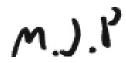
# Pork Barrel





# TABLE OF CONTENTS

RETROGRADE BY BILL BULLOCH	06
YESTERDAY BY BRADLEY KING-SPOONER	08
POLITICS FOR A DIVORCE BY BALAMBÉR PAÁL	09
SELF PORTRAIT BY MATHEW PALMER	12
A DAY IN JUNE BY JANE DOE & THIS IS ENGLAND BY DANNY MCNAIR	14
UNTITLED BY ADAM HAMPTON AND MATT FELLAIZE	16
INTERVIEW WITH MAUNG DAY	18
THE PENGUIN'S MIGHTIER THAN THE WORDS BY HARRY DRAPER	24
THE WATCHMEN BY STEVEN KENNY	26

### **PORK BARREL**

editor Callum France

project lead Brontë Pleasants

creative non-fiction editor

James Stables

short fiction editor Danny Mcnair

micro-fiction editor
Bradley King-Spooner

visual arts editor Rachael Mcullough

poetry editor Brontë Pleasants

special thanks
Maung Day, Simon France, Sword Systems, Erin McMahon, Foxhat Theatre
Group, AD+NAUSEAM

website www.porkbarrel.co.uk

submission email submit@porkbarrel.co.uk



#### **EDITORIAL**

Welcome to the first edition of Pork Barrel; the very start of our journey, one that is sure to last for years – nay, decades to come. Thanks for flicking through our magazine, we hope you'll stay for the ride. Come, take a seat won't you? We'll run you through our brief history:

icture your local pub, as long as it's fashionably decrepit and filled with students drinking cheap beer. Whilst sat around a corner table, sipping a double of twenty-three year old rum, we devised the idea of a revolutionary magazine. Hang on, well; one of us spent our weekly budget on twenty-three year old rum. The rest of us are normal and drank lager. Apart from Bradley, he tucked into an apple juice. It would be a magazine that would change the world or at least claim to.

We want to get the conversation going, with contributions from people from all parts of the political spectrum. 2016 was a tumultuous year both in politics and society at large. We wanted to see artists respond to that; and since the everyday is political, this should be represented in the works of contemporary artists, both here and abroad. We've had contributions from both students and established artists - educators, and the educated. This magazine is our vision, our promise, and your opinion.

For our inaugural issue, we had the privilege of sitting down with Maung Day, this year's international writer in residence at Edge Hill University. We talked about poetry, politics, power, and the role of the artist in society.

It was enlightening for all of us, and we hope it inspires you as much as it did us. Thanks, Maung.

#### Our Manifesto:

- 1. For better or worse, the everyday is now political.
- 2. The left/right dichotomy is an anachronism.
- 3. People must demand more than bread and circuses.
- 4. Irreverence is always relevant.
- 5. No idea is above criticism.
- 6. Ridicule is man's most potent weapon.

And while we're thanking people, we'd like to thank every single person who made this magazine possible. Thanks to James Harker for putting up with our bickering, and keeping us focused. Thank you to Simon France for being the best damn web designer six poor students could afford. Thanks to Billy Cowan for your critique of our marketing materials, your advice was invaluable. Thanks to all our contributing artists for giving us some actual content to publish. And finally, thanks to you; the reader, without which this would all be a pointless endeavour. Now onto the good stuff, let's talk politics.

Sincerely, Callum

"

And finally, thanks to you; the reader, without which this would all be a pointless endeavour.



From left to right: James, Callum, Danny, Brontë, Bradley.

# RETROGRADE

BY BILL BULLOCH



Bill Bulloch is a writer, photographer and visual artist investigating the apprehension of the moment and specific instances in apperception.

