foyles, Charing X Rd—I had a poem in there. I am trying my hand at stories now.

AK: I don't mean to sound like a broken record, but what do you feel are the fundamental differences between online and print magazines?

MC: Print mags will survive the cyber-bomb.

AK: For the first issue of *Dwang*, did you send out a submissions brief or was it invitational?

MC: I contacted all the contributors and invited them. Some I stumbled across by chance. I am still blown away by all the talent in this issue and am proud of/grateful for their participation. And I intend the second issue to be just as knockout.

AK: I imagine putting a magazine together was quite expensive, how did you finance it?

MC: Tangerine Press would like to acknowledge the total lack of support from the Arts Council of England in the production of *Dwang* #1.

AK: And do you run Tangerine Press by yourself?

MC: Yes, tis just me.

Two poems by Rob Plath



Rob Plath identifies the things he'd like to hear read/sung on his deathbed:

Poem: *Song* - Allen Ginsberg

Play: *Cat on a Hot Tin Roof* - Tennessee Williams

Novel: *On the Road* - Jack Kerouac

Song: *I'm Gonna Live Till I Die* - Frank Sinatra

drinking away the offspring of flies

my cousin leonard
was in a bar fight
in mexico
& locals murdered him
at 26 years old
& left him in a shallow
grave

my grandpa nick
was the only one
w/balls enough
to go down there
to identify
his body

i think of this story
as i sit here eating
a bowl of white rice
& a piece is stuck
to my chin

& it leads to me imagining
the fat grains
wiggling, arching their backs

like the offspring of flies
born within
leonard's young nostrils
beneath his eyelids
inside his lips

& i push the bowl aside
& take out the wine

& toast leonard's courage
to lay there like that
& get eaten up so young

& i toast grandpa nick's guts

& anyone else who
was fed upon too early

or had to identify
something that was
familiar
but no longer identifiable

body bags or no body bags

i lay on my horn
as the rubberneckers
slow down to gaze
at the accident scene
at the flashing lights
the twisted metal
the firemen w/jaws of life

but what these nosy fuckers
do not know is that
they themselves are in body bags
their whole lives so far

their beds are gurneys covered
by floral comforters

their true selves zipped up
within the darkness
of their dictating skins

ignorant of their rib count
leather watchbands choking
their wrist bones
etc...

i want to ram them
w/the nose of my car

rattle their bags of bones
but they have cages for
citizens that do things like that

instead i go home & write
what i wanted to do, to scream

not that any of them will ever read it
or ever comprehend the message

but i assault them w/the abc's anyway

who knows maybe one motherfucker
will stumble upon it
& think

but who i am to want to make
others think?

where's the bottle of wine?

i'm sick of these stanzas

fuck the globe & everything
in
it

we're all in the jaws
of death
anyway

A poem by Edward Lucie-Smith



Edward Lucie-Smith identifies the things he'd like to hear read/sung on his deathbed:

Song: *In diesen Heiligen Hallen* - Sarastro's aria from *The Magic Flute*

Play: *Waiting for Godot* – Samuel Beckett

Novel: *The Crystal World* – J G Ballard

Poem: *Love and Life* - John Wilmot, Earl of Rochester

ambition

Ambition took her
To that high window –
She flew through it,
And broke.

You could say
Ambition broke her,

Shattered her plan
To be the first...

The first in eons
To lift the lid
Of Pandora's box.

'Free us! Free us!'
A buzzing swarm
Of women's secrets.

Too heavy for one,
So she looked about
For a man of power.

Wrong choice.
He picked her up
And threw her away.

Two poems by Adrian Manning



Adrian Manning identifies the things he'd like to hear read/sung on his deathbed:

Poem: *So Now* - Charles Bukowski

Play: *The Dumb Waiter* - Harold Pinter

Novel: *Fear and Loathing in Las Vegas* - Hunter S. Thompson

Song: *Tiger Mountain Peasant Song* - Fleet Foxes or *Surf's Up* - Brian Wilson

reach towards sunlight

For Elliot

you reach towards sunlight
pull down slivers
throw them into my eyes
a real god at last

you grip chunks of laughter
and stuff them
into my open mouth

without a word you fill
my ears with the sound
of life and what it is
to live

you catch running water
in your fingers
and nourish my bird soul

it is magical

I was once
all you are
later I ask
that you become
only the best of what
I am
now

the hum

the hum of a
distant engine
like a giant wasp
out in the street
conjures up
the sound of a journey
made back when time was
twice as long
and everywhere was
so much further away

the waiting black funeral car
outside the house
ready to depart
slow
mournful
patient
only the shortest distance
to the final destination
short journey
long journey
the difference between
youth and old age
what happens in between
anybody's guess

