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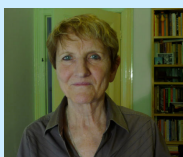
# Chapbook

the meh of

Z Z Z Z

by Pam Brown

## Pam Brown



Since 1971 Australian poet Pam Brown has published many books and chapbooks including *Text thing* (Little Esther Books, 2002), *Dear Deliria* and *True Thoughts* (Salt Publishing, 2003 and 2008). She has also written for film and theatre. She collaborated with Seattle-based Egyptian poet Maged Zaher on a collection of poems called *farout library software* published by Tinfish Press in 2007. Her next book, *Authentic Local*, is due from Papertiger Media in 2010.

She has earned a living variously and, until recently, spent many years thoroughly absorbed in the processes of classification and archiving at a sciences library at the University of Sydney.

For five years, from 1997 until 2002, she was the poetry editor of the Australian literary quarterly *Overland* and currently co-edits *Jacket* magazine. She is also associated with *HOW2* and *Fulcrum* magazines. Born in Seymour Victoria, in her imagination Pam Brown lives in Hellbourg, La Réunion, in real life she is currently doing time in Blackheath, in the Blue Mountains west of Sydney. She keeps a blog at [thedeletions.blogspot.com](http://thedeletions.blogspot.com).





Some of these poems have appeared in *Cultural Studies Review*, *Grasp*, *HEAT*, *Overland* and *Parthenon West Review*.

The cover art is by Margaret Schnipper.

Margaret Schnipper is a New York based photographer, film writer/director and visual artist. Her artistic style is recognizable by its playfulness, infused with a spirited attitude and positive outlook.

Her photography has been repeatedly exhibited on both U.S. coasts and her mixed-media collages and installations shown in New York and Washington, DC. Her film directing has to date been in short format, but she has written several screenplays that she hopes to move toward production. She is presently working on a photo campaign called the "blue sunglasses" project, the goal to benefit artists who are living with AIDS. This project and much of her work may be seen on her website: [www.littleatom.com](http://www.littleatom.com).



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## No worries

*les nouilles ne sont pas toutes dans la soupe*

*not all the noodles are in the soup*

(Québécois saying)

flat out,  
too tired to die

flying across  
the country of soundbites,  
sleeping sitting up  
is impossible

but  
bedroom-eyes slumbers on the aisle,  
his casual orange sweater  
emblazoned, kind of gothically,  
'Military Order - Devil Dogs'

\*

real live mesa on the ground  
miles below

Utah,  
or maybe Nebraska,

jet-zone puzzles like  
how IS a mountain formed  
if not volcanically ?

slow progression

\*

charged-up the camera,  
going on a day tour



pretzel dogs,  
a positive snack discovery

waxed cardboard cups,  
regular means giant

\*

all day all night  
on CNN  
economies are tumbling

(Baudrillard would have loved  
this 'dead cat bounce'  
of stocks & shares)

the Canadian dollar is a 'loony'  
(he'd have liked that too)

\*

up in Québec -  
an actual 'arts constituency'

\*

panhandlers,  
I have to ask,  
what's *my* 'social contract'?

\*

exhorted to  
'live better'  
yet feeling worse



\*

watching a photographer  
conceal himself  
behind a column,  
then a curtain  
then a large loud speaker,  
now I find him everywhere -  
through a potted palm,  
a half empty bookshelf

\*

a spotlight catches  
a few silver hairs  
on the back of the neck  
of the poet who has been sleeping  
through everyone else's reading

\*

three empty bottles  
and  
how many years have I put into this,  
the meh of z z z z ?

\*

from now on  
I will certainly decline  
invitations to travel far,  
I'll never see China, for instance

I don't really mind  
not seeing anywhere

I'll meander



# the meh of z z z z

around some bend  
like Lucky & Pozzo,  
arrive from nowhere  
make a speech  
and leave

only half genuine,  
you disappear before you're gone

no worries



## Wet flanelette

who are those people  
running on my grass?

