

television on all sorts of subjects, including the always-challenging area of relations between Britain and France. He still had a number of projects in progress when he died. One of his friends visited him shortly before his death and remarked on the precariously balanced piles of books and papers which surrounded him: those, he said, were articles waiting to be written.

François was always ready to help, always ready to join in a project and bring people together to make it happen. He played a seminal role in a number of research groups. He built up friendships and networks not only in France but throughout Europe. He sat on a number of committees and earned respect for the meticulous care he put into ensuring that nobody could forget that behind each dossier there was a fellow human being and not just a sheaf of papers. He was a major figure in the professional associations for English studies in France and elsewhere and he will be very much missed by all of them. If a text or motion was needed to further the cause of teaching and research then we would naturally turn to François who had a sure grasp of how to put a point forcefully. He could improvise brilliantly; he could ask long, searching questions; he would sit on juries for PhD dissertations and contribute greatly to the intellectual debate with the candidate. His students felt inspired by him and valued his support very highly. He enjoyed life immensely, and it was a pleasure to be in his company, at a meeting or round a table with a fine meal and a good bottle of wine. He could be witty and charming and intellectually engaging.

He probably tried to do too much; he undoubtedly lived more than one life. He was not a great respecter of deadlines. It is a paradox that many of his friends have felt very keenly over the last few days that François, who was almost always late for his appointments, kicked the habit of a lifetime and left far too early for his last.

Authors: Judy Kendall

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She has two poetry collections published with Cinnamon Press, 2007 *The Drier The Brighter* and *Joy Change*, due out in May 2010. Her monograph on Edward Thomas's composing processes will be published with University of Wales Press later in 2010. Her digital work can be viewed on <http://teaching.shu.ac.uk/ds/sle/earnshaw/gallery/>.

In these pages we publish two groups of poems. The first group are English translations of a contemporary Frisian poet, Geert fan der Mear, an English lecturer at Groningen University in the Netherlands. The second group are original works, in which Japanese and English cultural perceptions and language mix.



**Four poems by Geart fan der Mear in Frisian
Translated into English by Judy Kendall**

At nachten langje

Blaumûtskes dy't om koarstkes skarrelje
Wipgatsje foar myn glêzen om. De loft
Struit wyn en kjeld, skerp as in guozzekloft.
Noch even en de flokken warrelje.
Wêr sille jimme keare bij 't flymjien
Fan 'e froast? Ha jim wol as de iikhoarn
Foar wintertarring ret? De dei fan moarn
Bringt neat oars as 't skerpe hongerpriemjen.
En ik, mar wij – wat ha wij yn simmerlange
Dagen bedijd oan tarspiis foar winters
Lange kjeld? Skientme en jeugd binne flinters,
Waans wjokjen dien is at nachten langje –
Nei hûd, nei eageljocht, wat jout mij wjok,
In kerltsje freugde en in kromke lok?

Lengthening night

The blue tits hop in front of my window
darting and bobbing for breadcrumbs. The sky
throws down the wind and cold: making them fly,
as sharp as skeins of geese. Soon it will snow.
Where will you find protection from the claws
of the frost? Like a squirrel did you stow
food underground for winter? Tomorrow
will bring you nothing, except hunger's jaws.
What have I, we - in drawn-out summer days
stored as provision against winter's long
cold? Youth and beauty are butterflies, gone,
their winging over with the lengthening shade -
when skin and eyes are dulled, what gives me flight,
what gives me grains of joy, crumbs of delight?

Grenen

Wij hiene rûn. Fiif oeren lang. bolderjend
Hie de see ús besâlte en ferdôve
Fan Raabjerg Mile ôf, dêr't we swier tûgje
Moasten troch 't giseljend sân dat, wyt skolprjend

Fan heechste helmgerstoppen, ús ferblinde
Hie mei kleur en kerrel, nei Grenen ta,
Dêr't twa streamen nimmer net frede ha,
Mar yn ivige botsing inoar fine

Yn skombrûzjende stegering. Yn 't lij
Wiene, wurch en ferwaaid, wij einlings kommen
En fûnen doe it wyngerûs ferstomme,
En it weachgebolder fier – ik seach dij

Oan, en winske dat der dochs ferlossing wie
En dat ús lange swalk dochs ljite brocht –
Mar 'k wist ek, al hoe lang't ik dij ek socht,
Dat moetsjen nea, nea net oars as botsing wie.

Grenen

We had walked. Five long hours. The thundering
sea had deafened us, spraying us with salt -
all the way from Raabjerg Mile, where we fought
through lashing sand, its fine whiteness surging

into our eyes from marramgrass dune-hills,
blinding with colour and grain - to the sea
where North and Baltic currents ceaselessly
meet at Grenen, peacelessly break and build

to rearing walls of foam. At long last, tired,
windblown, turning a corner, we were screened
from the booming waves, the roar of the wind.
Muted, they grew soft and distant - I gazed

at you, and wished we were delivered, safe
from our long roaming journey, in shelter,
though I knew, however long I walked after
you, we would rest there but to build and break.

