

Attitude

Saturday speaks of  
attitude

I return to Hannah  
Wong's class  
sit out the waiting  
room

tugging  
at tangled laces  
then I am  
at the barre  
another new face

warm up  
a leg  
have to keep  
in step  
retire and relevé  
for Hannah  
one by one  
little attitude  
I reach

centre  
work inside  
left cluster  
another Daniella  
in class

surprise  
descends  
into minority  
attitude on

demi-pointe  
note hers  
holds  
more body  
and vigour  
I consider  
Carlo Blasis'  
dance term  
    'Attitude'  
a form of  
balance    weight  
ed in different  
movements  
minorities  
    recurrently  
objectified  
for  
    displays  
of attitude  
anomalies  
in a line  
how do we  
mess it up?

Dancer Julie  
Felix fought  
their double  
standard in '75  
    as a black  
British swan

found her feet  
back  
    at the Royal  
Opera House  
in a Harlem ballet  
troop     she stood  
for women  
    historically  
        demonised  
and their  
opinions  
unfeminine  
    aggression  
I recall Serena  
Williams' argument  
towards a sexist  
umpire  
    Mark  
Knight's response  
drawing an  
animalistic  
    caricature  
why do they  
mock  
our curls?  
damaging chemicals  
considered accept  
able from  
    a young age  
suffering

‘adultification bias’  
where blackness  
warrants  
a breach of  
adult behaviour  
those adolescents  
assumed less  
innocent and  
incrementally assaulted  
so on Saturday  
I speak on pointe  
erasing  
the silence  
with a new set  
of lines.

Panic Closet

*after Terrance Hayes*

It begins with locked doors and metal grates, with people i-  
nside towerb-lock  
cells waiting for a statement to determine their fates as you  
see a party go uninterrupted over several floors it begins with hollowed faces in  
damp rooms pale eyes and weak chests while an-  
ther cemetery hungrily digests it begins with another American  
anthem that cannot be rejoiced because necessity for the ode has made sonnet  
form void. It begins with censored smiles and witness stands with voices that  
gloat before a verdict has been reached or a reasonable motive is  
discovered and privacy breached. It begins with blues rhythms that emerge and rotate, questioning part  
itions that determine their mental state. It begins with a prison  
of mental unrest where the self is part  
dove part crow as panic  
flutters frantically through the closet

Creating Space

We are walking down Cromwell Place  
chomping on air and electric bass  
as the rain slick pavements weave us in  
our conversation begins to grow thin  
we are caught recounting old meals  
family eccentricities and ordeals  
while the aloof and aging musician  
digests the remnants of a queer exhibition  
we are walking down Cromwell Place  
questioning avenues of creating space  
in a society which demarcates shades of skin  
generating identity conflicts within  
while the privileged attend V&A Lates  
to muse upon what otherness creates  
our duality speaks from the lens  
capturing a raw authenticity that transcends  
the narrow walkways of Cromwell Place  
and the gilded art walls we embrace

Unconscious Bias

I would like to  
steer left  
when told  
right  
slowly pull-  
over the  
intersection  
    until  
the Kodak  
roll is full  
capture  
March twenty-  
first  
    day feeling  
conscious  
of future  
conversation  
hear the  
systematic  
hum  
of Bilal  
Harry Khan  
converting  
a Nation's  
complacency  
and finding  
the white-  
washed  
fences  
too flaky

Renée

You recall that day in January  
sharp like the tick of the clock tower's toll  
four years of energy standing between the two  
of you  
her sister stumbling  
        around soft library seats  
the innocence raw as the rash etched across  
her skin  
        your mind trying to untie knots that had settled  
like the frizz dangling from an unravelled twist  
                where Winterbourne  
shook itself of year six perfectionists  
                though you hold fresh reasoning of an  
11 plus grammar                  ingrained like the  
rules of primary  
        friendship  
                to find a close resemblance  
is to mirror more than skin  
                take a novel cover  
open the complexities within  
                so you trickle  
down fiction aisles  
        thumbing pages  
        of Noughts and Crosses  
dreading the journey back  
                from your roots  
allowing the Centrale buzz and Surrey Street stalls  
to fade  
        through Bluewater



Jeté

Millbank 8.45

drizzle

November rain

twelve feet      Chelsea

find David Wall

fascination with motion

immortalised

forward leg

thrown

birdcalls below

Vauxhall bridge

chest bare

Tchaikovsky f-e-a-t-h-e-r-s

1973

metallic

focus

five years

under

Miss Durnsford

sculpting youth

Plazzotta

P

O

U

R molten

“joy, depravity, violence”

Croydon 2013

