

Café by Wren's St James-in-the-Fields, Lunchtime

Kawiarnia przy St James's Wrena w porze lunchu

I was sitting on the plane tree / slowly taking root

Café by Wren's St James-in-the-Fields, Lunchtime

Anna Błasiak

Lisa Kalloo

Kawiarnia przy St James Wrena w porze lunchu

ANNA BŁASIAK & LISA KALLOO

This book has collaboration and translation at its heart: between people, words and images, languages, cultures. The poems came first, in Polish. Then came the photographic response to them. Then four translators, MARTA DZIUROSZ, MARIA JASTRZĘBSKA, DANUSIA STOK and ELŻBIETA WÓJCIK-LEESE, took a set of 12 or 13 poems each and translated them into English. All people involved were women: the poet, the photographer, the four translators and the two editors. Together they arrived at 51 Polish poems, 51 English poems and 51 photographs making this collection. They raise themes such as cultural identity and migration, queerness, racism, isolation and family memories.

Anna's poems make me think of the verse of the Swiss French poet Phillippe Jaccottet. She seems to be interested in analogies of life events, mysteries that are invisible at first instance, slips of tongue, contrasts, things held back, hidden moods and emotions. Just like Anna's poems, Lisa's photos capture and arrest details, writings, colours, lights and shadows, as well as textures of the world, they are snapshots, images captured as if by chance on a journey. **WIOLETTA GREG**

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16th April 2020

KAWIARNIA PRZY ST JAMES'S WRENA W PORZE LUNCHU

Siedzę cicho,
zaczajam się.

Gołąb nagle skręca,
zatacza koło,
drepcze pod inny stolik.

Zostaję sama
ze swoimi okruchami.

CAFÉ BY WREN'S ST JAMES-IN-THE-FIELDS, LUNCHTIME

I'm sitting quietly,
holding breath.

The pigeon veers off,
makes an arc,
potters to another table.

I'm left alone
with my crumbs.

Translated by Elżbieta Wójcik-Leese



Photograph by Lisa Kalloo

ANNA BŁASIAK. Poet, translator, journalist and literature co-ordinator of the European Literature Network. Writes poetry in Polish and in English: *Off_Press*, *Women Online Writing*, *Exiled Ink*, *The Blue Nib*, *Ink Sweat and Tears*, *The Queer Riveter* and *Modern Poetry in Translation*. Anna has translated over 40 books from English into Polish and some fiction from Polish into English – by Mariusz Czubaj, Wioletta Grzegorzewska, Jan Krasnowolski, Kaja Malanowska, Daniel Odija, Mirka Szychowiak, Irit Amiel and Renia Spiegel and poetry by Maria Jastrzębska (*Cedry z Walpole Parl / The Cedars of Walpole Park*, co-translated with Wioletta Grzegorzewska and Paweł Gawroński), Mary O Donnell, Nessa O Mahony, Vesna Goldsworthy, Martina Evans, Elżbieta Wójcik-Leese, Tishani Doshi and Pascale Petit – and, into English, by Mirka Szychowiak, Radosław Wiśniewski and Edward Pasewicz. In addition to her book-length translations, her work has been published in *Best European Fiction 2015*, *Asymptote*, *The Guardian*, *B O D Y Literature*, *Modern Poetry in Translation* and *York Literary Review*. More: annablasiak.com.

'This was an adventure for me as a poet – to work with a visual artist. It sharpens one's eye, but also one's ear; it provides a completely new, at times unexpected viewpoint. The fact that the visual artist was also my life partner has just added another amazing dimension to working together.'



ZRYWANIE TAPET

Stare życia śpią warstwami, schowane przed wzrokiem.
Para wodna obnaża ich kleisty zapach.
Ręka drży
za każdym razem, gdy mam zerwać kolejną płachtę.

Naga ściana pod spodem opowiada zupełnie inną historię.

STRIPPING WALLPAPER

Layers of old lives sleep hidden out of sight.
Steam reveals their sticky smell.
My hand trembles
every time I start to peel another piece.

Bare wall underneath tells an altogether different story.

Translated by Maria Jastrzębska

LISA KALLOO is an emerging queer, BAME, British artist/photographer of Indian/West Indian heritage. Studied law. Moved away from it. Rejected materialistic ambitions. Swayed towards creative pursuits. Coming from a British Indo-Caribbean background, she explores as many cultures as possible. Born in London. Raised in Basingstoke. Studied in Wolverhampton. Lives in Ramsgate. She takes a mindful approach to life focusing on elements of stillness, compassion and empathy and applies them to photography, combining with Eastern philosophies she learnt as a child and later in life. She sells a few limited edition prints. Takes part in select exhibitions and installations. Lends herself to illustrations for books and for small companies. Runs a very small photography workshop teaching the basics of this art. People are her hobby. In small quantities. Large numbers overwhelm her. Street photography sees her out there, usually dressed as a shadow, but in her element. More at lisakalloophotography.co.uk



Photograph by Mihai Muscar

'Having immersed myself in the rich, expressive language of Anna's poetry, I found myself on a journey of visual quest, delving into photographic territory new and old, lost and found, explored and questioned. It serves as a reminder that shared experiences greatly enrich one's imagination and widen perspective, for which I am grateful.'

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MARTA DZIUROSZ

Photograph:
Wiktor Kostrzewski



MARIA JASTRZĘBSKA

Photograph:
Lesley Wood



DANUSIA STOK

Photograph:
Witold Stok



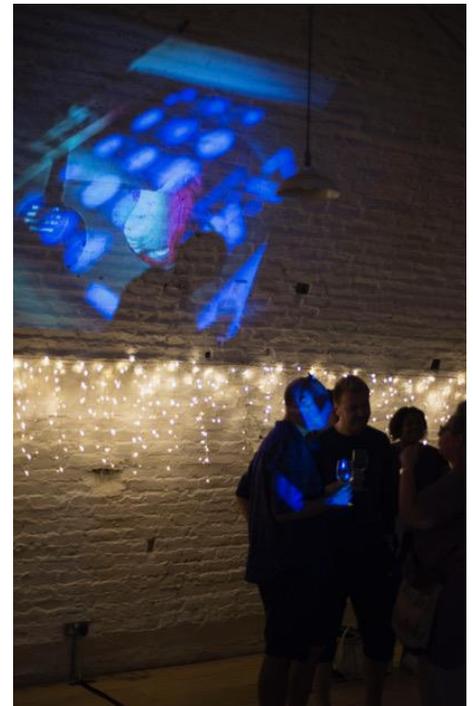
ELŻBIETA WÓJCIK-LEESE

Photograph:
Peter Leese



"To and Fro" exhibition of poems and photos from the book, August 2019, The Archive, Ramsgate. Photograph by Trevor Coles

Lisa and Anna will be exhibiting images from the book, giving readings, and discussing the book at libraries, galleries, and bookshops during 2020.



"To and Fro" exhibition of poems and photos from the book, August 2019, The Archive, Ramsgate. Photograph by Trevor Coles

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