

# Reassembling Still

## OTHER WORKS BY DAVID MILLER INCLUDE

- The Caryatids: Poems 1971-73*, Enitharmon Press, London, 1975  
*All My Life*, Joe di Maggio Press, London, 1975  
*Our Bread*, Actual Size Press, Deal, Kent, 1976  
*Malcolm Lowry and the Voyage that Never Ends*, Enitharmon Press, 1976  
*Out of this World: Eight Prose Texts, 1977-1980*, Spectacular Diseases Press, Peterborough, 1984  
*W. H. Hudson and the Elusive Paradise*, Macmillan, London / St. Martin's Press, New York, NY, 1990  
*Cards* (with John Levy), Sow's Ear, Stafford, 1991  
*True Points: Eight Prose Texts 1981-1987*, Spectacular Diseases Press, 1992  
*Tesserae*, Stride Publications, Exeter, 1993  
*Art and Disclosure: Seven Essays*, Stride, 1998  
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*Spiritual Letters (Series 1-5)*, Chax Press, Tucson, AZ, 2011  
*Black, Grey and White: A Book of Visual Sonnets*, Veer Books, London, 2011  
*Spiritual Letters (Series 1-5)* (Audio Recording, Double CD), LARYNX, London, 2012  
*GLORIA and other early poems*, erbacce-press, Liverpool, 2013  
*A River Flowing Beside*, hawkhaven press, San Francisco, CA, 2014

## EDITED BY DAVID MILLER

- A Curious Architecture: a selection of contemporary prose poems* (with Rupert Loydell), Stride, 1996  
*The ABCs of Robert Lax* (with Nicholas Zurbrugg), Stride, 1999  
*Music while drowning: German Expressionist Poems* (with Stephen Watts), Tate Publishing, London, 2003  
*The Lariat and other writings* by Jaime de Angulo, Counterpoint, Berkeley, CA, 2009  
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DAVID MILLER

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## Contents

A path a lake the very breath	11
Confrontation	13
Landscape	16
In the Field	17
Fire Water	19
Thesis	22
Suite	25
The London/Hartgrove Notebook	27
(Untitled / for Bill Cirocco)	32
“the drift...”	33
“moving to the margins...”	34
Derivation	35
“long-sustained gazing her eyes...”	36
“he spoke of prophecy’s end...”	37
“we stopped at the sea...”	38
“Power...”	39
Wild Poignancy	40
“memory water flowing...”	43
RELATION	45
“3/ swings...”	47
“snow field...”	48
“water to blood...”	49
Hagoromo	50
Elegy	51
The Book of the Spoonmaker	53
Stromata	56
Moments	63
Messages	64
(From:) The Preparation	66
The Story	70
The Music	78

Primavera	82
Insistence	85
Voice	88
Children	91
Moments	94
Pictures of Mercy	97
Participation	100
Plenum	101
Participation	103
Understanding	105
“suddenly...”	108
“and I stopped, how long...”	109
1969	110
What Determines What We Are	111
GLORIA	113
“white surface...”	113
“3 children...”	115
“Chris, his daughter Sarah and I...”	116
“white terrace house opposite...”	117
“flame at one window (fire in the room)...”	118
“February 21 1977, Mathias sent me a postcard...”	119
“solar radiation, wind, rain, gravity...”	120
“reflection...”	121
“cold...”	123
“Apropos of the symbolism...”	124
Areas	126
A Song, for Plumage	138
“the eye sees...”	145
“Someone comes, out of the distance...”	148
“The blinding moment...”	150
Three Poems for Julius Bissier	151
Portals	153
Cells	157
Aura	159
Threshold	162

The Image	164
Bagatelles	165
Appearance & Event: 16 Poems	167
<i>"the length is as large as the breadth..."</i>	168
"Penetration: one..."	169
"The invisible form..."	170
<i>"...external kisses have been made..."</i>	171
"Burning the house down..."	172
"I have polished brass door handles & door-plates..."	173
"Silver lines etched into the night bind us..."	174
"In the night all the given names cut through..."	175
<i>"for George Alexander..."</i>	176
"The narrative is broken by..."	177
"There is a confusion of voices           & the voices..."	178
"If the images of friends have returned..."	179
<i>"She turns everything into wine, the man said..."</i>	180
"Held by the image I am caught..."	181
"An ambulance..."	182
Poem for Emmy Hennings	183
The Soprano	184
Funeral Music (for R. C. Kenedy)	185
Kiss Me	186
The Oak Tree in the Garden	187
Of the World. Of Power	189
 "a mist & a circle of light..."	192
Slides	194
Unity	199
Orientation	201
Background Music	204
Three-Way	210
Audrie Browne	212
A Sort of Beguine	216
Through Fire	218
 There and Here	221

"The black oval surface framed in gilt..."	224
"The stones at junctions..."	225
"Set up on a hill: a structure..."	226
"Lights, openings..."	227
"Only through..."	228
"Burnished verticals..."	229
Poem (for Paolo Uccello)	230
Rain	231
"A dust-storm obliterated..."	232
Poem/ (for Faith)	233
" 'Above the earth', she said..."	234
Ballad	235
"He collapsed, lay helpless..."	237
"The window frames..."	238
The Room	239
"On the mountain..."	240
" <i>Predestination</i> – a painter gave me..."	241
"In the blue..."	242
"The surviving light..."	243
The Field	244
"Frescobaldi on the organ..."	245
"She came down a stairway, dark..."	246
for J. R. – i. m.	247
"perception (blue..."	248
2 about Music	249
"so then turns away..."	250
"the taste of curds..."	251
"Japanese <i>raku</i> bowl..."	252
"what would it mean..."	253
Door of Paradise	254
Legend	256
At the Heart of the Thicket	258
Dark Ground	261
For Patty Waters	265
Devotion	267
Focus	270
Faces	273
The Park	275



