Psychedelic Meadow
Selected Publications by Jeremy Reed

Poetry
The Isthmus of Samuel Greenberg (1976; 2nd edition 2018*)
Bleecker Street (1980)
By the Fisheries (1984)
Nero (1985)
Selected Poems (1987)
Engaging Form (1988)
Nineties (1990)
Red Haired Android (1992)
Kicks (1994)
Pop Stars, with Mick Rock (1995)
Sweet Sister Lyric (1996)
Saint Billie (2000)
Patron Saint of Eyeliner (2000)
Heartbreak Hotel (2002)
Duck and Sally Inside (2006)
Orange Sunshine (2006)
This Is How You Disappear (2007)
West End Survival Kit (2009)
Bona Drag (2009)*
Piccadilly Bongo (with Marc Almond) (2010)
Bona Vada (2011)*
Whitehall Jackals (with Chris McCabe) (2013)
The Glamour Poet… (2014)*
Sooner or Later Frank (2014)
Shakespeare in Soho (2017)

Novels
The Lipstick Boys (1984)
Blue Rock (1987)
Red Eclipse (1989)
Inhabiting Shadows (1990)
Isidore (1991)
When The Whip Comes Down (1992)
Chasing Black Rainbows (1994)
The Pleasure Chateau (1994)
Diamond Nebula (1995)
Red Hot Lipstick (1996)
Sister Midnight (1997)
Dorian (1998)
Boy Caesar (2004)
The Grid (2008)
Here Comes the Nice (2011)
SAMPLER
For Paula Stratton and Iain Sinclair

Later, downstairs at the kitchen table,
I look round at my friends. Through light we move
Like foam. We started choosing long ago
– Clearly and capably as we were able –
Hostages from the pouring we are of.
Their faces are as bright now as fresh snow.

Thom Gunn, ‘LSD, Folsom Street’
SAMPLER
Introduction

Growing up in Jersey in the seventies, before I left to do American Studies at Essex University, wasn’t easy as an anomalous poet living in a largely pedestrian, materialistic society. My escape came by way of finding part-time employment with John Berger, part of the Berger Paints family, who patented Prussian Blue, the first modern synthetic pigment. John Berger, a wealthy, reclusive aesthete and compulsive bibliophile and antiques hoarder, kept his mother mumified in the living room of his property Tivoli, and my unusual introduction to his eccentric, serendipitous lifestyle forms the basis of this sequence. If arson had torched a property of his, left as a ruin in Waterworks Valley, then the shell of the house and the adjoining fields were used by a group of friends of mine to do LSD, and to set up large speakers in the ruin through which to play psychedelic music and the seminal rock albums of the period. We called the place Psychedelic Meadow as it was regularly coloured and shaped by acid. Paula Stratton’s LSD documentation of her experience of the drug became a seminal influence on my poetry. When she committed suicide in the late seventies at a squat in Chester Gate, Regent’s Park a big light went out in me, and my poem ‘Elegy for Paula Stratton’ can be found in the collection This Is how You Disappear, my book of elegies for dead friends. Nobody I know has ever come more beautiful.
SAMPLER
Prussian Blue

The Bond car
70s vermilion E-type Jag hatchback
for coastal muscle, John Berger
juicing a lick for climacteric show
the heir to Berger Paints to Prussian Blue
first modern synthetic pigment
complex colloidal dispersion
a blue that leans on black but remains blue
like watching thunder stack into a cone
he drove through, hoping to wipe age
in gene grammars, transition back
to a selective time: 12,000 tonnes
of Prussian Blue produced annually for use
in black and bluish inks. He’d done it all,
Nazi affiliation, look that blue’s
Berlin blue, ferrocyanide
with legacies. Told me the commandant
in occupied Jersey bought out his shop,
mostly art nouveau vases, serious clocks
hand-painted French, money wasn’t issue,
and after drank champagne sat at his desk
talking of Lewis Berger, who mixed Prussian Blue,
1760, in no better dangerous times.
The Way Down

I’d never been there, took the bunker steps
white overhead fluorescent tubes
coming on like a virtual day
I’d never see again, a bump
in time I’d tripped over,
blue paint licked on a concrete lip
like an accidental dribbled hex,
and followed his descent, the scare
worse at his back, under a house
screened out prohibitively from the road
by green confusion. Went on down
into a terminally squeezed annex
a red Nazi flag collapsed on a desk
and she was there – he’d had her mummified
his Corsican mother, her bandages
done like a toffee wrapper, the event
so awesomely irreversibly odd
it threw me out of boundaries,
her fingertips brushing the scarlet flag,
eyes redirected at her, turning round
to find the lights gone out, me on the stair.
Fruitarian + Heroin

Each his own individual way,
one banana, one Kitkat, blush pink grapes
as daily nutrition, coffee
so sticky Turkish black like impasto
spooned with Acacia honey
a meticulous fruitarian
his diet clean as marine oxygen
even his heroin
was mauve poppy. I didn’t know the world
in his employment, kind of
baby I’m not here, only these words are,
sitting out my break under the skylight’s
thunder-damaged polyurethane caulking
next to a pile of Virginia Woolf firsts
oxidised mustard yellow.
I’d hear him turning over rooms searching
for something located in his mind
he’d never find in flashback millennia
rumbling the silver. I was 19+
waiting to move on, already vegan,
and wore a Prussian blue lapis lazuli stone
he gave me, soaked up his reality
as paranormal, felt the house walk in
and squeeze me like a granite python.
Foggy Start

