

EYELINES

Haiku and Others



Michael Bangerter

Kite Modern Poetry Series

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EYELINES

Haiku and others

MICHAEL
BANGERTER

Kite Modern Poetry Series

EVELINE

THEIR NOVELS

MICHAEL
BAYCETER

THE HOUSE OF THE FUTURE

Eyelines

Michael Bangerter

By the same author

A Far Line Of Hills

(NPF, 1996)

Freezing The Frame

(K.T. Publications, 2001)

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

A number of these poems have appeared in the magazine, *Blithe Spirit*, and in various anthologies published by The British Haiku Society.

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Cover watercolour by
Trevor Gellard, LRPS

Book Ref : K.T. 106
ISBN 0 907759 48 3

Published by
K.T. Publications,
16, Fane Close,
Stamford,
Lincolnshire,
PE9 1HG.

Printed and bound by
Mailhäus Digital,
9, Sketty Close,
Brackmills,
Northampton,
NN7 4PL.

(Tel. 01604 674440)

For Katya, Kate and Rex

THE UNIVERSITY OF CHICAGO

Published by
The University of Chicago
Press
Chicago, Ill.
1957

Printed and bound by
The University of Chicago
Press
Chicago, Ill.
1957

(The University of Chicago Press)

Eyelines

How can I
be sure
the eyeliner I apply
is thick or thin
anything at all. I wonder
what happened to
your eyeliner
when you were
looking at someone
I didn't see. I wonder
if you were
looking at me.

Oh I think
eyeliner of all
things is
a beautiful thing.
I wonder if you
ever had one,
or that my body has

2000

How can I convince you
it was real -
this inability to move
or blink or feel
anything at all? To prove
what followed is
quite impossible -
moving up towards
a ceiling that dissolves
in silver light -
looking downwards

on a body
emptied of self -
drawn through
a breathing luminosity.
Of course I knew
that I had died,
or that my body lied.

Dawn chorus
I reach to turn off
the alarm clock

Chill morning
a pheasant calling its mate
I can see her breath

The canary's cage
husks of a cracked seed
fall on her egg

Sunlight
through a blackbird's wing
- bright skeleton

After the last shoot
it is only the breeze
that ripples the pond

Two fat pigeons
close to the raspberry bush
- my turn now!

A crow hovering -
the stray tom licks up
the last crumb

A chain saw
cutting through
the blackbird's song

Dawn reveals the castle,
its abundant gardens
- a cockerel crows

Early morning mist
half a deer
asleep by the rose bed

Who's that on the garden swing?
- only the west wind
ever young

An opaque sky
swirls of hot air
a headache coming on

Tendrils of ivy
wrapped round
the high tension wire

Under the garden shed
old autumns
crackle

The rain so fine
I put on my specs
to see it

These wild violets
cut and put in a vase
- how quickly they wilt

Feeding on the lawn:
three black-faced sheep
and a blackbird

Only from this window:
faces in the trees
stare back

Despite the new bathroom
still can't manage
a clean shave

My silent keyboard,
in the lane
a screech of brakes

Gale from the North Sea
here, the tall firs
whisper

The blizzard
has snapped our aerial:
snowy screen

A blizzard on Ben Rhinnes -
in the village
the last of the snowdrops

Heavy shower
the dry-stone walls
drip

Geometry of stars
eclipsed - the razzle-dazzle
of these Northern Lights

Old racing calendar,
dead plant, his electric clock
still going

My father papered
over paper
in his house

'Popeye' torn out
from one of my comics
Dad lights his pipe

On the bale of hay
green shoots
full circle

He circled his dilemma:
cosmic flotsam
round a black hole

Arks
are sad ships -
what they leave behind

A fresh grave
by the cherry tree
his lead in a drawer

Grass
Roots
Boots

Big bucks
Spent
For kicks

At last!
His very own
Goal

Canadian fire weed,
dead-nettles - the old road
losing its way

This passing beggar,
a ragged shadow
at his heel

His life
full to the margins
in serious copperplate

Awake - sorting out
the tick of the clock
from the patter of rain

Midnight
listening to the space
between two owls

My wife is talking
in her sleep - I'm now
wide awake

I cease to sip my tea
remembering
last night's dream

Moonlight
through the billowing curtains
shape shifting

Eating breakfast
with the lights on - hungry
for Spring

Fording the storm-rushed burn
these five granite slabs
my two splashing leaps

On the hill road
storm water breaks
the speed limit

It has stopped raining,
a slight breeze shivers the leaves
- shower of crystals

The Scotch pines
gold-tipped
above our grey slates

Beneath the eaves
icicles
drip sunlight

Water, slowly tracing
my boot prints
on this muddy path

That high branch
broken in last year's storm
waits for the moment

Zig zag of pale moths
in a tunnel
of blue rhododendron

Clear blue sky
- the barometer
falling fast

My deck chair
its striped canvas
the striped lawn

Sound of a shotgun
the young silver birch
trembles

The empty excursion train
hoots - one pigeon
on the platform

I stoop to pick up my hat
the gale's dry chuckle
in the tumbling leaves

Whenever the wind
whistles I watch
this one tree

Caught in this spider's web
droplets of rain
catching the light

My daughter wondering
why so many long words
in my Shorter OED?

Collector's guide:
the prices of everything
someone else can afford

My brand-new
high-backed executive chair -
still on the edge of my seat

Flower baskets hung
each August - perhaps this year
the Best Kept Village!

The gamekeeper
nurtering each small life
so that he may end it

This rock has waited
a trillion years for me
to stub my toe

First night:
relying on people
I don't like

A hearse passing by
elderly shopper
takes off his hat

The earl is dust - bare bones
of the castle
still hog the limelight

Old bin man
fondly reminiscing
his dustier days

About to speak -
is it the lecturn
that sways?

Puffing on his briar -
Kt. to R. seven! His smoke
makes rings round me

A cattle-truck roars -
in the yard, cows
stand mute

His neck between the barbed
wire - Aberdeen Angus
scratching

Evening sun
setting alight
a cattle trough

Dad's vertigo forgotten:
small son waves
from the top rung

My waste-paper basket
full of junk-mail
and screwed-up poems

Her answerphone cuts out -
begin again or start
from where I left off?

Hot sands
salt on her lips
making me thirsty

Above the nets
hungry gulls swoop
down on their luck

Sea spray on my face
the wind in the ropes
is singing

His love triangle
not quite
equilateral

After their break-up
- in bed
repairing the damage

The road bridge is closed
we watch a small yacht
tug at its moorings

My wife's IT tutor
has gone down
with a virus

Passing the house
where two sisters live
(both of whom read Mandarin),
I see, for the first time,
their new bridge,
which spans a quiet stream.

It's of the Chinese kind:
of specific arc and balustrading:
delicate, geometrical, strong.

There is a pleasance here,
a sense of it sharpening my wits;
as a pyramid is said to -
held above the head;
or if above a razor, sharpens it.
This well-tempered harmony
of water and geometry.

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Michael Bangerter lives in the Grampian Highlands. His work appears regularly in many magazines and he is also a reviewer.

He has a theatre background and has written for both stage and radio. He received his MA (poetry) from Lancaster University and is currently a tutor with The Open College of the Arts.

Eyelines is his third published collection. His second, *Freezing The Frame*, is also from K.T. Publications.

Cover watercolour by
Trevor Gellard, LRPS

Book Ref : K.T. 106
ISBN 0 907759 48 3

£3.50 (£3.95 by post; £8 overseas)

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