Sell my soul to space in grand temptations Of moon and mars - pursuit of nations. Envelopes of change are pushed In starless velvet clasped in dust. Bright Daedelus climbing high beyond the clouds in darkling sky, rising effortless on wings of light heedless of gravity, ignorant of plight. To hear Jove's melancholic wail and steer old Halley's flaming tail; an upturned bowl we call the sky trapped under which we live and die. To finally glimpse Pluto's secret face, 'tween Ceres shining aspects pace. Circle Saturn's icy stare with necklaced moons dancing where; once a glowing world had hung -'til torn apart its essence flung in retrograde motion tumbling far. Eclipsing light from the farthest star, falling home now journey set

Not soon, nor suddenly, - no, never letting go

a vision, a memory a wish to know.

with sleeting thrusters slowing yet -

over rolling hills and humming wires

to land home again, in youth renewed.

tasting air in burning fires,

by Bill Bulloch

## YESTERDAY

## WRITTEN BY BRADLEY KING-SPOONER

The classroom was cold, and there was a map of the world on its wall. All seven continents, and all the water dividing them. It was, of course, common knowledge that a quarter of that land, and all of that water, belonged to them, along with roughly the same percentage of the world's population. It was a mighty and grand thing, to be sure. A simple bit of pinned-up paper, giving testimony to the success and power of this culture, still drunk on its wartime victories.

But where inebriation leads, sobriety eventually follows. Even before graduation, one of those countries on the map acquires a new flag, an independent flag. The ration books disappear. Another nation takes leave of this ownership. Yet another treads behind it. Interdependence becomes the name of the game, factories close, mines shut down, materials raw and refined ship in from places so very far away. Independent places, either recently so, or always so. Pressure is slowly lifted from the feet, and placed on the shoulders of others. Warships are dismantled, infantry dismissed, weapons made overseas. Pride gives way to pragmatism, to efficiency, to economics. Ancient foes so close to home now control the waters around the cold and foggy home island, the first time in history they have been able to do so.

The living room is warm, and he wonders how this was all done so peacefully.

# POLITICS FOR A DIVORCE

WRITTEN BY BALAMBÉR PAÁL

'Heeey!'

'Hi, son.'

'Did you have a good day?'

'No.'

'What's the matter?'

'I've lost the elections.'

'What? But... How is that possible?'

'That lying bitch won by 50 votes...'

My mom wanted to divorce after 20 years of marriage. She chose to do that because my father didn't bring home enough money. But dad started a political career for a better bursary. If he would be elected as a representative in this district he could get a better payment. Actually, he always loved politics and wanted to be a more known person even though he was a system administrator and programmer. This career was a great opportunity for him. He is not a bad leader, he is smart and knows how to talk. He had big goals and he wasn't selfish like the current politicians in Hungary. He had enough of them. We all had enough of them. Liars and egoistic politicians who just wanted to put their hands on bigger powers. They had declaimed future for the country. They had made us believe in change. They brought change. Oh, yes, they did. A change into a much worse world by complaining about the mistakes the other political party had done in the past years instead of correcting them. They have been doing this for six years now. And they are surprised about the fact that almost 200.000 of young Hungarians left the country. They had enough of them too. This is why my father decided to join the elections in 2014. He wanted to bring change. He didn't want power. He only wanted to build a better place.

'But yesterday you said you were leading.'

'I was. She took the lead in the last 2 hours.'

'My God...'

'60% of the people didn't vote.'

'Doesn't that make the elections invalid?'

'No, the government have changed that rule unfortunately.'

My dad didn't want to divorce after 20 years of marriage. He said he loves his two sons and is trying everything. But mom didn't believe him. She was a people person. She worked for almost 20 years at home as an accountant. She didn't have friends or mates. Just her two sons. My parents believed in the same political party and they always attended their events. They were one of the first volunteers to join the party in 2012. She got an offer for an office job inside Budapest to work for them. She accepted it as she knew my dad would not find another job for a better bursary. Life was going well for her. She had found friends and gained a small fame within the party. Half a year before the elections, the party asked her to be a representative in the same district where my dad was. She accepted it even though she got the worst place within the district.

An actual ghetto where the people didn't have water, electricity, and rumours said it was the most dangerous place as well. But she didn't retreat. She spent time to learn about the place. Met people, talked to people. Convinced them to vote for her. She went there many times and hoped that the people will choose her. If she would become a representative that means she would get a better bursary. A bursary enough for the divorce.

'So... What will happen now?'

'I don't know. I should give up this career.'

'Are you sure? After all that you've been through?'

'There is no reason to continue, son. I'm a failed representative now. Who would vote for a failed representative?'

'But you lost only with 50 votes! Think about it.'

'Think about what?'

'That woman was a real politician. You were an accountant coming from nowhere with no political background. And you almost beat her. I believe this is a great success'

'Yeah, you might be right. Your father unfortunately wasn't that successful.' 'Why so?'

