Poems

Ian Stephen

Follow this and additional works at: https://ro.uow.edu.au/kunapipi

Recommended Citation
Available at:https://ro.uow.edu.au/kunapipi/vol13/iss3/9
Poems

Abstract
LOSGAINTIR, SOUTHWEST HARRIS (for Cathy Wilson), SOUNDS

This serial is available in Kunapipi: https://ro.uow.edu.au/kunapipi/vol13/iss3/9
Ian Stephen

LOSGAINTIR

The form of your foot fits
in a swamped crater,
growing from flecked white
on Traigh Losgaintir.

Your salt-clogged hair
is rippled like
long abrasions
in sea sand.

I take you all in
and trust that threats,
overhead or undersea,
will remain remote

or be quietened
like the hard blue lines
grown hairy in
this range of tides.

SOUTHWEST HARRIS
(for Cathy Wilson)

This island is discontent as light,
come glancing under precipitation:
a weather-system from south of Islay.
Ireland is there, under Malin Head.

I let a measure of conditions
into the box, until a selected stop.
You sketch fast or lasso
the ewe's legs of your easel.
It doesn't want to be static,
straddling conflicts of gradients.

A melting landmass in the dunes of
Seilebost. Toe-head out as an arm
but insufficient to shield the machair.
Then there are katabatic bursts of wind,
against the grain of decent predictions,
bringing destroying light,
from Clisham and Mullo fo Deas,
brushing deep below the surfaces
of the sound of Taransay,
bringing only change.

SOUNDS

Here, the tides talk in Norse
and flood in conjunction
with prevailing spindrift.
You do not see the gradient of waters,
only the shoulders of fiords:
Loch a Ghlinne, Resort, Tamnavay.

To the south, set is composed
of midstreams and side-issues.
The flood takes off on a beam reach
to scour by Coppay, bounce Ensay,
nudging from Rhenish to the Uists
in a contrary cycle.

Even the cartographer concedes
special treatment for the Sound of Harris
and orientates the latitude scale
across the vellum.
You navigate
in diagonals.