perched on an upper ledge, quivers
and flares its wings, tensed and eager
to be loosed, then projects itself
out exulting on the air
where a sparrowhawk registers, locks
upon, impelled also and by desire
curving in flight to meet

so, winged and finned, lifting
from their cradles, balanced on flame,
a plume following, stately, the exemplars
of our devising, yearning on course,
ascend through cloud beyond our sight
to make revelation in a ripple
of brightness, the sound following
only after a pause, as if an echo
returning from the unheard

Like his press, Turnbull was a migrant, traveling frequently between England, Canada, the United States, and Scotland (where he eventually retired). Though his fellow-travelers included poets as diverse as Creeley, Dorn, and Finlay, actual influences are hard to spot (though the occasional dislocations of being suggest an affinity for W.S. Graham, and I think Turnbull learned a lot from the early poems of Hugh MacDiarmid about lightness of touch in short lyrics). That, and a lifelong commitment to publishing with other small presses, meant that Turnbull's work has often not been very visible, or when visible, oddly hard to place. This handsome *Collected Poems* lets us see, at last, that he was in fact unique, true through half a century of questioning to the least self-important of selves in modern writing. The possibilities for Anglo-Scottish-Canadian-American poetry in the twenty-first century are widened by the inch of its depth.

Peter Manson

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Barry MacSweeney, *Horses in Boiling Blood*. Cambridge: Equipage, 2004. 84pp. £8

Rod Mengham's Equipage has published the extraordinary imitations of Apollinaire that Barry MacSweeney wrote before his death in 2000. MacSweeney's death by alcoholism was a harsh end to a long drinking lifetime, and his relationship to Apollinaire was an addiction to the Frenchman's spirits, a neediness visceral, cultural, and political.

The chimes of consonance between MacSweeney and Apollinaire

provide an intellectual rationale for the project: Apollinaire spent his last years witnessing a new century's wondrous flights of technological and human form, as well as the unprecedented carnage of the First World War; MacSweeney spent his last days seeing that century out, between two wars in Iraq, singing songs of praise and lament.

But more powerful than this cultural exchange is the exchange of affections across time. To imitate Apollinaire, as MacSweeney does here, is to perform a dynamic transfusion of life fluids, to imagine the Frenchman as a drinking partner across death's way. It is also to make friends with European modernism, to go to the innocent heart of modernist experiments with the language of the new, while bypassing the obduracies of the Poundian line. In recovering Apollinaire's transfiguring love of the ordinary, MacSweeney goes straight back to the source that underwrote both Breton's *fraîcheur* and Ginsberg's kindliness.

MacSweeney has done this kind of thing before, in poems infused with the ghost figures of Rimbaud and Blake, and most importantly with the Chatterton persona (the latter imitations bear traces of the Rowley fakery, with their occasional bright medievalisms, all starres and gunnes and cloudes). Apollinaire, however, fits MacSweeney's bill like no other: near dead from drink, feverishly hallucinating demons with mouths full of knives, MacSweeney finds an ally in the soldier poet with the trepanned skull.

MacSweeney's translation technique is mixed—sometimes the poems cherry-pick from Apollinaire (e.g. "*After Apollinaire*"), sometimes they engage specific texts (e.g. "*From Guillaume's Fête*"). In all cases there is a mingling of texts and contexts. We walk down a boulevard in prewar Paris to find ourselves arm in arm with MacSweeney rocking round Grey's monument. We mime Apollinaire's jokes about his injury, only to end up in detox at Newcastle's Royal Infirmary. It's almost a stream-of-consciousness trick: the surreally episodic flow of thoughts mimes a drunken mind as it rocks and rolls along at nighttime:

> I breathe alcoholism into the air
> Then the starres and argent sky swoon through my filters
> And the shells hit our skulls
> This beautiful trenchwater This gorgeous meadow
> Stricken by artillery
>
> I rise up in polished black boots
> Which I polished myself because we received supplies
>
> The roses are dead and we die too
>
> But the roses will eventually winne
>
> ("At the Hoppings")

This poem works from Apollinaire's "Fête," which imagines the gunshot wounds of the soldiers in the trenches as roses:

> L'air est plein d'un terrible alcool
> Filtré des étoiles mi-closes
> Les obus caressent le mol
> Parfum nocturne où tu reposes
> Mortification des roses

The net effect of these translation-imitations is reckless improvisation. It works because MacSweeney so confidently assumes that Apollinaire would approve.

That is not to say that MacSweeney doesn't sometimes have to edit Apollinaire. References to Catholicism, for example, are made sly, republican, and political. Where "Zone" famously compares an airplane to the ascension of Christ, saints, and prophets—"Les anges voltigent autour du joli voltigeur / Icare, Enoch, Elie, Apollonius de Thyane"—MacSweeney gives us "Icarus Enoch of / Birmingham Ely of Dublin Bobby Sands you madman Apollinaire." The effect is cheap and flashy, but the animus is important to MacSweeney: he wants his Apollinaire surreal-radical, not catholicizing.

Being Apollinaire allows MacSweeney to tell many of his French stories, with Paris, May 1968 as their pivot. "I loved 1968 the Citroen workers showing me car parts / In the shelves ready to throw at gendarmes." This French connection, however, can create crude and unlovely side-effects, as when MacSweeney paints all Germans as anti-republican reactionaries: "those grey-suited primitives / who are trying to rape and overtake my gorgeous republic." Many of MacSweeney's jokes are not subtle: "I'm not extracting the urine even though you're a Makem supporter." And MacSweeney sometimes verges on the sentimental, even maudlin—as when, for example, Jacqueline Kolb, Apollinaire's redhead, becomes Jackie Litherland, MacSweeney's lover and fellow poet: "My pouchy pigeon my tumbler my beautifully-breasted dove" etc. But this is the rough that accompanies the smooth; it enables MacSweeney's riskier moves.

Rare as they are, the moments when the lines really sing come through with a grace and twist that recalls Bunting. These three lines from MacSweeney's version of "Zone" give the flavor: "Freakjob, handjob, kissjob, explosivemind subject, // The ibis on fire the crags of the maribou crane // Zero human, nowhere person, lost in the rain of New York." Lines like these most recall Apollinaire, the poet of sudden transcendent, unpredictable flights, and the harmony with Apollinaire that MacSweeney finds there is more than enough to justify the self-indulgence that so often afflicts these poems.

Adam Piette