

THE EDITOR

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Before long the imperceptible protuberances in the tarmacadam, its unruly undulations claimed their purchase in the soft belly of the tyre. Huw, who was next to me, still wakes in the night sweating hard; against the white lane markings passing two inches above his head; against life's terrible softness; against the flopping and churning of bodies; against being flipped on the M4 with the doors crushed shut; against crawling on the ceiling with three other prisoners; against not remembering if there was a lorry behind us; against the rain; against the dark and against the silence.

I have no doubt which one of the little bastards was to blame. It was the Venetian, **Canaletto** this time. For a brief and deadly moment, as I pulled right to avoid an obstruction, into a lane that did not exist, I felt the liquidity of his line as it encompasses form; somewhere between the orange milk that flows over the Port Talbot skyline and that which was beyond, I was momentarily distracted by his mastery of the hidden workings. I saw through his inner eye.

This is our art addiction issue. We ponder the terrible toll the longing for aesthetic and conceptual satisfaction can take: **Anthony Shapland** examines its capacity to rob the unsuspecting of their reason. We talk to **Heidi Sian Smith**: young, bright, full of promise and contemplating throwing it all away for a lifetime in the arts. At the other end of her career we have **Li Fenglan**. She has kept her habit under control by balancing it with a lifetime of hard physical labour. To her, sensibly I feel, art is but an effective means of encouraging the worker to increase the nation's productivity; it has no connection, in her mind, with pleasure. **good cop bad cop** would concur with this sentiment, as they lay bare their fractured mental states. **Tim Davies** sheds much blood for his practice whilst **Jo Longhurst's** subjects sweat for hers. Even **Trwbador**, in spite of being impossibly gifted, have still been flirting dangerously with the temporal thrill a pinhole camera can provide.

This morning I pulled out of the junction at the bottom of our road, I looked left but forgot to look right. As the approaching car crashed into our side, appropriately, it was **Jesus Monterde's** series *Nenimi Parco* with its visceral renditions of life in El Maestrazgo that had stolen my attention. - **b**

Ric Bower



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Cormorants, Ian Watson

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