Got closer in on it than breath
Lowell’s psychiatric Life Studies, Notebook
as diaristic coctailed agenda,
compress the hipster world to 14 lines
a sonnet’s poetry’s black-box,
my mother put me on it
and Mister Prussian Blue gave me Rimbaud
like heisting a jeweller’s window
into saturated psychedelics
we did hesitantly on the rooftop –
an old man tripping into the rainbow’s curve,
a young man edging psychotic collapse
in a lysergic timeline that seemed years
in chromatic brilliance. Nobody knew
my teenage infatuation with madness
and my avatar’s drug paraphernalia
like an occult opiated ritual.
All of his properties left to subside
into imploded stucco masonry
bits of it missing our head, and the lot
choked with antiques sourced from the Middle-East,
China, Japan, and got like a plutocratic mogul
in a limo blasting a dust cloud out of town.
Blood Sugars

Blood glucose 184 mg/dl
reactive hyperglycaemia the start
of needles. Valley fog so thick
it looked like an eco-aspirin
a tufty opaque furry hangover

so tangible I’d sculpt it round my wrist
like a vaporous octopus.
Potato Shack down bottom, strawberries
sexualised at a red scrunch
his sunken house slung low behind a bend

like a port you wouldn’t enter.
Fog like autonomous mirage
so deep his headlights sliced through it like butter
come back as suffocating stuff
and I got launched into Naked Lunch there

as a biomedical user’s guide
while he talked of money markets
and arson, how the house exploded in petrol
and peeled the Rolls like a can
stripped by hydrochloric acid

fuckt by his attraction to Nazi leather
and the locals labelled me for it
community with a collaborator
but I only cared books and bottles
we drank and threw into the reservoir.
Some Books read at Psychedelic Meadow

Asa Benveniste, Edge, Joe Di Maggio 1976
Joseph Berke & Mary Barnes, Two Accounts of a Journey Through Madness, Macgibbon &Kee 1972
William Burroughs, Naked Lunch, Corgi, 1968
William Burroughs, White Subway, Aloes Books, 1973
J.G. Ballard, The Atrocity Exhibition, Cape, 1970
J.G. Ballard, Crash, Cape, 1973
Edward Dorn. Geography, Fulcrum, 1968
David Gascoyne, Collected Verse Translations, OUP, 1970
Thom Gunn, Moly, Faber, 1971
Lee Harwood, Landscapes, Fulcrum, 1969
R.D. Laing, The Divided Self, Penguin
Christopher Middleton, Our Flowers & Nice Bones, Fulcrum, 1969
Stuart Montgomery, Shabby Sunshine, Fulcrum, 1973
John Michell, City of Revelation, Garnstone Press, 1972
J.H. Prynne, Into the Day, Saffron Walden, 1972
Iain Sinclair, Kodak Mantra Diaries, Albion Village Press, 1971
John Wieners, Nerves, Cape Goliard, 1970
John Wieners, Behind the State Capitol, Good Gay Poets, 1975
Dandelions

A meadow of lemon suns
or one on a doorstep
like Blake’s brain
hallucinating drenched yellow
lysergic psychosis
so even his piss created
a hologram in the street
a puddle vision in Soho
and me outside the valley house
watching their grey space-helmets
rising like Ziggy’s ‘Starman’
into a red-haired
Bowie sci-fi alien
time-slip fiction
like pop pollen blown from Peckham
to colonised Mars.
Never got so close to them
as sitting in forced attention
to their intense pigment
everything that makes them so
aggressively energised
driven up into the light
and got me reading Blake first time
in the middle of a field
as visionary clarity.
Floyd

Opened the meadow into psychedelics
Floyd on the exhaustive arc
of a migrant generation, Meddle
like doing sonic yoga on a breeze
floppy as lifting honey
iridescent riffy shimmers
played so loud we tore the valley open
a neighbour a mile up the road
exoplanetary terraforming Mars
on a cotil. We took over the site,
three of us in under trees
like leaves grew from our leather sleeves
in an exact involvement with geography
zippered against the skirmishing loopy fog
in the tree’s sculpted armpits.
Our intermediary hormonal state –
even standing still was like riding a bike
with crotch momentum across the planet.
Floyd laid us out in the grasses
drizzled by floaty chromatic sketches
‘Pillow of Winds’ under my back.
A man stood watching us up on a slope
smashed by the sound, turned round by it
like he’d got zapped by World War 3.
Strange Attractors

Glenise, stoned under his wedgy thumbprint
at 25, a cigar
dipped in sticky sugary Sambuca
attitude you didn’t, he did
trip into another chapter

both shared the same beach-blonde hair dye
a managed simulacrum
Boots. I’d got into her makeup
spontaneous androgyny
coop-orted into a delusional summer

like the fog was tinctured with acid
into purple, orange, green
molecular arabesques at First Tower
walking the beach like a space rock
a collusive community outlawed

by age inequity and local
aspersion – the writing was very clear
spray-canned on a south facing wall
Glenise sponged off red acrylic
as bits of chemical venom – I mean

people came like objects out of the fog
3D spooks that couldn’t take it
doing lysergic tantra and went mad
come in out of the music to hear
time like a snake knotting its tail
Dave/Paula

Dave’s blue gated aviators
did wraparound reflective sky
kept orange sunshine in the fridge
each dose a 300 ug hit
and his one sleepy eye

wobbled like gel at some reflex,
the acid man, his dope sister
came to us dispensing vision,
sit in the daisies, climb out
into the fifth-dimension…

Paula walked out of her eyes
into mine, such fluency
I felt the added chemical
of her floaty personality
mix with me like purple sunshine

They were over just for summer,
slept out in the Berger ruin
got their water from a blue stream
collecting clouds in its shimmer
sat there naked in the noon sun

self-focused on patterning.
Time blew back, September yellowed
into foggy footprints, they took
a room a while, Dave’s sugar cubes
fixed like a library in the fridge.