\*

dragging the wheely bin  
to the footpath,  
a shooting star  
zim a flash  
above the dark pathway  
at the back of the house

through the window  
little green standby lights  
on the computer equipment -  
the cat burglar's runway

it's a carbon toe-print  
in there

\*

empty street  
in a couch potato smalltown,  
every human indoors  
in home-entertainment

\*

flagpole  
in a bare yard

\*

the best rubbish  
behind





# the meh of z z z z

the buildings -  
cardboard boxes,  
twisted wire,  
wet carpet, wet flanelette



## Self denial never lasts long

very busy here  
finishing up a 900 page epic poem I've been working on off  
& on for  
25 years!

telereal

I am  
kind of continental

I want to come back as  
a false witness

your gifts of cheap software  
cannot compensate

what is  
mazarine  
what is  
teazle

frowsty hairdo

it worked for the chimp

good to be young, indiscriminate, finding out,  
with time to  
BROWSE

then,  
after the libidinal,  
twenty years of scooping

locate  
a happy go lucky cunt, a lookalike



# the meh of z z z z

now, there's  
your fillip

this is the stich  
section

picking at the price sticker,  
everything must go !



## Rehab for Everyone

hands so cold  
    fingers cold  
tucked under legs  
    sitting in insect hiss  
        low white noise  
gas heater undertone  
    no other sound  
        nothing

almost asleep,  
    a car pulling up the hill

    a currawong  
does that shrill thing  
    into pink air

a huge open yawn  
    almost breaks my jaw

the pen that makes the marks  
    alters the angles of the letters

a patch  
    of yesterday's chocolate  
        stuck to my corduroy sleeve -  
a signal  
    imagined and interpreted

we look back  
    at the years in the tops  
    waiting to be taken out of time

red brick  
    wall map of Australia  
    grass green carpet



mustard coloured plastic chairs  
clumpy piling on the mittens

mitts on the keyboard  
pushing thoughts and jingles  
out

to Dublin to Seattle,  
Adelaide, Kane`ohe,  
Faversham, Glebe

sadly notating dim trivia  
me-minus-you  
outside community

literary festivals  
can't help anyone  
like a rehab book sale

making mistakes,  
so different  
from being morally wrong

in an unsettling world  
it's a rabbit life,  
built the walls from Castrol cases

black tyre ribbons  
strewn  
like a giant's licorice  
under the striated cutting  
siding on the highway,  
say goodbye  
to the Woodford bends

sometimes the clunky  
can incandesce  
but I want to know



how to vitalize gawkiness,

sometimes

I'm in my no-mind sometimes  
in a technological mindlessness  
sometimes nowhere near limber,  
although that's unusual

some people

just float along *all* the time  
accumulating the placid

sometimes

when you think you're going down  
you're not,  
you're going straight ahead  
to a utopia of modernity.



## Windows Wound Down

parked under  
a chalky old light pole,  
windows wound down,  
dozing on the front seat,  
on the radio  
Chinese classical music

hot night tonight,  
across the road  
a man is wearing  
his hat, indoors.

the stars that I love,  
when I remember  
to look at them,  
blink above the building

\*

I've memorised  
a Keats sonnet  
for February  
a Tom Clark poem  
for March

&  
julienned the carrots  
for spicy carrots  
with harissa, cumin,  
parsley, garlic, lemon,  
while listening  
to crazy music -  
Albert Ayler

\*



a Czech poetry paperback  
bought in 1971,  
there's a 30 cent ticket  
to the Penguin Reserve  
on Phillip Island  
and a poignant note  
tucked between the pages  
of a poem marked with a pencilled 'x'

'x' - Vladimir Holan, Changes -  
This is our hope : that we have passed  
the limits of the last reality.  
But while consciousness disappears  
it is the very consciousness  
whose constant changes  
remain . . .

the note -  
P  
I can't bring myself to write  
what's in my head  
I am splitting up north I guess  
I love you  
B

\*

The Collected Poems  
of Gwen Harwood  
is on the table  
but I should  
prepare a talk  
for Zines in April

\*





going on online,  
a small discussion  
(between 3 poets)  
about experimental poetry  
and free verse that one poet says  
is really  
*anecdotal 'sincerity'*  
*wrapped up in the unified 'I'*

oh dear I think that must mean me,  
with whom I am definitely stuck,  
I have  
my limitations, though  
not always 'sincere',  
and never 'unified' -  
only paranoid

\*

do carpenters  
read novels  
about carpenters?  
do pastrycooks  
about pastrycooks?  
poets read novels  
by poets,  
like  
Roberto Bolano

yes, it seems so

\*

another phone call  
more cancer  
and another  
a month later



like Michael said,  
now we'll spend  
the rest of our lives  
watching our friends die.

