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The Tone Poem: A Stolen Work

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Punt, M

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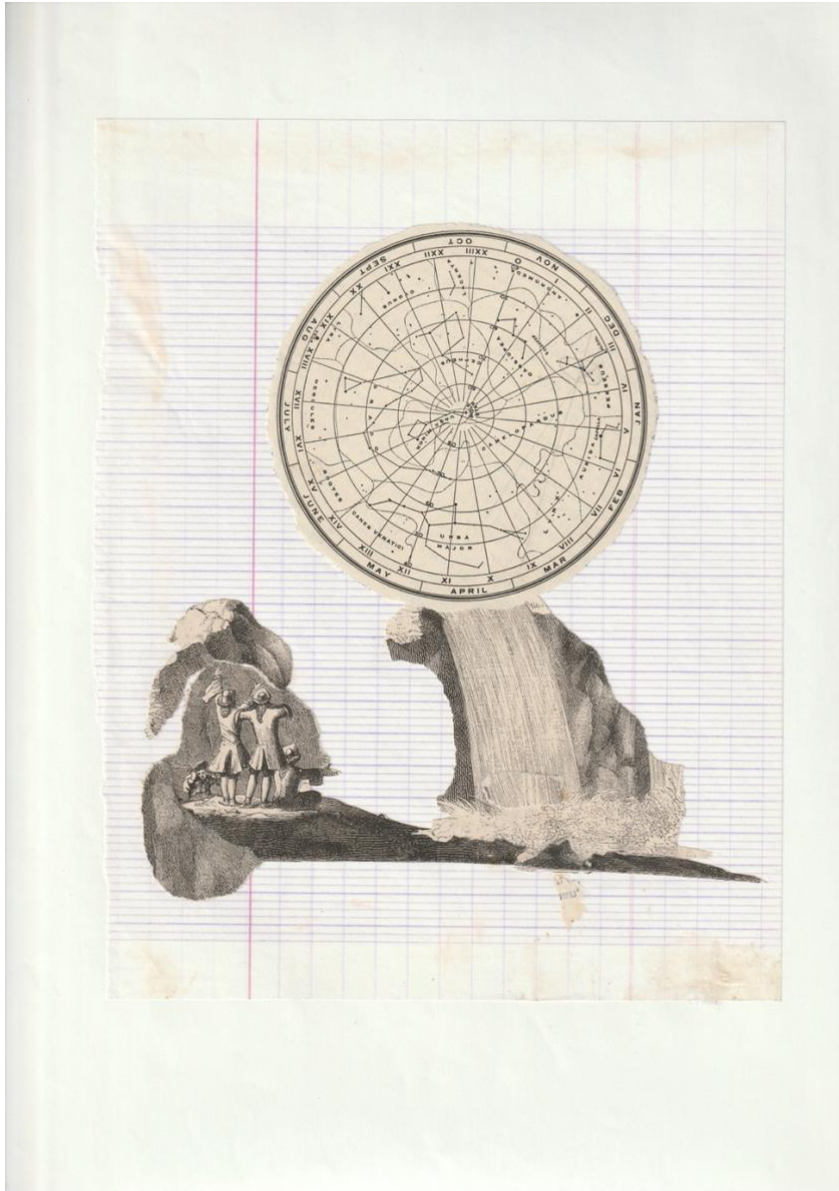
THE TONE POEM: A STOLEN WORK *

Michael Punt
October 2023

* Versions of this tone poem have been exhibited twice. Once in New York and again in Brno. On both occasions the work was stolen and it was never returned. Fortunately, the author has a good memory.

