

explorations



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A note from the editors

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In this new issue of *Explorations* you will find seven critical essays, an interview with a famous writer, a poetic meditation and two reviews – all having to do with literary matters.

We open the issue with a conversation that Wit Pietrzak held with the celebrated British poet J. H. Prynne. The interview is brief but suggestive in its emphasis on poetry as intellectual and imaginative revelation; as the poet himself says a propos of his teaching practice: “we make discoveries in class and we keep open minds in interpretation to keep the mind flexible, shifting our focus as occasion moves us along.” Prynne’s “flexible mind” is at work in his poems, of course, and it informs much of the criticism devoted to his poetry. You can see it, for instance, in Wit Pietrzak’s article on Prynne’s 2010 volume *Sub Songs* (in the “Articles” section). Pietrzak’s is a major critical intervention and an interesting attempt to address the poetry which seriously challenges and resists interpretive efforts.

Joanna Antoniak’s and Julia Kula’s essays deal with the literary motif of physical and metaphorical journey. Antoniak’s is an interpretation of Sky Lee’s 1990 *Disappearing Moon Café*, a formation novel about Chinese immigrants in Canada as well as a troubling document of shifting cultural identity. Kula analyzes the generic and spatial parameters of American road fiction as described by Paul Auster in his celebrated *The Music of Chance*, finding in the novel a “literary dialogue with the tenets of the convention to create its postmodern variant” (as the author herself has it).

The problem of individual identity is the main concern of at least two other texts included in this issue. Sławomir Kuźnicki examines some song lyrics written by Michael Gira, a leader of the rock group Swans, and discovers in them a desperate search for lost identity. Giorgia Scribellito addresses the painful process of acculturation and the making of the bilingual community as evidenced by Julia Alvarez and Raquel Cepeda, two Dominican-American writers, in their novels *How the Garcia Girls Lost Their Accents* and *Bird of Paradise – How I Became a Latina*.

Katarzyna Fetlińska interprets a few science fiction works by Iain M. Banks (mainly *Excession*, *Look to Windward* and *Surface Detail*) in the context of the Scottish writer’s interest in recent developments within the cognitive studies; particularly, she is interested in Banks’s characterization of differences and similarities between the human mind and

Artificial Intelligence. Mirosława Kubasiewicz depicts the birth of the professional A note from the editors 2 friendship of Katherine Mansfield and Virginia Woolf, the friendship based on “their passion for writing, their desire to become professional writers and to find a new voice that could genuinely express their female experience” (as the author puts it in her summary of the essay).