

THE MOTTRAM DOSSIER

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Five previously unpublished poems by Eric Mottram

Stormy Tuesday

“They will call it Stormy Monday

But Tuesday’s just as bad”

B.B.King

the sense to improvise

courage in a new age

return of astrological hope

“passive aggression” Aquarius

in dead clothes

eat tribal polls

cannibals of their own dumb opinions

drum chant passive lives

don’t think just raise your arm

together

answer masses

a decrepit analyst’s claw in the patient

what principles this late

at this date state of nation

body state

decreased to skeleton

control dream works for Prometheus smashed
on any street wall
dissent stapled to dead reports
zoo vultures expose the liver
hack hit men in pandas

King's College London: College Archives, MOTTRAM, Professor Eric Noel William (1924-1995): Poetry, 1956-1995, *Stormy Tuesday* (1994-1995) 2/2/168-72.

*

[no title]

mental gifts leak away from that first wet emergence
flesh imagination seized by hyenas
who will do nothing but insert their appetite

tribe passivity spreads in the drummed air
dull electric beliefs seep from print screen and phones
equalized food spreads from biblical sheets

trained to take sides where there are none
futile draining games perpetuate
mob leader victories

endless hunt plays stir thought for game for quarry
until muscle and nerve no longer tolerate mimesis
act act it after long pleasurable preparation

close-up blood spatter and throat sliced slightly
in every home basic values unity by blood shed
examples for night street and home anger

see it and see it and the muscle moves
can stay loose no longer
nightly tribal beliefs in crime hospital gang warfare

boardroom and arena are musts for opportunity
tv congregation yearns for the real thing song
herd sacrifice under the Bar-M

auto-collective in collective emotion for union

for undifferentiation for magic the spiritual continuum
“the boy to be initiated is reborn as his totem-animal”

in 1911 in *Themis* “we no longer associate slaughter
with our highest moral and religious values”
now slaughter is value

King’s College London: College Archives, MOTTRAM, Professor Eric Noel William (1924-1995): Poetry, 1956-1995,
Untitled poem, *mental gifts leak away* (1994) 2/2/163.

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[no title]

[handwritten Post-it note at top of page ‘Given to Florence Elon’ – American poet]

“preceded and attended by silence”

where you can hear some one else think
to clear expand risk undamaging

meeting house anywhere
enter a huge moment silence

fall silent rise silent full again
free from noise gods and their police

sounds of silence morning rain charged air a hum
converse of conversation

held hands unheld for silence
alone convivial

King’s College London: College Archives, MOTTRAM, Professor Eric Noel William (1924-1995): Poetry, 1956-1995,
Untitled poem, *where you can here* (1994-1995) 2/2/168-72.

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Towards “A Comedian”

“And children wearing masks by night”

Jack Spicer

orange inherited hoods
possess little eyes ablaze

use mask to signal
is inside plays you know what

name is mask
with a parent thrust

name signs a place
by masker’s hand

name signs know
by threat behind eyes

I masks prisoner a lifer
who never chose his crime

I You passage a child
blocks with its knife

a mask is told a speechless
child less will is clue

a long roar of laughter
echoes from mask for meeting

lucid mask unsteadied
before amputating infant

analyzer mewling and puking
find your own mask place

here and now is other
memories to put mask aside

little archaic persister

this is a comedian you cannot mean

real laughter against your humourless
twitch in soft flesh without character

before the conquerer
mask for rejection

King's College London: College Archives, MOTTRAM, Professor Eric Noel William (1924-1995): Poetry, 1956-1995,
Towards "A Comedian" (1994-1995) 2/2/168-72.

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[Untitled]

an undone bed heart laid bare

stars burnt not over the sea

bedroom open to a bay let in horizon

steady breakage waves unturn sweats

await embedded

out of all that happened

what do we know of forces that join us

that join that could unite

share we say share and under say

hold tighter against doubt

'the ebb tide' death bares the same new

remains glitter in the same

new dawn bound to dispersal at sea

say all at sea say all there

the room a cabin to horizon

neither traitor nor perjurer ever

nomads from pasture to pasture

there meet noman's-land

a place for execution outside the walls

a place amidships for blocks ropes and tackle

who shares who sees unmasked together

 what masks were

were painted on what signs

lover mask in a mask family

trials with masks for joy

“and the golden-masked man divests himself

of his gold in honour of the Sea”

Footnote to this poem says: October 15, 1993 – “today finished reading Amers, and thus all of Perse's poetry over several years –but not yet the letters...”

[Editor's note: *Amers* is a book-length poem by St John Perse published 1957. 'Amers' in the title refers to 'sea marks', points used in navigating at sea. The final line of Mottram's poem is a translation of the last line of Perse's poem.]

King's College London: College Archives, MOTTRAM, Professor Eric Noel William (1924-1995): Poetry, 1956-1995, Untitled poem, *an undone bed* (1994) 2/2/162.