South London Mix	276
The Flamingos	293
The Same Again	294
The Cups	295
“Half-turned away through our half-...”	296
Lacunae	297
Vermeer	298
“The burning wood says...”	299
“Beech furnishes the...”	300
“An afternoon with a circus...”	301
“The hour grew more...”	302
“Sunlight dapples the floor...”	303
“To offer: to receive: to eat...”	304
<i>Acknowledgements</i>	306
<i>Notes</i>	308

*To the memory of Petros Bourgos*

*A path a lake the very breath*

night fastens upon a window  
twice a small path a room  
you appear at the gate you follow

down the hallway where  
the television's been left  
on the top of the closet

amplifications *left and right*  
*gate-posts two slabs of stone*  
time deranged and revered

•

chill air deep blue  
of conjoined sky  
and lake aciculate

a writing of true  
derivations the lines  
are bestowed as praise

*for the lovely (slender)*  
*and good girl*  
*who is my friend*

•

the victim suffers  
through an image  
into desire or injury  
and death – your face

your very breath  
visible in the cold  
commands me abjure  
spells dissolve harm

*in the shop of nothing  
by the way of nothing*

# Confrontation

## 1.

They have been sitting together for a long while, talking; one of the two drinking wine without offering any and without being asked for it.

– Do you wait as the children in the fable, their parents away and a tiger prowling at the gate? They must sacrifice their livestock to the tiger as others – in the same spirit – propitiate demons, waiting for release from their ordeal.

## 2.

from the bus she was there  
on the balcony at eye-level  
but not looking at him

*moss and wild strawberry  
wild-rose running in a cleft  
of Derbyshire limestone*

*the rose of Demeter  
in he remembered  
the cleft of her rocks*

## 3.

– you desire to eat  
the beautiful as it's  
incarnate in flesh

or image – *dignity*  
you say and *freedom*  
lurid absurd flashes

rebellling against darkness  
language caught in the  
toils of your violence

4.

the path deviates to a lake  
cleared he follows it he's  
drawn as by the need

to give testimony he'll  
write it down as it falls  
as by chance her speech

falling waking in a past  
impossible her young  
voice its clarity

5.

– your desires coagulate  
around death their residence?  
with decay and stone signs

turn and see a fresco a devil  
shitting into a witch's mouth  
but the witch Rangda appears

*the face is exposed menaced*  
and the Barong can only  
fight Rangda to no outcome

6.

the wind lifts a line  
of small red panels strung  
down the building's side

when the night comes  
the rain at night drink wine  
fall asleep wake and write

and paint in broken ink  
the door open and wax  
dripping on the table

## *Landscape*

*(for Linda Bryant)*

a black so chill  
it numbs the eye

you favoured rocks  
I spoke up  
for the comfort of trees

.

in a desert landscape  
these Polish lamentations  
are lifted breaking  
through a wash of static

cholla and prickly-pear  
seen from a moving car  
the soprano's voice  
that sings of grief entire

a confluence unstable  
that ear shapes with eye



## *In the Field*

1.

“don’t turn away where are you gazing  
and whatever are you gazing at?”  
“there was a huge golden man”  
the girl said “lying down on a couch  
and the couch was in a field”

2.

details reproduced through layers levels  
the dream coming home in day’s hours

3.

a line in vermillion  
brushed onto paper  
gold body-colour  
anticipations of black  
on white revealing birds  
and immortal beings

4.

“throughout that field there were outbursts  
of crying” but the children take on the aspect  
of celestial nymphs and a love  
from before birth’s remembered  
unearthly life stirring in faces

5.

*and the tribute which he offered  
was a picture of the Lord of Heaven  
and of the Mother of the Lord  
altogether improper things he brought bones  
of supernatural beings they are superfluous things  
which ought not to enter the palace*

6.

disseisin *where were we now*  
where else could we be  
than in that same field

# *Fire Water*

*(for Gerhard Richter)*

1.

shapes of dream moving beneath

what tone what  
tones black white grey

2.

windows smashed  
row of windows  
rows of windows  
odd-shaped holes to look out of  
faces appear in corners

hacked, smashed, blown  
out of air  
the mixture of  
elements

she dyed her hair and  
cut it, rearranged it  
there are photographs to show this  
“change of appearance”

one of the men had eleven  
disguises  
they are documented in  
eleven photographs

the woman, Gudrun, was  
arrested in a boutique  
after a shop assistant  
spotted her gun

cool air of the morning

all those dreams  
apocrypha  
the night just as it was, but  
out of that

bullet in the arse

Shining back, flowing back  
meditative face, the  
high cheek-bones, long face  
tight but lovely line of the lips  
toughness  
lines of the neck

she was found dead in her cell

another was shot in the eye  
by police

“A time (he said) is quickly approaching

the eye the eye

“when the privilege of immunity for the  
“crimes of the ruling class

lines of the neck

“and their henchmen...  
“will disappear...”

“News is sold as a commodity, information  
“as a consumer product

the target in the wind, the lines  
of force

“– what’s not consumable must make them  
“vomit”

3.

each night  
wet with thin rain

for those who pass in  
and out of the rooms  
one room the tree  
in near-dark

How the ethical gazes out  
irrevocable, from iris and pupil