

IAN WILLIAMS

THE DEATH OF LORCA

They've just killed Federico Garcia Lorca
They left him in a ditch and someone fired
two bullets into his arse for being a queer

To this indignity add another
In three years time when the fuss has died down
and things are right, there will be an apology

An error of judgement on some minor official's part
or revolutionary zeal over-reaching its jurisdiction
can be excused in the muddle of war

Truth falls first, it's said, the front line trooper:
principles next pirouette against a cemetery wall
spinning to a tommy gun's chatter

In times of crisis who gives a hoot for
the slaughtered innocents, the politically naive:
a precise theology pigeonholes all

Civil disorder is good for nothing if not retribution
the settling of old scores, a cleansing out
of riff-raff, cranks, those of doubtful sexuality

In the slopes above Viznar the poet lies
dead in his bones, spilled of Spanish marrow though
the Granadine song snuffed at dawn

reverberates through the hills with the gunshots still