Kunapipi 30 (2) 2008, Contents, Editorial

Anne Collett

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Abstract
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KUNAPIPI
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Kunapipi is a biannual arts magazine with special but not exclusive emphasis on the new literatures written in English. It aims to fulfil the requirements T.S. Eliot believed a journal should have: to introduce the work of new or little known writers of talent, to provide critical evaluation of the work of living authors, both famous and unknown, and to be truly international. It publishes creative material and criticism. Articles and reviews on related historical and sociological topics plus film will also be included as well as graphics and photographs.

The editor invites creative and scholarly contributions. The editorial board does not necessarily endorse any political views expressed by its contributors. Manuscripts should be double-spaced with notes gathered at the end, and should conform to the Harvard (author-date) system. Submission should be in the form of a Word or Rich Text Format file sent by email attachment to acollett@uow.edu.au. Image files should be high resolution tif format and submitted on compact disc if larger than 1mb. Please include a short biography, address and email contact.

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European Association for Commonwealth Literature and Language Studies

Front Cover:
‘Wall hanging of black velour showing a map of the island of St. Vincent’, from ‘The “West Indian” Front Room’ exhibition by Michael McMillan (Geffrye Museum 2005–06). Photo © Dave Lewis.

Kunapipi refers to the Australian Aboriginal myth of the Rainbow Serpent which is the symbol of both creativity and regeneration. The journal’s emblem is to be found on an Aboriginal shield from the Roper River area of the Northern Territory of Australia.
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EDITORIAL

Although this special issue began with the idea of exploring the diaspora of African popular culture, it shifted over the extended period of its compilation to include work on African diaspora and/or African popular culture. The end result is an eclectic range of essays, fiction, poetry and installation work on Africa in the Caribbean, Canada, Britain, the US and Australia. It includes discussion of religion, philosophy, theatre, dub poetry, ‘market literature’, drumming, and home decoration. It features work on writer/performers J.M. Coetzee, Pamela Mordecai, Mukoma wa Ngugi, Moqapi Selassie, Sistren; and Kunapipi’s second ‘poetry retrospective’ that highlights the work of Caribbean storyteller, Olive Senior. I say, Caribbean, but she spends much of her life in Canada; yet when I tried to replace Caribbean with Canadian-Caribbean or Caribbean-Canadian, it did not seem right — perhaps because her poetry is situated so firmly in the rhythms of the Caribbean — its voices, its language, its stories and songs, its people and its history. ‘So far from the sea,’ she writes, ‘I find myself/ worldless. (Oh, leave it alone, but I meant/ to write “wordless.”)’. It’s hard to imagine the Olive I know from her poetry and story ‘short of a word’, but in sympathy I give her the last word of this brief introduction and celebration of thirty years good sailing:

... sometimes, like

tonight, I feel a hemispheric sadness: the
New World as tired as the rest. And there’s
a waterlogged moon getting ready to burst

like the gourd that spilled an ocean when
the seeker, like myself, disobeyed, took it
down from where it hung by a thread,

dropped and broke it. So who were we
to know that from it seas would stream
forth, bringing three ships with our eclipse:

the Black Sun? Yet how but by disobedience
can we change the world order? So what if
all we are left with is a sieve to carry water?

We can use it to fish up a poem or two
to sail from our flagpoles.¹

Anne Collett

NOTES
¹ Founded in 1979 by Anna Rutherford, this is Kunapipi’s 30th year of production. The lines are from ‘The Song That it Sings’, published in Olive Senior’s latest volume of poetry, Shell (Toronto, Insomniac Press, 2007, p. 28). The poem is reproduced in full on p. 191 of this issue.