

Termini

We lived where buses turned back on themselves,
when drivers still referred to us as ‘scholars’,
winding on their final destination
and we would end up here: PIER HEAD.
Today, a spinning blade blows *surf 'n' turf*
from a steakhouse kitchen, luring those
with appetites sharpened by river air
after a windswept round trip on the ferry.
What else is there? The city has shrunk back
from the front, slowly, over the years
leaving this airy strand the buses bypass,
and now nobody’s journey into town
ends with a top-deck, front-seat panorama.
I left the slashed seat and the listing bottle
to finish this journey on foot, in the rain,
the same route where the brothers Lumière
cranked the first nitrate from a moving train;
and stand now where we sagged the long school day
eating hot dogs, watching buses turn
back to the far estates with lower case names,
an audience staying put for the minor credits.

Electricity

It comes as a shock to that first audience.
The street they walked in off just moments before
hangs pale on the wall. All the colour has gone,
and its faces and carriages have ground to a blur.

Remember, no one has thought of pianos
or credits. The performance will start off mid-scene,
once each hard bench is filled, when the first usher nods
and the lamp is turned up and the crank starts to turn

*and their hairs stand on end to a shimmer of leaves
or the movement of clouds, and the way that the tense
has been thrown like a switch, where the land turns
to dreams,
and where, sad to say, we have been living since.*