

The real, imagined and mistaken history of the spirit of gravity. A poem in 6 parts.

I.

It started with Nietzsche, above a pub.

Robin Hood, prince of thieves, my fool's hand
reached

towards a cabinet,

though not of Caligari but more prosaic returns

Seeing into a future, unfurnished by interpretation

A random book a random page but no commandment,
no elegant adornment

needed

for a name

agreed to refrain, for more romantic concerns

Seeing into the future, unrestrained by interpretation

Three of us flicked through yellowing words and
musty language,

paper curled towards opening in the same few places

stale air fanning faces

to chance upon a word, sentence or heading that brushed the eye

impatient to fly, to fly away

for a night above a pub

For Rimbaud and Rilke.

II.

For Rimbaud and Rilke

thus spake Dan:

Step rrrrrright up!

Presenting for the first time:

‘The Spirit of Gravity’!

III.

And so above a pub, the lift I think it was

hope and ruin to come

The first of many places

Staging posts of going from pillar to post to host

sound:

We love what you do, but we don’t take enough behind the bar

on a wet Thursday night in February

to justify you blowing up

(minimal impact, please take note)

our noise controller

for the pleasure

of six shy men with goatees

so,

go please.

A man hung upside down gave us the booking

American, Canadian? Certainly contrarian.

Bald Jeff as he wasn’t known

but in this poem

to distinguish from bald Geoff

who would one day wear a wig to do the talking

at our gigs.

Cheesemaster of ceremonies.

IV.

Initially

the founding duo used these nights

to plough a lone furrow

Inviting like minds to bring synths and sympathy

and

hopefully bums on seats.

Yet,

After those first few months of Malevich,

Night on night: sound on sound

Suprematism was abandoned for

Collectivisation and

Gravity was shared

White on white squared

From then on a storied blur of

aforementioned venue changes, posting stages on a journey

through the Brighton music scene,

Layers from different eras revealing themselves

Disappearing themselves

Yet somehow surviving, and whisper it (loudly of course)

Thriving

Only as this city can, of lost rivers, shifting graves, secret passages and

Slaughtering places.

Those wet Thursday nights suit us fine
the not going out night
for the not going out type.
A heady combination that formed a strata of loyalty,
embedded under two decades of music for free listing magazines
But buried beneath other's words
is another language.
Alone in an empty house
Sing with mine own ears

V.

I remember
Before we had this place, this space, which Gravity placed.
We were not jazz at The Lift, we were fields
We were not folk at the Komedia, we were fields
We were not punk at The Free Butt, we were fields
We were not indie at The Albert, we were fields
We were not rock at The Green Door Store, we were fields
I remember when this was all fields

Those do I not resemble:

The voice soft, the hand eloquent, the eye expressive, the heart wakeful
Instead, sampler, synth, computer, fearful
of multiple wires and sockets, the hum of the overburdened.
A silence of sorts broken by the continuous buzz of waiting electricity
Punctuated no doubt
by Tony swearing under his breath
at the latest near death of something
battery operated.

This I do resemble.

All fields.

VI.

The next twenty years

For the new possessors,

Stand aside Nietzsche

(A nod to a gender

once well concealed, now thankfully more frequently revealed)

To remember

of all treasure pits

One's own is last excavated -

so causeth

the spirit of gravity

So don't ask me the way

For it does not exist!

Keep finding fields

That is your gift.

Nick Rilke, 2021.