

Independent author

joanne burns

corrida: a five poem suite

Biographical note:

joanne burns is a Sydney poet. Over a dozen collections of her writing have been published. Her most recent book is *amphora* (Giramondo Publishing 2011). *kept busy*, a CD of joanne burns reading a selection of her work, was released by River Road Press in 2007. She is working on a new collection *brush*.

i. business as usual

it's war, the meat pie bonus
 staff were arrested offended and
 intact that's what you get with
 the arms-length approach to the
 corrida's history although bakers
 have more control over their pies
 people want to see real chunks;
 still the platinum diversification
 code means it's not all meat,
 ravenous fans have been seen
 romancing fish and vegetables
 in the hybrid blood spas so surprise
 surprise

the jaguar threw a lavish
 party on a host of solar panels
 i'm a bit nervous doing my
 sums in the steel mill foyer
 the thought of that green halo
 eloping – the window would
 only wind down just an inch
 stone walls are still a feature
 of a head

ii. manifest/er

the surprise decision on the bumpy road
 to grammar, a coup in the diary covenant
 well received; trapped in its own web the vacant
 chair diverse as an emotive phrase restructured
 the backyard; and who would have imagined
 a bus driver to return like a prodigal sun
 from the versailles exploration thesis, the arrival
 party at the tower of london was acute and
 taciturn – some still believed it was best
 to trim the hedges some were tight lipped
 about the rosey picture – and this could
 wipe out any benefit from the plan to divide
 the good from the bad everyone was happy

though about the 19 billion sound rescue package
 the final comment 'we misjudged how quickly
 syllables could turn around' one of the best
 sellers was the seamless camisole someone
 suddenly declared

ii. tough love

it's the city of optimists
the bulls are roaring
over the leftovers shining
like gift cards there
are pizzas so new the
olives are still on the trees

here are pavements lined
with almonds myth solid
as guides to the holy land
and spiced lamb on tooth picks
to sample while the chefs
get on with cooking the books

and the patient ocean so
energetic in the titanium lobbies
no shortage of people to count

iii. lotional

portafiled in waterproof snaplock plastic
share portfolios will bide their time like
projected family weddings you ought to be
congratulated mums and dads for feathering
your nests intoned the presidential spectacle/s
from a harbour newsroom it's all ship
shape my friends leave the old pacific chunder
of tin coins and the crested carpet that pokie
spew is for the mugs shares can be your shoreline
or think of it as share farming, as our pastoral
heritage – he ploughed her and she cropped – the pumpkin
will be golden blue or butternut –

of course there will be
complementary seasons bulls
and bears glitches and corrections
peaks and troughs but she'll be safe
as toasted fingers vegemite or anchovette;
ditch any second thoughts between the calomine
and chamomile summer cockroaches will
eat them up –

iv. hilt

the giveaway dead flowers boom:
sprawling mines contemplating

entertainments: the grass pallets
slide: niche profits on a global
dive, you pitch my pool into a
passing buck and i'll ride you into
bank-ruptcy: equine woodchips
pulse for pulse; pretty forecast,
sleep easy on the oil rig bud –
while the internet circum
ambulates the rampant hedge like
a stylebook parent naked in autumn toxic
bones defend the tight rope with choc
aholic con-fidence have you
recruited yet that winner, jitterbug!