'He didn't stand a chance against his rival.'

As the elections were lost, the political party had lost a lot of their volunteers and supporters. My mom stayed there for one more year but she found a better job and divorced from my father later. He stayed there as a volunteer but didn't try himself out in the elections anymore. He mostly worked for the party every day, without payment. My mom has to work for the current government now to get an acceptable payment.

There are people we love, people who care about us. And some of them decide to start a political career because they want to help more but we never vote for them for some reason. While others who volunteer and support a party with their hearts are remaining unnoticed. These people help our society and trying to make the world a better place. But why can't we see them. Why?



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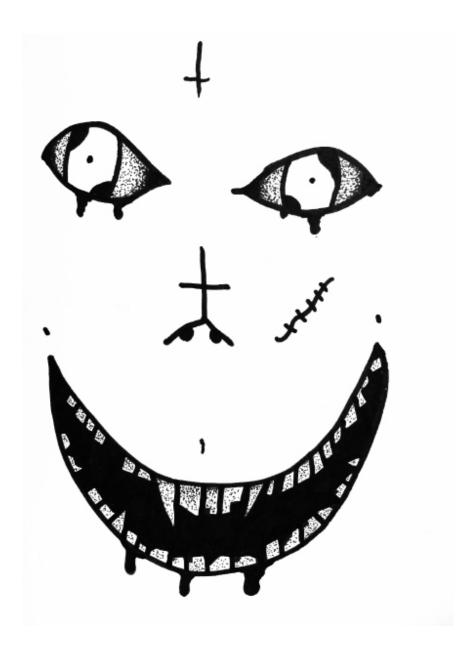
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PORK BARREL | PAGE 11



#### > Self Portrait

By Mathew Palmer – Located in Manchester/Sheffield, art ranging from Digital illustration to Graphic Design.



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By Mathew Palmer – Located in Manchester/Sheffield, art ranging from Digital illustration to Graphic Design.

# A DAY IN JUNE

BY JANE DOE

> Ordinary day Sunny Thursday meet and greet smile and chat Campaigning shots are fired loss of a nation has come at last

# THIS IS ENGLAND

#### BY DANNY MCNAIR

Government; corrupt.

Our paths abrupt.

Questionable integrity.

Damaged economy.

Food banks increasing.

Poverty continuously rising.

Student reality discarded,

our country negatively regarded.

Yet "this is England" a country somehow so proud.

Teens judged for inevitably being part of the "wrong crowd".

## UNTITLED

#### BY ADAM HAMPTON AND MATT FELLAIZE

Bitter as ink written in stout letters:

Brexit means breakfast

Enter Farage: 'fruit fucking salad? It's got too much melon in!'

Hard Breakfast Stopping the free movement of cornflakes The lost ghost breakfasts of the nineteen-fifties

Cooking oil on jeans, Lundy to Malin via the Irish Sea, Scraps & patches on a high street jacket, Job-market blues and ciggy grey

Let me be clear I'm being clear about being clear be grateful for my clarity, there's fog

Staying up late in half-light, Nebuchadnezzar crawls to My Bed after a bacon butty A double Judge look over George's Hall and a Verdigris mane again

A little over to the west it's just Possible to observe slices of skies "You get better skies now, everything's better"

Beneath our feet the streets are paved with carpet tiles 1ST 1034 HUNTS CROSS ON TIME. Ban euphemism, ban spin, Ban them both as Class A drugs

It's left as the preserve of choice a golden shred, littering the mornings cluttering the holding pens

Of the NHS, two chairs, a blanket And the rhetoric, May's fingers stained With bitter ink bled from a bank note

A repurposed idea the sleight of hope we've simulated it With a white light, job lot squire, auction it was

In our Backalleybar of prism neon, cocktails, socialcig and a dig at the Blue Nose drinking. Match day, summer scarves, Anechoic Chamber of alcohol loss. This is a shared purpose We're all in this together We're all in here together

Under the soft belly of cumulus red, Banks of pug-crease street stacks, Lamps of flickering lipids

Watching the hours contract This is the zero-sum deal Just don't look up

Just don't. Pull the pin from the frag and hold it. It'll rake the leaves from your auburn hair. Pull up a backbench, who would you like to drink?

