

A CONFUSION

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OF LIVING

Rupert Loydell

A CONFUSION OF LIVING

otata's bookshelf
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A CONFUSION OF LIVING

*When the mind's an empty moon
The clear days come.*

– Wendell Berry, *The Clear Days*

LOW LIFE

squatting and hanging out
leave you feeling dirty
anger beginning to bite

IDEAS OF TIME & SPACE

not only misguided but pretentious
a new symbolic object
no matter what the meaning

ABSENCE

the body closed off from others
a series of particularly personal letters
she began to weep hysterically

THE WORD MEMORY

waymarkers in a cognitive map
pulled taut and stretched indefinitely
closed spaces populated by nomads

A SINGLE CONTEXT

growing up on the future
we sat defiantly in our cars
all of the words spoken

THE PICTURE BEGINS TO COHERE

the real interpreter of experience
might be god overshadowed
look me straight in the eye

THE ACTIVE IMAGINATION

a time of dramatic tension
pinpricks of light in a patch of darkness
nature is not so mechanistic

CLEAR AND BRIGHT

the popular response
idle and luxurious irrelevances
a more tender voice

SCRUTINISE THE DARKNESS

establishing a protective distance
reconstruction of the cityscape
hard work but revelatory

DEFINE THE TERMS OF THE CONTRACT

watching a story being told
absorbing even echoes of narrative
forcing myself towards the use of images

AUTOMATIC LANDING SYSTEM

forgiven for feeling powerful
instinctively nervous about
like a double negative

BURNED PAPERS

our story is becoming lost
a muttered construction of doubt
we must be confident in our path

MY OWN HISTORY

the black square to the left
and the black painting hung next to it
are different from each other

WITHOUT SOME SENSE

the journey to understanding
seemingly impossible
how far away the ends of the earth

INDETERMINATE FORM

the past can be fully intelligible
scooping up water with a spoon
bringing us all into harbour

THE DIFFERENCE BETWEEN IMAGES

it is about retention
seeds of new memories
things we have never seen

BASIC GESTURES

witness the destruction
they can do nothing
have to be restrained

A PROBLEM TO BE SOLVED

thrown out of the museum
an element of wonder
from the moment she awoke

VOICES PUNCTUATED BY WHISPERS

a painfully unsettled score
faces that passed through our lives
compared with the purity of silence

EMPTY DELIVERANCE

our future has been stolen
stand above the past
carve an aesthetic of insurrection

FUN TO BE ALIVE

a magic lantern show
can't remember how it happened
nor the place it was

NEW MEGASTRUCTURE

evacuated and bombed out
we roamed the streets
jittery with anticipation

PLOTTING IN EARNEST

chalked across the ceiling
every word has meaning
you have to say it for others

WORD OF MOUTH

on the other side of the world
things going on all the time
people hear stories

ILLEGAL OCCUPATION

a confusion of living
lost myself there
avoiding my reflection

DANGEROUS CHEMICAL REACTIONS

the last link in a chain
a trick done with mirrors
the sun itself ablaze

THE RETURN

not only the backdrop but foreground
opportunities taken and missed
a retreat into fantasy land

KNOW YOUR LIMITS

lured by curiosity and desire
the hollow construction of love
little wounds are the most painful

SIGNIFIERS OF DECAY

chalk dust on my fingertips
symbols painted on broken windows
prayers before childhood meals

CRACKLY LANGUAGE

a machine renewed
sermons about the state of the world
never learnt when to shut up



'What is a poet? A fabricator who understands that "it does not matter what things are, only what the relationship between them is".' Everyone is confronted daily with dozens of seemingly unrelated moments; often one doesn't bother to dwell on most of them. Moments come, moments go, only those that seem to create a compelling context stick in our minds. [...] Loydell's work evokes the intertextuality of the language of poetry and the language of painting and photography. This is the language of seeing and recording discontinuities, incongruences, contextual realities, not as an observer, but as someone firmly rooted in the many contexts of language.'

– Andrea Moorhead

'Loydell, an acute observer and adept interpreter, is always open to fluency and nuance in these rewarding poems.'

– Martyn Halsall

Rupert Loydell is Senior Lecturer in English with Creative Writing at Falmouth University, the editor of *Stride* magazine, and a contributing editor to *international times*. He is the author of many collections of poetry, including *Dear Mary*, *The Return of the Man Who Has Everything*, *Wildlife and Ballads of the Alone*, all published by Shearsman Books. He edited *Smartarse* and co-edited *Yesterday's Music Today* for Knives Forks & Spoons Press, *From Hepworth's Garden Out: poems about painters and St. Ives* for Shearsman, and *Troubles Swapped for Something Fresh*, an anthology of manifestos and unmanifestos, for Salt. He lives with his family in a creekside village in Cornwall.