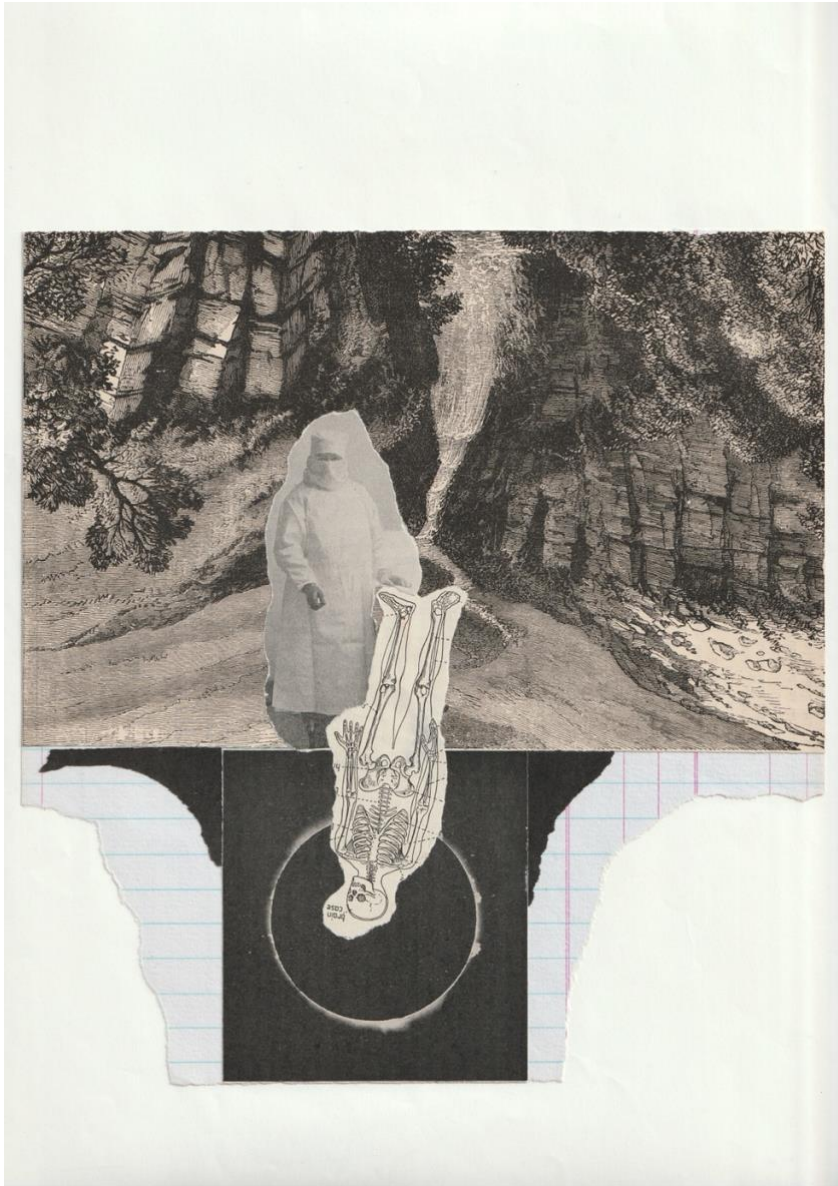
THE BEGINNING

The annunciation of his birth: Born in a gush of water - celebrated by some, feared by most including himself. (To the east of Libra, a star glows in the photocopy. It speaks of freedom.)



ARRIVAL

The material presences: Born fully formed but transparent like a fish or a worm. An empty braincase held by the Achilles heel, inverted by the faceless all knowing medically gazing eyes. It lies across a eclipsed sun retreating behind a captured moon.



The next thing he knew he was five, articulate, lucid capable of walking several miles. He discovered he had a talent for getting kisses from girls by coy advances and averting his eyes at the right moment. It never ceased to amaze him how simple it was.

THE QUEST

Lying in bed communing with the world: wired to the bed frame was the ariel for his radio made from a crystal and a whisker. The birds and fishes are confused. The turbulence is mediated by the drama of the news and by the weight of the words.
Lying awake seeing more than can be seen.



Sometimes he heard them talking downstairs and wondered what they had to talk to each other about after so long.

LOVE IDEA

Patience and solitude which are neither uplifting nor hallucinatory. Single minded obsessiveness awaiting the arrival of the seal puppy to spear: What else? He develops a habit of not seeing the point; examining the objective – the end product rather than the present.



When the ice melts there is smoke in the projector beam and dark tobacco kisses.

EXPECTATION

Sitting by the setting sun (the sun that hid behind the moon) he waits in expectation, (with both the sun or moon) for transformational events of psychic significance. His scholarly approach and thick clothing make it difficult for him to see the obvious.



Not helped on this occasion by the censor.

DENIAL

I saw him from a distance, he did not see me - but I saw. He was seated on a rock beneath the strangest pinnacle. Below was a town square with a needle of carved rock which affirmed the civilisation of earlier men. And behind: A magnificent compendium of architecture, more pinnacles, towers, steeples, and arches all in the form of a church. The minutest of men, indistinguishable from pebbles, cast shadows in the ground. And I, in the shape of a bird, watched a short distance away as he tuned into the Telegraph cribbing a world view in place of his own. A bear flying earthwards, silent as an owl, glimpsed him from the corner of his eye and became tame and earthbound in a single moment.