We have the best drinks. The best.
Failing non drinkers are so overrated by the way.
We're building a society. We build the best societies.

That Trump tweet:
The poet is a loser,
Who even writes poetry anymore?

Sad! But enough and hoping That enough is enough is enough It seems, for now, in failing light

The affable lancer of boils sharpens his knives. It must be done, relieve the addicts, the Reds, Of their slick of festering ideals.

Getting out of the bubble, bravely Switching the news feed to most recent Practically Che Guevara, pluralista!

A GP appointment card sourced from a ticket tout; A sucking face back-lit by a clipper; A broken leg plastered in Paper Mache

A commodity, once identified as such Is capable of both increasing and Decreasing in the isolating silencing seconds

The curtains tied back in a ponytail, he feeds The shredder a love letter and leaves To tear our bodies like bread.

Compound interest in the food bank A scattering of car park birds Picky with abundance A bin for tins, a bin for packets Of own brand cereal, the note of Highest denomination rarely given

To understand that when it plays out It trickles down and the signifiers Come out, wet newspaper, park bench



# INTERVIEW WITH MAUNG DAY

ARTWORK
THE THUG NATION - MAUNG DAY

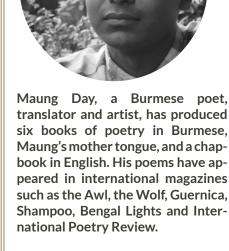
uring Maung's visit to Edge Hill Universtity, Callum and James had the pleasure of catching him for an interview. They discuss his attitude to his poetry, his artworks, and how his history in his country has influenced his life's works.

C: How do you start one of your poems? What's the approach you take?

M: I often start from an image, or even just a phrase; for instance, I'm writing a short poem responding to the artworks by William Blake, and Yves Klein. So I visited galleries - I was looking for something that would inspire me to write this poem. I wouldn't call the poem ekphrastic though, because I don't want to belong to any club (laughs), or any form of category in a rigid way. Whilst I was looking around, one phrase caught my eye, which was 'The sky is my first artwork' - Yves Klein said it. He was young, hanging out with his two artist friends, and they divided up the universe between themselves. Yves Klein got 'Sky', and the others won 'Air' and 'Fire', I think; so the artwork they would produce over their lifetime would be based around this concept - and Yves Klein has this kind of 'Yves Klein Blue' characteristic, I think it was his personal take on this. So I looked at poems starting with that line - but for me personally, I would just say a phrase, or image really.

C: You've mentioned before how politics surrounds and is woven into your poetry work - you said you didn't choose politics, politics chose you - do you feel that just your poetry is centred on politics, or does it expand to the other forms that you create? If it is just poetry, is it because the medium allows you to fuse multiple strong ideas and perceptions much more fluidly than other literature? It's a long question (laughs).

M: Yeah, you're right, poetry is a very fluid form; the artistic expression I can have in poetry can be quite paramount, quite profound, I think. I'm not especially interested in party politics or anything like that, but more about how power is practised in our daily life - even in our language itself. That's what I'm more interested in. I'm drawn toward more experimental, innovative writing because it's also a form of resisting the establishment - take language poets, for instance. Their writing can be quite linguistic, yet somehow very theoretical; because they are dismantling, deconstructing the power institutionalised in the language - in poetry itself. In Burma we have an older generation writing poetry that's very political, but also quite wishful - wishful thinking. For me, we (poets) always have to re-define, examine what is power, how is this power practised in both writing as well as in society (cont.)

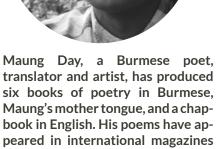


He has edited several Burmese literature and art magazines and is the translator of a number of books. He has also translated the works of Burmese poets such as Aung Cheimt, Khin Aung Aye, Moe Way, Yoe Myay, Dlugalay, Mae Ywayy and Cho Pain Naung. Aside from literature and poetry, he has also been active in the arts scene in Yangon, where he co-founded Beyond Pressure performance art festival.

His artworks have been showcased in Poland, Germany, China, Hong Kong, Australia and Thailand. A book of his poems in Thai translation is forthcoming in February 2017.

"

I'm not especially interested in party politics or anything like that, but more about how power is practised in our daily life.