Five poems by Salena Godden



[Photo by Johnny Dredge]

Salena Godden identifies the things she'd like to hear read/sung on her deathbed:

Song: *Get It While You Can* – Janis Joplin

Poem: *Roll the Dice* – Charles Bukowski

Novel: *Cider with Rosie* – Laurie Lee

Play: *Cat on a Hot Tin Roof* - Tennessee Williams

the day the earth moved

When I awoke
I was perfectly confused
until the night before
slowly flooded my mind
did I dream him?
no he had gone
my house was bedraggled
booze stained and smoky
I stared at the hole in my empty bed
I reckoned he must have gone to the pub
or something
I was insecure and panic stricken
it was like I couldn't breathe easy
so I opened the window
as if I might see him in the street below
eventually I remembered
technology
and there was his text message
help I am lost and bereft
I phoned and said
I cannot breathe properly
he said he felt like he was underwater
we both needed each other
right there and right then and right now
he came bringing two stolen eggs
cigarettes and a tin of beer
we kissed and kissed and kissed
and fell onto the bed
to make love very urgently
as though we had three minutes to live
as if we'd both die if he wasn't in me again
right there and right then and right now
it was one of those end of the world fucks

a ripping and screaming halleluiah of a fuck
but all because he'd forgotten my address
when he went to the corner shop for breakfast.

a letter to an air stewardess found in the back of seat 67a

Dear waitress of the air
when you are very old, grey, blind and deaf
disgracing yourself by wetting your tights each time you sneeze or cough
and then breaking wind when you call out in pain and confusion
and when you smell weird as yeast spread and sick
please do tell your meals-on-wheels do-gooder
or help the aged social worker
and indeed your only contact with the outside world
that you once refused to lend a poet a pen
on a short flight to Austria for no reason whatsoever

tell them it was back then, when you were a tangerine-coloured air stewardess
with a ballerina bun, a soft fruit fat arse, over-plucked eyebrows and liar eyes
tell her how you got quite a little power kick out of the fact you were not even using it
that biro, right there, in the tippety-tip of the top pocket
you were keeping it there to look official
you knew we all knew that you knew that we knew you had spare ones
with the airline name written down the side
in the luxury goods duty-free rip-off trolley
thus forcing the poor dear poet
to write in lipstick on the back of a used sick bag
you understand the poet had a marvellous inspiration upon take off
it could have been the greatest genius of poem of all of our lifetimes
please note that instead of poetry this was what the poet wrote on same short flight

Dearest sky barmaid
with your halloween pumpkin slit for an inane smile
this one is not for you - you sour faced citrus
but about you - you mottled mandarin skinned reptile

I demand, you bring me ten more vodkas, as I scrawl these words
blurred and smeared, with carrotty sick seeping through
I hope that you enjoy a miserable monotonous life
like a one-winged bird going in circles with no real destination or purpose
with your cupreous skin like poor quality leather goods from all that sun-bed
and your jowls sagging from all that hair-bun pinning
stinking of cheap citric acidic perfume
and your arsehole limp from aeroplane fibre-free foodstuff
and all those rough dry arse-rape searches at every landing
I see you baby
I see you with your peach painted talons clinging to an oxygen mask
while you lose that very pen to an insane suicidal terrorist madman
who uses it to write his demands on your face mistaking it for an orange post-it note pad
I hope that pen leaks all over your uniform and dyes your right tit blue
I also hope you choke on rancid pilot sperm

Bon Voyage
Seat 66A

patti smith

In a greek bar
drinking ouzo
in Saint Michel
with a pencilled
moustache
like Dali
I see a familiar figure
in a big coat
wooly hat and spectacles
peering in the window

Oi Patti!
I holler
chasing her

up the street

PATTI!

