

Tuning Wordsworth's piano

Unspoilt Nature is nature writ too small;
nature at our feet;
nodding daffodils saying 'Yes',
green the obverse of grey paths
in the Victorian Botanical Gardens
where children cavort and disks wheel,
Orphic artists paint concentric circles,
create the sun – sing the music
of the spheres.

Under cover

(for Alexis)

Mushrooms, delicate as lace,
take over where gardeners
have reduced summer's riot
– orange irises, golden rod,
and annuals with Latin names
too numerous to remember –
to stubble on the battlefield
of the Botanical Gardens'
herbaceous border.

A student flat, in a Christchurch winter

The flames entertained us, better
than any television set
in the days of black and white,
stoned, zoned out
making shapes from flames, like
people with crooked noses
in the clouds, or the man in the moon.
Philip Clairmont's hessian fireplace
hangs from nails in the Christchurch Art Gallery,
full of demonic eyes
and flames licking,
painted under artificial light.

Threatening rain

(after Kim Addonizio)

Lining up its heavy clouds,
a brainstorm on a poem
scatters ideas across the Canterbury sky,
as the nor'west presses down on the city.

A brainstorm on a poem,
signature cumulus lenticular form,
as the nor'west presses down on the city.
Over the Plains women draw curtains, retreat inside.

Signature cumulus lenticular form.
No escaping Te Hau Kai Tangata;
over the Plains women draw curtains, retreat inside
under a sky threatening rain all day.

No escaping Te Hau Kai Tangata;
the wind warning death is near
under a sky threatening rain all day,
darkening, then brightening.

The wind warning death is near
scatters ideas across the Canterbury sky,
darkening, then brightening,
lining up its heavy clouds.

From a bed of stars

Rain beads on brassicas,
the meniscus, taut

between white veins, is a jewel
that reflects the beloved,

would reflect the Milky Way
were it not for the snap

of ice on opened leaves.