: I think we live in a more and more complex society today – I grew up in an Indian-Burmese community; I'm Indian-Burmese – so I had a really hard time living in a Buddhist community (laughs), hanging out with Buddhist friends, you know?

Like it or not, there's always tension in a society, created by divisions who gets more from a society, right? I'm interested in politics in that way; what I've been writing recently is very political, somehow. Yeah, I think poetry is a good form, a good artistic genre where I can really express that - I also paint, so there's another medium that I use to express that. Are you familiar with the poetry of Frederick Seidel, an American poet? I like his writings because he is a big politico, but he can be very vulgar writing about sleeping with underage girls, or his artwork, or tailoring his motorcycles; he's a rich man. But I enjoy the self-parody in his work. In my poems I write about myself -I'm usually making fun of myself, or even putting myself in the places of other people, in different things. I think poetry today is very technical sometimes - quite boring to say it frankly (laughs). I want poetry to be more exciting, more personal.

J: You've mentioned your work is quite experimental, quite innovative; do you think that the post-censorship era of Burma or Myanmar - whichever you prefer - has influenced the poetry scene there?

M: Yeah. Younger generation poets are now experiencing a much improved freedom of speech, a freedom of expression. They're using the internet, and social media too - I mean it's an interesting phenomenon.

Speaking of which, the political and social situation of a country always has an influence on how we practise our art; for instance, back in the days of the censorship, a lot of artists adapted performance art into their practise - you know why? Because it's a very explosive form, you can be very explosive in performance artwork; it's also very free, you can join a guerrilla faction, avoid authority by performing in public then going away, you know, a very underground movement. I met some foreign artist friends of mine, and they were surprised at the poetry in my country - because there's usually specific stages in art, like an evolution, where you get to a certain point because of the changes in the past. But performance art in Myanmar came out of no-where. So I said to them that people were also trying to survive at the same time, trying to live their life whilst still responding to the situation of the time. They thought performance art was the perfect medium, not all of that generation became performance artists, but it depends on what kind of society and political situation you are in.

J: Like the medium fits the time?

M: Yeah, yeah.

C: So would you say that performance art has affected your poetry? Because we're studying landscape poetry this year, and one of my questions was: how do you approach the space on a page in your poetry? Do you focus on breath, or the aesthetic? Something else?

M: I like my work to be very imagistic – like I said earlier; I mostly start my poems with an image in mind, or even a phrase, though that is imagistic somehow. So I'd probably say I approach them aesthetically.

It's challenging for me to write in English, I've studied poetry but I'm very much self-taught. I've read a lot of poetics, about other poets, both local and international - but I favour the work of deep imagists, the likes of Jerome Rothenberg, or Robert Kelly - and even Spanish Surrealist García Lorca. I like these poets because I'm interested in imagery, and how you can be critical by constructing an image. Over the past few days I've talked about seeing things behind the surface, because sometimes we can be looking at things, but not really seeing, you know? I always work with the line 'You don't see if you don't look', because things are always there, but we as people might see different things according to our approach. For me, I am quite critical of that, I try and focus on it how we can perceive things differently. So that is imagistic work itself really, more visually orientated.

J: One of the things you mentioned in your lecture was that the scene in Myanmar is being driven by a lot of young poets, about how academia hasn't really had a chance to catch up – you said that every writer is an institution. Do you envision that going forward? Or perhaps universities catching up to young writers, and taking over the keys of the artistic scene?

M: When I look at England, or the United States, I always see institutions working with poets, always creating spaces together – of course, there's always politics involved when writing in institutions. In Myanmar there used to be this tradition, but when the military seized power, 40, 50 years ago they shut down institutions – University was closed for a while, I didn't go to school for a couple of years because it was closed! The whole country almost, was shut for 2 years (cont.)

: it was a very comatose stage in, institutionally. Universities, they deliberately created an education system where you don't really learn – or you learn something in the way they want you to learn, and poetry? Well Poets can be subversive, are subversive.

We have to be subversive, we have to always question things and institutions didn't want that – they were under the control of the military for a very long time, so a kind of bureaucracy developed, a tradition. I don't really see it happening very soon, I can't see Universities catching up – not until we see institutions being reformed, perhaps in the next 20, 30 years.

