

Frank Kellaway

## MISTER ZEIT

I met a bloke in a pokie bar.  
No, not a bloke, indeed, a guy  
With Elvis hair and fat cigar.  
His fancy jacket caught my eye.  
"What gives with the ostrich and death's head?"  
He frowned, "We don't explain ourselves" he said.

The picture was plastic, white and red  
across his chest and bulging belly,  
sewed on with psychedelic thread  
that winked and wobbled like a jelly.  
"The ostrich has a human skull for head!"  
I go again. "We don't explain," he said.

"When we're at home, then who the hell are we?"  
"Mister Zeit and his Geist say 'hi' to you,  
a poet I guess, since you're so rude and free?"  
"Yeah, Frank the crank, the poet, that'll do.  
The ostrich, though, why does he scrape that hole  
As though to bury his skull or save his soul?"

"He isn't alive and he isn't dead,  
but I must insist that we never, ever  
in any circumstance whatever  
explain our spirit or times at all," he said.

## IN MEMORIAM RAY COLES '06

So you dropped off the twig, my dear old mate —  
in sun or shade a singing passerine —  
your sense of the earth's music was innate  
and you perched high to see and not be seen  
from where your image-melodies could float,  
(laughter's magnificent of the absurd),  
like rainbow bubbles, every perfect note,  
almost, indeed, as though you were a bird.

But fierceness, too, was in your bright blue eye  
for trampers of the weak, sulphuric scorn  
for rich fools claiming power by divine right  
in genteel uniform of shirt and tie  
who reckon that they hold the world in pawn.  
Just the boy, you, to call them out to fight.

## THE KIMBERLEY

Here in the Kimberley the weathered rock  
is purple, ochre, red and sometime cream  
fading in distance to a violet dream.  
Spinifex feeds the longhorn Brahmin stock,  
also the termites who build forts of mud  
protecting the galleries of fine-chewed hay  
and chambers where the Queen may lust and lay.  
Human proportions are in all they've made,  
sensuous breasts of mud, buttocks and thighs,  
cannonball heads, and some wild masks with eyes  
which search the clouds, gidgee's or mulga's shade.

Galahs peel off the road in flakes of pink,  
in flakes of grey, soft feathers floating down.  
Some hills are Mr Atlas-muscled, crown  
greenish or tussock-mottled to the brink  
of hammerlocking armatures of stone,  
but some are ghostly, flat planes sheeted stark  
to a fell stumbling-over fell of scarp,  
falling to crumbling cemeteries of bone.

My windscreen's carved by flying stones, with stars;  
their astral bodies glitter as we move  
through shadows glimmering with blue and mauve,  
till all is drowned by dusty avatars,  
the angry godheads of the land we've scarred.