I yell

excuse me

are you?

she takes off

her glasses

and shakes

my hand

I say

it would be

a great honour

for you to join us

for a drink

so softly

she replies

oh man I can't

I gotta work

back in

my hotel room

her voice is

so gentle it

throws me

I'm starstruck

I search my pockets

to find a gift

something to

give her

I find my

black eye pencil

and blurt
then can I give you
a moustache
like mine

she looks at my face
and says
I was kinda
born with one

a deathly silence
I say oh
oh yes
yes oh
um

we shake hands
and then
she is gone
lost in the crowds
of Saint Michel

twat

if you'd like a poet
to write about you
be a twat
and if you want a poem
written all about you
be a twat to a poet

because poets
don't often write
about nice people
or people they love

until it's too late
and they are dead

so if you want
to be immortalised
in a poem
either be kind and die
or be a twat

and if you want to be ranted about
from stages in literature festivals
and hear about yourself on BBC Radio 4
be a twat

and if you want to see yourself in print
in the poetry section of the broadsheets
and in arty magazines and anthologies
be a twat

and if you want to have school children gasp about your wickedness
and students shake their heads in disgust at the protagonist in this poem
that's all about you, you twat
then be a twat

that's right
just like that
be a twat
you carry on
be yourself
just like that
be a twat
just like that
you twat

it must make you feel like
being a twat

knowing that
you will live forever and ever
in library archives
and recorded for prosperity
so be a twat
be the twat in this poem if you like

this one is all about you, you twat
hoorah a poem about me
hello! I'm the twat
to which this poem is referring
yes it's really me
pleased to meet you
nice to put a name to a face
I'm not just a twat
I am the twat

or even worse I am me
I am the poet twat
that should just get over the twat
that even wrote a poem about the twat
twat poet twat poet
twat twat twat!

on/off

we meet on
oxford street
it's late
i tell you
i hate you
and ask you
to leave my
London
so i can get on

with my life
your hair is
too long
and scruffy
and i tell you
then i kiss you
and you say
stop kissing me
please
salena
and then
we kiss again
we sit
on a bench and
share a roll up
and make
talking noises
then we kiss
up close
in a doorway
grinding
against
a wall
until
you say
you have to go
no i say
no
actually
i have to go
and i jump on
some random
passing bus
stopping
at a red light
leaving you

gawping there
unshaven
with bad hair
i take
the wrong bus
but finally
get home
and into my bed
alone
so glad
we sorted nothing
out.

A poem from Stuart Crutchfield



Stuart Crutchfield identifies the things he'd like to hear read/sung on his deathbed:

Song: *Truth is Marching In* - Albert Ayler

Poem: *Today!* - Steve Richmond

Play/Script: *Krapp's Last Tape* - Samuel Beckett

Novel: *Suttree* - Cormac McCarthy

church of yuh!

dockside doles

out

free jazz from a tin can

whilst walking

home through

concrete

and mere secrets

getting

home to find

faded, desultory

love-note; typewritten though

she's left

the

country

and left all her stuff in

yr house

'n it sinks in the swamp

of gunk/guh silver hair

and broken jaws

floating in the whole

mess

faster than ever

as water comes in through the ceiling

even Meltzer wrote

about gutters:
must be something in

the poet's shack that

leaks

single love-note, still faded
floats in a pool of ruined

carpet

A poem by Geoff Hattersley



Geoff Hattersley identifies the things he'd like to hear read/sung on his deathbed:

Song: *There Ain't No Santa Claus On The Evening Stage* - Captain Beefheart and his Magic Band

Novel: *Dreaming Of Babylon* - Richard Brautigan or *Pulp* - Charles Bukowski.

Play/Script: I can't really think of a play or script I'd like to hear read. A performance (rather than a reading) of Ionesco's *Rhinoceros* would be brilliant, but I'd need a bigger bedroom.

Poem: Anything long and pointless by Rupert Loydell, just to remind me that there are worse things than death.

poem for kylie

She had long hair,
one of the shits had hold of it,
dragged her round by it
while the other two took turns
to boot her in the face.
I started shouting
from my fourth floor window
leave her alone, I'm calling the police,
leave her alone.
Then she was flat out in the road
and they were walking off
but one turned back, started stamping
on her head like a loon
and I ran straight down there
in my bare feet.

She was moaning, trying to move.
There were teeth on the ground –
blood all over the place.
Her hair was thick with blood.
She kept spitting
mouthfuls of blood.
Her cheekbones were broken
or her eye sockets.
I could hardly believe
she was still conscious.
She could just about speak,
told me she was eighteen
and her name was Kylie.
She was such a small girl,
five feet, maybe, six stone.
I held her in my arms
till the ambulance came.
It took more than an hour.

I've got thousands of songs
by hundreds of singers.
All the singers are dead
or soon will be.