IX

*Ik? Wêrom bin ik der noch? It swarte wetter
Ûnder it stap. Ik lei op knibbels en bûgde
Mij foaroer, boartsjend, en fielde hoe't it sûgde,
Dat swarte dat swarte. Ik bin yn it wetter
Fallen en ik flean ik sweevje troch it wetter
It is om mij it is yn mij o it is mij
Ik sjoch ik bin draaiende stippen binne mij
Ringen fan blau ljocht blau blau sá blau it wetter
Boppe ûnder binne net mear inkeld wetter
Weagjend. Mij. Mar wat wie sterker? Mij moast skieding
Ferneare yn ik en dat. Want de ferlieding
Wie it bern oermânsk it kopke boppe it wetter
(Eefkes) rôp kalm: 'Durkje, wolst mij der úthelje?'
Sels bin ik no de priis dy't ik dêrfoar betelje.*

IX

me? how is it i am still here? the black water
under the canal bank. i was kneeling, bending
forwards, I was playing and I felt it sucking,
that blackness oh that blackness. into the water
i have fallen and i fly i float through water
all around me inside me oh all of it me
i see how i become swirling dots become me
rings of blue light blue blue oh so blue the water
above and beneath no longer only water
billowing. all me. but which was the stronger? i
had to suffer the split into self and other.
for temptation won: the small head in the water
bobbing up, called out calmly, 'Durkje, pull me out.'
and this self is the price i now pay for that shout.

Pavane foar in ferstoarne prinses

*Do bist sa tsjep, sa fyn, sa kein, sa tear
Dyn lipkes bin sa bleek, sa blau be-iere
Dyn hantsjes, dyn teisterkes sa ynfieren,
Dat ik mei skerpe kâldens bij begear.*

*Dyn kliene fuotsjes triptrapkje net mear,
Dyn boarstkes sil gjin dreameprins beriere;
Nea sil er dij nei 't himelbêd ta fiere,
Om't ik mei skerpe kâldens dij begear.*

*Dyn amper jong-bloeien sil nea fergean,
Dyn deade laits bliuwot as koel moarmer stean.*

*Nea sil dyn fammeflues foar 't libben wike,
Mar mij hast mei dyn wite kjeld ferrike.*

*Sjoch, hoe't ik dyn sulveren koarde brutsen ha,
Mei myn wite leafde dij tadutsen ha.*

Pavane pour une Infante défunte

You are so fair, so slim, so pure, like gold,
with sweet lips so pale, veins like blue ashes,
such grave little hands, such proud eye lashes
that I crave after you in my sharp cold.

No footprint is left by your small thin sole,
no dream-prince buries his head in your breast,
no shining knight comes to lead you to rest
for I crave after you in my sharp cold.

Your moment of bloom will never wither.
Like cool marble your dead smile will linger.

But though life will not pierce your girlish skin,
your white cold has parted, asking me in.

See how I've snapped your silver cord in two,
how with my white love I now cover you.

Poems by Judy Kendall

*The Character Of Rain*²

"Gather yourself, we'll go into the cold,"
The Man Made Of Rain (Kennelly)

In Brendan Kennelly's vision a man
contains within him rain
and only rain,
just like the *rei*, the spirits of Japan,
built also from the character of rain.

It pours direct from heaven
when they open mouths to chant, sing, pray.
This is the weather-maker, the soothsayer's way -
words intended for gods, spoken by men
in possession of the spirits, of the *rei*.

*Mr Mori's Report*³

Everything is upside down in England.
They print books from back to front, they serve soup
for starters, they overcook fish, they eat
mushrooms raw, on Valentine's the women
receive chocolates from the men, they limit
drinking hours, they put their soapy bodies
in the bath and drain it daily, they keep
futons on the floor on stands, they never
sleep next to the blanket, and happily
set their heads towards the north, for breakfast
they do not take rice or seaweed for which
they have just one word, they use umbrellas
only when it rains. But apples are cheap,
you can eat the skin, it tastes of heaven.

2 Published in *Joy Change* (Cinnamon Press, 2010); digital version, developed with Steven Earnshaw, at <http://teaching.shu.ac.uk/ds/sle/earnshaw/gallery/>. Reprinted here with the author's permission.

3 Published in *Joy Change* (Cinnamon Press, 2010). Reprinted here with the author's permission.

Foreigners⁴

Foreigners are all the same,
exotic creatures
keen on noise.

Doughnut complexions,
and fiery tempers
when not dipped in saccharine.
They prefer flesh to fish.
Filled to capacity

with selfishness,
they look after their own
first. They do not think it wrong.

There is a distinct smell of old milk.
Their sugar levels are uncertain,
liable to explode.

And most of them possess
a careless flair
for turning the neatest room
into dishevelment.

They cannot gauge politeness,
their talents do not extend
to delicate matters.

Their women are loud,
noses mostly irresistible
and faces enviably unflat
(although they wrinkle early).

They cannot sit still
and have a tendency to wriggle.
A foreigner is always big.
You never see a small one.

⁴ Published in *Joy Change* (Cinnamon Press, 2010) and previously in *Ambit Poetry* magazine.
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*Joy Change*⁵

I get an email from a friend
where he lets slip
the offer of a joy change -
just the thing
to lift the winter spirits,
greying in.

Later he sends again,
apologising.
He claims that he mistook,
late night, his fingers dripping type,
the y key for a b -
but they are miles apart.

He says he meant
a business teaching post
in foreign parts, with holidays,
lots of them, and pots
of money. It would be challenging -
he says.

It's clear he thinks it's clever
that he's dropped into my lap to land
upon my feet so far from home,
but I'd been hoping
for a turn upon my head
alone.

⁵ Published in *Joy Change* (Cinnamon Press, 2010). Reprinted here with the author's permission.