

we cannot paint. fear draws figures of speech  
to keep us company. long distance grows.  
answers are recorded. a cold wind blows.  
we are brief. there is nothing to beseech.

silence. ice-skating on breath. it will hold.  
run out of change. replace the receiver.  
click. history in the unmaking. sold.

a single voice is its own believer.  
god is the pmg. the rent is due.  
i'm broke. love claims the absent residue.

## MANFRED JURGENSEN

### The Lecture

'poetry is the language of crisis',  
he quotes, removes his glasses and pauses.  
suddenly i know i have lived poems  
all my days and did not know the causes.  
these restless comforts that have been my homes  
were turning-points of truth's paralysis.

i dare not shirk this sullen craft, still less  
the moody tyranny of borrowed words;  
the creature senses jealously conspire  
to hear their nature speak. its will records  
the seasons of a desperate desire  
to be in health the language of illness.

mallarme, you died unhealed; fame's lost cure  
survives in repetition. such is death.

meanwhile i reside in overdue rent  
of academic life. my absent breath  
is print on page. how quickly it is spent.  
the critic's rage celebrates its posture.

## MANFRED JURGENSEN

Nolde: Flowers and Clouds

painted 1933; the drama unfolds.  
the coloured flowers are the knowledge that they grow,  
the ever changing clouds sense of a god who moulds  
his presence into passing shape. the movements know  
the secret of their projected composition,  
the reds and browns, the corn-poppy drowning the sun  
and the iris' light in which rays have begun  
endlessly to lure the nature of our vision.

history is a painting of the forbidden  
forces; the skies are riddled with terror and fear.  
within the form of genesis lies the hidden  
meaning. it is a pattern abundantly clear  
in the vegetable mind; thought studies how to be  
a mullein regally blue, or the soil of home,  
the bleeding evening of all the days to come,  
part of the immortal tyranny of beauty.