You know, Tea shops were really influential in Poetry in my country. Like I said earlier, poets, writers and artists educated themselves, and passed along their knowledge rather informally, so they'd do this in a tea shop, or at a gallery - we also use a lot of art galleries to meet and talk, I run viewings too, just to meet people. But now we can do it freely in the past it wasn't even possible. We should be aware of the advantages and disadvantages of strong institutions, you know? For us in my country, it can be quite hard to be acknowledged, to get supported by the government and the institutions, but in other countries, poets and writers might have that support. But in the United States, I met a lot of American Poets, and I always noticed a similar approach to poetry, something very 'workshoppy' in their pieces - which is because they are taught in a classroom; teachers might come up with whatever they want, but it is always beneficial to get oneself out of the comfort zone, which I think is difficult in a classroom.

For me personally, I talk to older poets if I want to know something. But that's difficult. It's informal, sometimes not helpful – but then you don't really have someone to talk to, so there are advantages and disadvantages (laughs).

C: Yesterday you said your painting and your poetry are like two different languages. I wondered if they still inform each other. Because you've talked about imagism in your poetry, does that come across from your painting, do you think?

M: I like my poems' artwork to be imagistic, but for them to be a bit more surreal, a bit bizzare. I like shapeshifting, so there are a lot of elements of shapeshifting in my artworks at the same time too. I think there's a tendency toward aesthetic elements in my artwork and poetry, they correspond very well I think. I'll send you some through so you can see them.

C: That'd be wonderful, thank you.

J: So from what I've gathered during this conversation, would you say that the role of artists in society – in your opinion – is to challenge power? Challenge the norms, challenge circumstance?

M: I would, yes.

J: How do you see that going forward in Burma? Do you see the artists continuing to have a bigger effect on the wider culture, the wider zeitgeist? Or do you see something completely new from the situation?

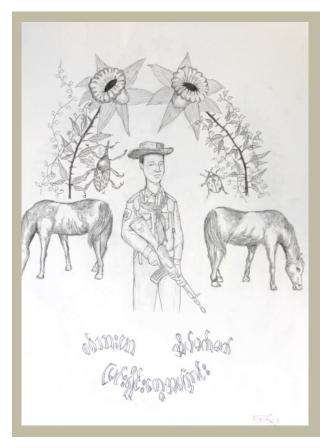
M: I think it will always be an ongoing process, artists challenging the status quo, right? But, the state, the institutions – and society too, will always be trying to devour that kind of dynamic art scene into which poetry

fits - and they're trying to devour it for their own interests. For instance. in my country there has been a revival of street art, a lot of young people spraying things and walls - and now people are starting to curate it in galleries! For me personally, street art is meant to be in the street, it has a specific political and aesthetic direction and ethos, you know? It's not meant to be shown, because it becomes marketed - I mean, you really want to sell street art (laughs)? So that doesn't make sense to me. I always see poets at the forefront of the movements of the time; they are the guys who don't make money, but keep writing, and I find they carry some kind of burden at the same time, and they happily do that. I like to think of poets as very strong, very resilient. Poets were part of the 1988 student generation in Burma, who protested the closing of Universities, so I think we have a good future with poetry and poets in my country; visual arts, I don't know because I also see a decline in it. The globalised phenomenon of institutions is that of bringing art into the market, and in a way, creating a narrative that artists are supposed to work under. I find it makes people aim to make big, huge installations, which don't end up necessarily reflecting the look of reality. I don't like that very much.

J: Where it's more about the spectacle and attention, the obvious financial benefits that come with it?

M: Definitely, definitely.

J: I think that has to be a side effect of globalisation, and capitalism coming to the market.



