# Nistanimera

Peter Hughes was born in Oxford in 1956, and now lives on the Norfolk coast with his wife Lynn, in a coastguard cottage which is creeping ever closer to the cliff edge. Music, painting and writing have all been important to him over the years and he has tried to keep active in all of them, while still earning a living by teaching. In 2007 he left teaching to concentrate on his writing and several projects are currently unfolding in small-press publications and webzines. The cover of this book features one of his paintings.

## Also by Peter Hughes

The Interior Designer's Late Morning, Many Press 1983
Bar Magenta (with Simon Marsh), Many Press, 1986
Odes on St. Cecilia's Day, Poetical Histories, 1990
The Metro Poems, Many Press, 1992
Psyche in the Gargano, Equipage, 1995
Paul Klee's Diary, Equipage, 1995
Keith Tippet Plays Tonight, Maquette Press, 1999
Blueroads: Selected Poems, Salt Publishing, 2003
Sound Signals Advising of Presence, infernal methods, 2006
Minor Yours, Oystercatcher Press, 2006

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#### Acknowledgements

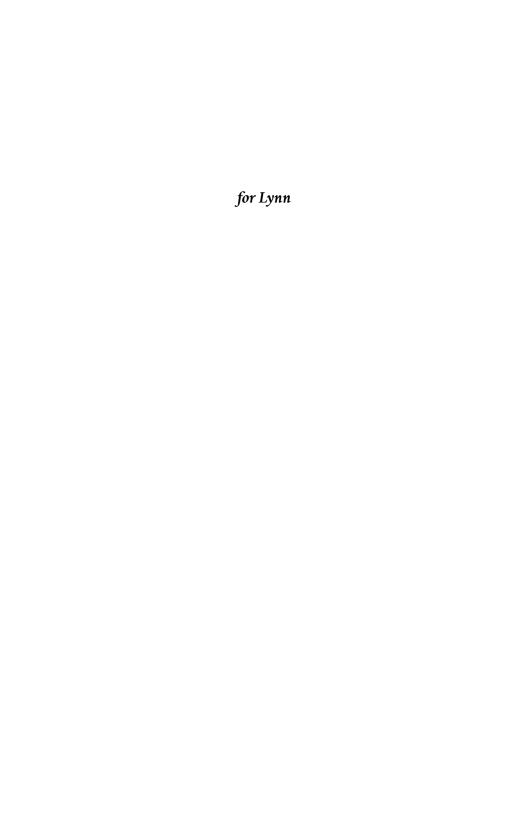
Some of these poems appeared in Active in Airtime, Fire, The Gig, Great Works, Shadow Train, Tears in the Fence, 10th Muse and Tremblestone. 'Oystercatcher', along with some other marine excursions, appeared in the chapbook Sound Signals Advising of Presence from infernal methods. 'Minor Yours' appeared as a chapbook from Oystercatcher Press.



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## Six Klee Paintings

#### 1920 Moonlit Night

the new formalism is always the former prison the deepening rut worn out by relentless pacing to & fro another channel for the water which already has every tune in its head

you know where you are with a hoover you can locate your marbles

& be firm with one Dr Scholl dovetailed to the starting block although blue is still blue

as in a 1920 moonlit night the sealed beam can't exhale who's treading the perimeter the grey juice of walking vision

eyelid thickness all else out of sight

& mindless

fins cross an inner sheen of dark grass

## 1923 Child in a Landscape

whatever dug this valley
has probably finished its lunch
no need for some new tidal myth
the sea goes in & out don't we all
meanwhile the stream is playing
conkers with its rocks
& applauding voluminously
you & the landscape stand inside each (other
& our musty ragged separation stands
what it can & cans what it must

yes look at the moon ) too

#### 1924 Portrait of Madame P

I like to think of gravitons
they are better than tooth-fairies
you carted my rootball no distance at all
though you looked like a wheelbarrow
on its last legs
the window sticks still
the point is already everywhere
& the line is the discharge of tension
between a couple of points
then before you know it it's lunch again
& four points make a fork
people you never knew
admire the upside-down boat on your head
physicists prefer to talk of prongs

#### 1926 The Menagerie Goes on Parade

I dreamt I made a go-cart with Hart Crane
we called it Blue – my was it faithful
it carried Joni Mitchell
Miles Davis the Reverend Blue Hummock
Hilda Baker polishing a big plank of fluorspar
(we passed chandeliers malnutrition & a brass band
at the back of the lead-mine – the underground
years pressfluffed in your shirt pocket)
Blue Mitchell on trumpet with Horace Silver
thumping the dunnock
bobbing along on a staccato patter
of cats' eyes over the crest of the hill
into the final Prussian blue miles
& this darkening blue into which you drive
is the night inside you can't overtake

## 1928 A Page from the City's Records

the dark & steadfast star stamped on your forehead rustles town with windy black-hole rumours the sewage outlet religious icon political badge the full-stop at the end of missing sentences the blackball ten billion dollars a week a lot of arms a lot of empty mouths the O in the core of all aesthetics before you speak the day's out

#### 1936

black the queen of colours

only just before the end did the distances compress our chests & flower within us as nettles

we were peopled by great silences hard to resist the inside of your wrist even in this little crowd of human beings backdrops cardboard rocks & red wine

delicate flicks big wet licks spilt stickiness emulsion under the nails & between finger-tips we knocked up Oz in a couple of hours

after months of battening down hatches keeping shutters closed checking locks

the whole caboodle gets blown away then slides down a rainbow into this space between streets

next thing I know you're smiling down from the top turret unfurling your flag over the emerald city

I wiped some of your green off my arm but all your other colours have seeped in deep & gone bronze