FRAU MINNE: PURSUING THE BEAR

And now there is a fence between the bear and his family. At last! he views it with contempt as he surveys its clumsy effort to come to terms with the ground and his four disorganised legs. The sun looks on disfigured and rebellious to be taunted by a child who alone sees the wind it causes, while the birds celebrate the newfound space in the sky.



THE TRIAL

Endangering oneself to find peace. The rivers run uphill diverting the evil by benign/divine interventions. The sailors (poor souls) think it is their song protecting them and surrounding them with light and tranquillity.



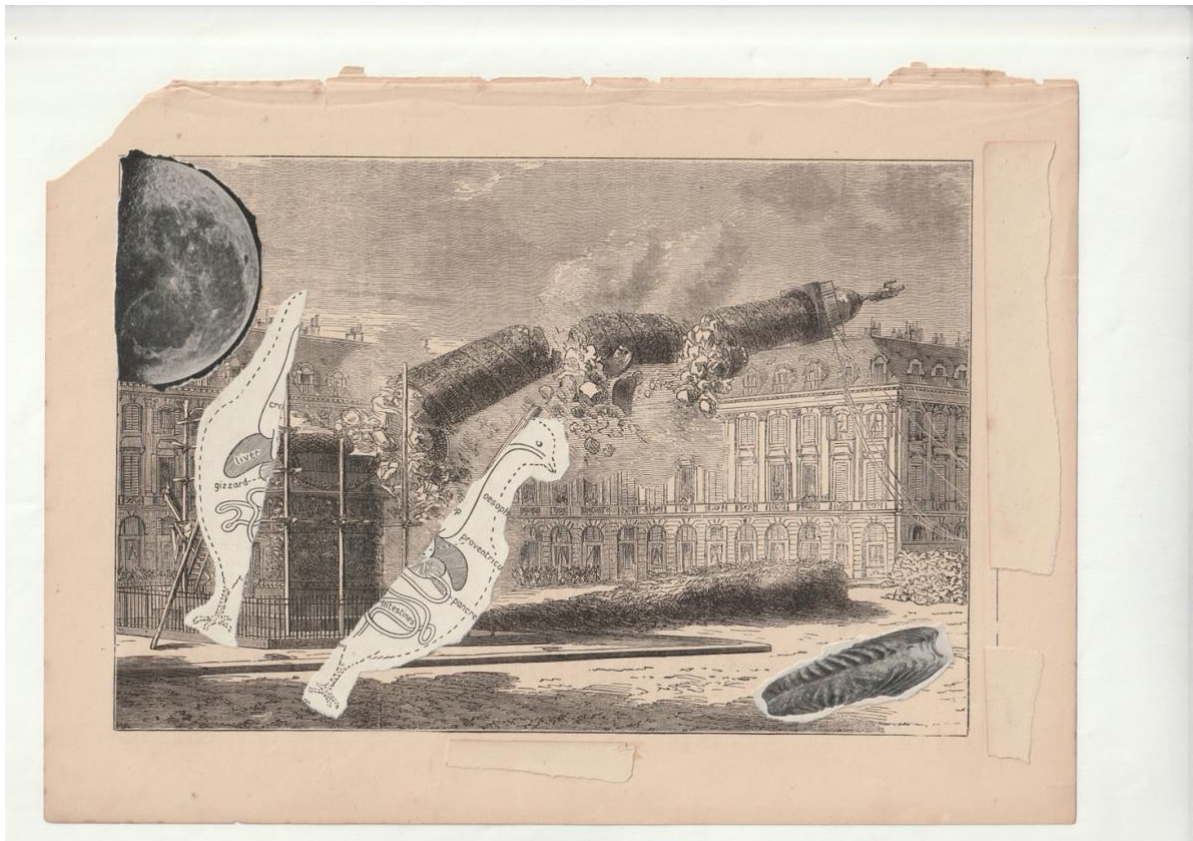
VIOLENT DEATH: REALIZATION AND REDEMPTION

April 1871: A violent death – his only chance of apotheosis. At once the crowd – all four! see the second coming.



END

The moon at last is free and the fossil of the animal breaks away from the rock and the pillar of all energy collapses into the hay. The pigeon breaks open to see the accumulation of its insides and, at once, falls to the ground.



THE END