\*

*End of the First Week*

\*

by the time they caught Karadzic  
everyone here had forgotten  
who he was, what he'd done

\*

water on mars?  
let's fuck mars up too

space terrain  
flag a claim,  
space fear sphere,  
see you tomorrow

\*

why not  
recalibrate your lifestyle

how did Jean Genet  
live in hotels  
for so long?

\*



she wiped her face  
with the wettex  
then turned to kiss me

let me  
track your parcel  
darling

\*

find a city,  
well, find a city first, I agree,  
find myself a city to live in.  
David Byrne, Cities

I can't google-map my past,  
where we lived is classified

\*

cept  
f u Peter P!  
u know y

\*

walk the spoodle  
and the labradoodle  
past the pot of pesto  
under the patio gas heater

grown men  
with ridiculous dogs

\*

*End of the Second Week*



\*

the podiatrist's fingertips  
are orange with nicotine,  
my corn recoils

\*

lithium eclipse  
a new cocktail

ice wine  
a minor fever

\*

booking into  
the Nasty Uncles Hotel  
one moonlit night,  
a double-bed room,  
a nasty argument,  
a bus stop

\*

the first Koreans of the season,  
cloth hats, one silver coolie,  
comic-print backpacks,  
peering over fences at plants  
imported from Korea -

it's Spring

\*

*End of the Third Week*



\*

gone solar

\*

cicadas sucking sap  
underground -  
that's optimism

\*

I'm not going  
to Zines in April,  
too old too tired too late

but

still in opposition -  
dead prepositions,  
and needless adverbs

\*

industrialising pollination

my white paper poem  
has  
no conclusion

I would like to see  
some viridian,  
in my opinion  
a neglected colour

\*

*End of the Month*



## Like 1988

my arm around your shoulder  
we walked downhill  
from Forbes Street  
towards Bourke  
then I saw you  
on the opposite side of the street,  
at the lights you waved,  
I raised my hand from your shoulder  
and waved back

your hair coloured  
with coppery streaks,  
you were distant, self-engaged,  
as if we weren't.

I touched your waist  
your dress fluted, like paper,  
white and red. you  
so strong it seemed like 1988.

I accompanied you on a walk  
towards you

later, you were fixing a bicycle,  
the carrier on the rear  
above the wheel,  
you deflected me but we had  
already been together  
time apart  
or lost

I know it's over twenty years ago



## Sister Morpheme

excipient ties, like ell oh vee ee,  
leaving  
nothing to chance

I always  
*wanted*  
to plagiarise you

sleeping, you were ill,  
and smelt like a mineral,  
but different

at the start  
your subwoofer  
shook me to my microbes,  
emergency exits  
opened in my night

I loved to you a woman  
as I returned your sounds  
from phone to morph

slippery gleams  
slithered into darkness,  
your fermented prosody  
ripe for traffic



## Pin drip red

“In blood the minerals  
of the rock”

LORINE NIEDECKER, *Lake Superior*

if it's a placebo  
you can believe in it

your fate,  
written on your forehead,  
is right as rain

missing vials,  
no record  
of your particular social stigma

a smooth slab of stone  
as unregenerate  
as solidifying magma  
lodged  
below your ribs,

top viral load,  
cradling a nightful  
of leaky enzymes

you with your sleeves  
rolled up  
ready for the line  
of least resistance

planning a cure  
to make you ill,  
kind of cruel  
to be kind of kind,  
optimistic too