> By Maung Day



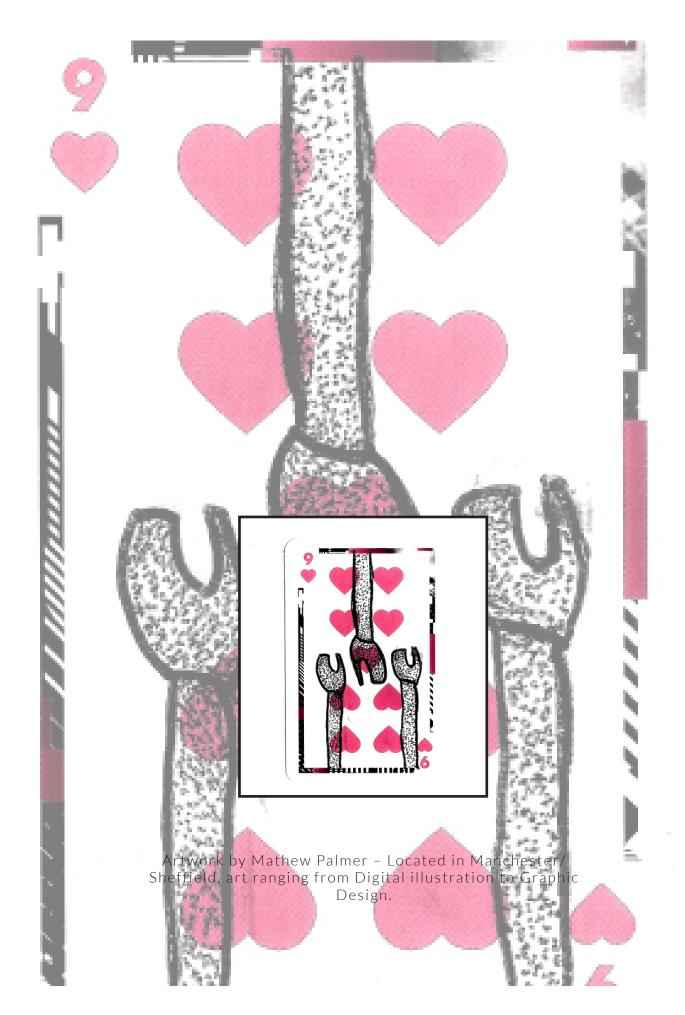
> By Maung Day

: Finally, what advice would you give to an aspiring poet, or just someone who is trying to break into the scene?

M: I can only speak from experience here, but when I started writing poetry, it was an epic battle - in my country the editors of the magazines who published poetry were very biased - which happens elsewhere too. But it was rather difficult to be published, so it was very useful to just keep writing and trying - persistence really. I also like to keep my feet on the ground, if you know what I'm saying? It's good to be nervous most of the time, it's good to be challenged - work can be quite confused as a poet, and an artist, and that's fine. If we get comfortable, sometimes it's not beneficial to our work, and to move forward with. For me I think about my work all the time, I scrutinise myself a lot - trying to reinvent things, pieces. I get inspiration from people like Picasso, or David Bowie, because they weren't comfortable people, they had problems creating their work - and I like to have problems when I create my own work.

We are born to a society which is pretty much predetermined, going through life with some kind of consistency – sometimes we don't need that consistency, especially when it stops us from creating new things; you'll always meet people with similar tendencies, reading similar books – but really just fuck it, see beyond the similar, the normal. Where are other things to write about, you know? What else is there? That kind of thing.

You can find out more about Maung Day and his work here - http://maungday.blogspot.co.uk/







by Harry Draper

## THE WATCHMEN

#### BY STEVEN KENNY

Living in the worst of times, We're piling up the dead. We see it on the TV screens, in black and white and read.

Facing our extinction With an apathetic gaze, Revelling in the chaos As we face our end of days.

Now the future is the past And it never stood a chance. Distorted and aborted, Without a second glance.

Those who would be kings Are nailed to their thrones. Committed to the violence; Spied upon with drones.

