Arrivals & Departures
The Shearsman Chapbook Series, 2014

Patricia Debney *Gestation*
juli Jana *ra-t*
Martyn Crucefix *The Time We Turned*
Anthony Rudolf *Go into the Question*
Robert Vas Dias *Arrivals and Departures*
Arrivals & Departures

Prose Poems

Robert Vas Dias

Shearsman Books
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Rubber Bands</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Woodpigeons</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Shirt</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Meditation on a Return Ticket</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>Der Blaue Reiter</em></td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cannoli</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Acrobat</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cheesed</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Deadheading the Petunias</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Road Kill</td>
<td>16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>She Knows Where She Stands</td>
<td>17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Do Angels Eat?</td>
<td>18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Numbers</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Stymie</td>
<td>21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Love’s Pity</td>
<td>22</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Cabinet of Husbands</td>
<td>23</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Last Apple in Leonia</td>
<td>24</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Petoskey Stone</td>
<td>25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>Eppur si muove</em></td>
<td>26</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sailor</td>
<td>27</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Desert Prose Poems</td>
<td>28</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Thing About Tables</td>
<td>30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Life of Bones</td>
<td>31</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>August 2011</td>
<td>32</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>Le vide papier que la blancheur défend</em></td>
<td>33</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Names &amp; Addresses</td>
<td>34</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Rubber Bands

Knowing postmen leave me red rubber bands in elastic London streets that change names after short stretches, twist first one way and then the other, coned off by a contraflow of my accustomed ways. Hieroglyphs of curly ellipses, intaglions of ovals, calligraphies of circles and circles within circles, squashed organic writing composed on strange byways, misshapen integers of a strange numerology, compel me to tease the meaning of their anthropological codes. But the red-banded bundles the postman brings me contain little but importunities, attempting to tempt me with new scams, impossible odds, bogus delights: no mysteries in the ephemera that are supposed to change my life.
Woodpigeons

I spent my whole self searching
love which I thought was you

it was mine so briefly
and I never knew it, or you went
— Frank O’Hara, ‘Poem’

She arrived with the woodpigeons. That is to say, she arrived and they left. Not that she had anything obviously to do with it. Of course she did. She kept on arriving and then she left. They appeared constantly to be fleeing the roost at her, at his, at anyone’s approach, though clearly they had to have returned in order to flee again. He never saw them return but they always fled. She came to stay with him and then she went. They – or more usually one of them – would explode out of the treetops with a clatter of wings against foliage that sounded like falling buckshot, and hurl themselves down to the field below the house, where they alighted on the rock walls. They waited, longer than he was prepared to stare at them, or they flew further away. He had to assume their return, never count on it. By saying hello to her was he not already beginning to say goodbye? Her eyes were flecked with green, the same glossy green as on the necks of woodpigeons. They could be heard from afar cooing in the trees. They were there, somewhere, part of an elemental landscape of love and loss. Their departure was sudden, loud, a flight of hysterical panic. She was of a quiet nature, discreet, but she had a flighty disposition. Even when he took them for granted, they all at once insinuated themselves by making a hyper-dramatic and, he thought, totally uncalled-for statement by ostentatiously going away and not returning for an indefinite time which was, for all practical purposes, forever.
The Shirt

When they kissed for the last time and he saw her go through the doors to security, turn once, wave, and disappear from sight, he retraced his steps back to his car in the airport parking lot. As he opened the car door, a faint whiff of her perfume was released which, however, dissipated almost immediately. He drove back down the motorway up which they had travelled not an hour ago, completing the other half of the roundabout the first half of which they had traversed earlier. When he got home he went to the kitchen where the remainder of their breakfast coffee was still hot in the coffee-maker, and poured himself a cup. He went to bed early that evening. Undressing, he pulled his shirt over his head: again the hint of her perfume. As he lay down in the same slight depression their bodies had made he noticed a smudge of dried semen on the bottom sheet of the bed from which they had arisen early that morning, the day’s travelling ahead of them.