randomised, double blinded  
dose and duration,  
pin drip red

it worked  
for the rat

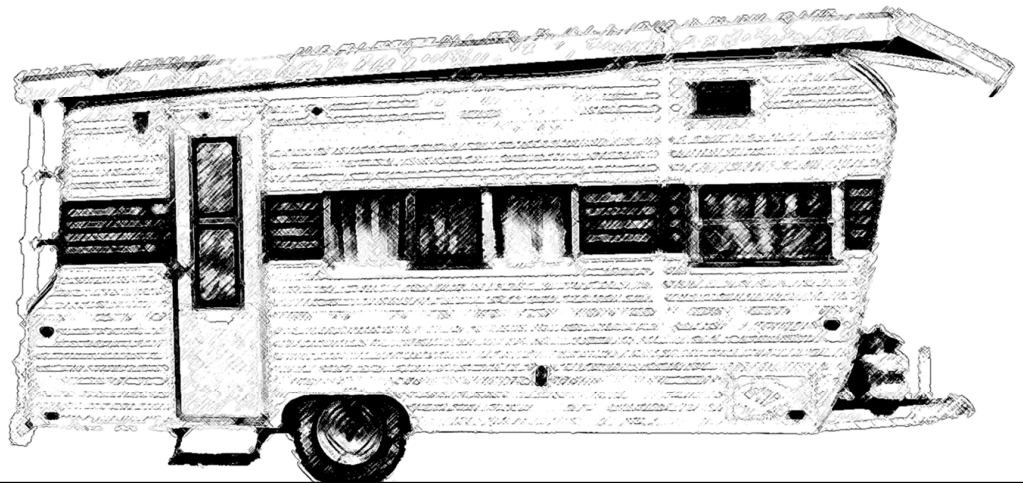


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*If knowledge can create problems,  
it is not through ignorance that we can solve them.*

*—Isaac Asimov*

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***Hollerin' from This Shack* (Grace C. Ocasio)**

**978-0-9812744-1-6**

Grace Ocasio is a member of the North Carolina Writers' Network, the North Carolina Poetry Society, and the Carolina African American Writers' Collective. She was born in New York City and raised in Hartsdale and White Plains, New York. She holds an MFA in Poetry from Sarah Lawrence College and an MA in English from the University of North Carolina at Charlotte. Recently, she completed a residency at the Soul Mountain Retreat in East Haddam, Connecticut. She contributes reviews of literary journals to the online Web site, *The Review, Review*.

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***Sueno(s) for Alejandra* (Robert Estep)**

**978-0-9812744-0-9**

Robert Estep was born in 1956 in Washington, D.C. He attended the University of Texas at Austin, where he studied English and French literature. He has lived in Costa Rica, Venezuela, Chile, and Mexico City, and currently lives in Houston, Texas, where he works at Fondren Library, Rice University.

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***Dreaming of Sunflower Fields* (Barbara L. Thomas)**

**978-0-9811704-7-3**

Barbara L. Thomas is a non-tribal Eastern Cherokee (her mother's people having escaped the Trail of Tears to settle in Southern Illinois near Shawnee Town). She was born high in the Cascades in 1927; in her teens was the recipient of a generous Lanham Foundation College Scholarship. Her first book, *Lilacs Wilting on Nancy's Bonnet: A Cherokee Narrative*, was nominated for both the Pushcart Prize and the Bumbershoot Literary Award, 2001.

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***Seducing Velasquez and Other Plays* (Dayana Stetco)**

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Dayana Stetco's plays have been produced in her native country, Romania, the US and the UK. In 2001 she founded the interdisciplinary physical theatre ensemble, The Milena Group. Her fiction has appeared in journals including *The Means*, *Emergency Almanac*, *mark(s)*, *Interdisciplinary Humanities*, *Metrotimes*, *Gender(f)*, and *Dispatch*. She is an Associate Professor at the University of Louisiana at Lafayette where she teaches Creative Writing, Literature and Film.

Ahadada Books is a small press first begun in 1999, publishing titles both online and in print. The aim of the press is to present new writers and literature that, to paraphrase Francis Picabia, speak with you, envelope everything, and belong to every religion. We present broadsides, limited-run chapbooks, and perfect bound books of diverse literary forms.

Online publishing is an integral component of the Ahadada Books project: to get important voices heard. The World Wide Web facilitates this endeavour, allowing a potential audience of millions to access our site and read authors that they might never find in their local bookstores.

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