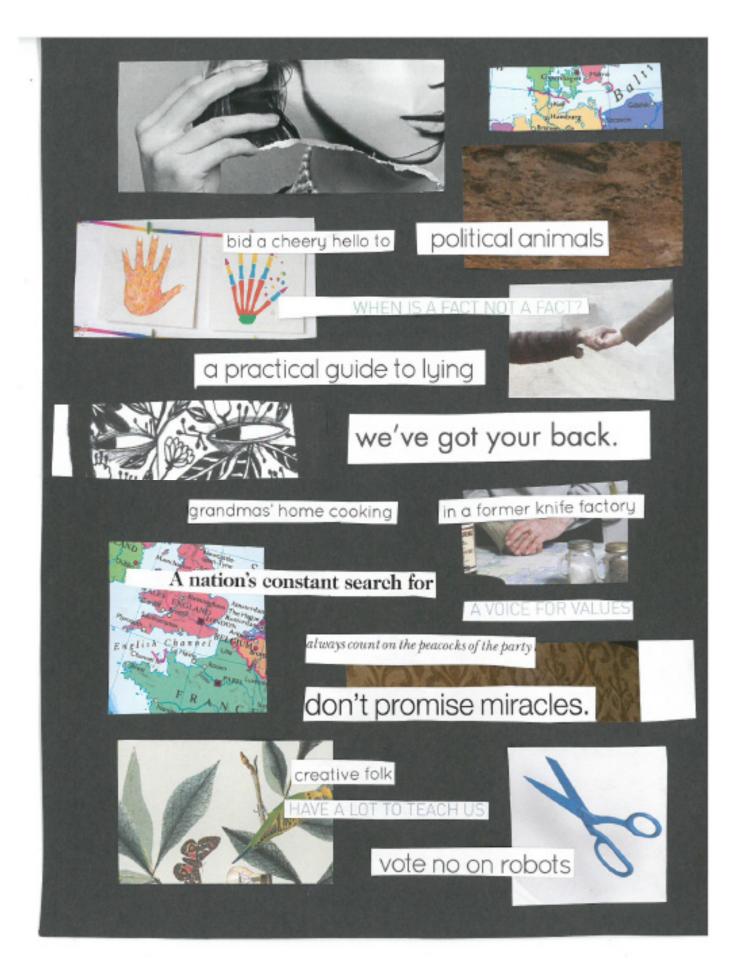
Corporations profit, From the madness of the show. Lining oily pockets With the suffering below.

And politicians sleaze
Through the alleys late at night.
Power in their fingers
Gripped around a throat too tight.

And we watch it all unfold Like a story never told. And we let it all explode, wrap up warm against the cold.

And we watch it all unfold, blame the young or the old. And we feel it all implode, A black hole in our soul.

And we watch it all unfold, We watch it all unfold. We watch. But we refuse to break the mould.



by Brontë Pleasants

# ABOVE A HOLLOW EARTH

#### BY JAMES STABLES

Walk through the that cold coal covered corner of the earth

Through to where the curves come to low edges

To where the buildings spring from the cracked earth like shattered teeth

And there you can find the hard men who went deep

Into the cavities of the world filled with a rotting black

And then returned to coal dust carpets

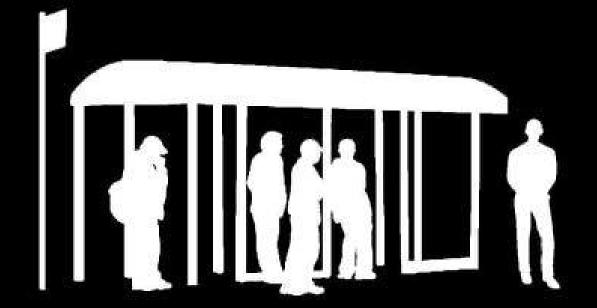
To become that romanticised worker who coughs up his lungs

And you'll find sunken fields and pre-fab housing

And used needles and ferns the colour of rotting meat

And you'll keep walking past to rolling green fields and yellow fields

# 



"Waiting for Godot meets Lord of the Flies"

A play by

FOXHAT THEATRE COMPANY



PROUDLY PRESENT:



Written by JAMES SAYER Directed by REBECCA BROWN

An original comedy about a gay couple hosting the dinner party from hell

Studio Theatre
The Arts Centre, Edge Hill University

Tuesday 31<sup>st</sup> January 2017 7:00pm Tickets £3 / £2 Concessions (Pay on the door)



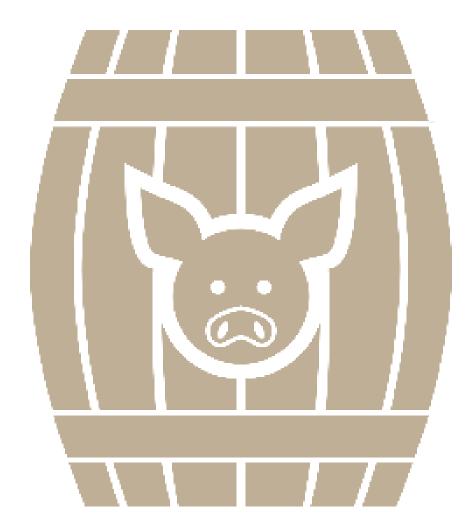






# A film Production By Ad Nauseam





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