

~ 20/20 Vision ~

A Fu 賦 Wikipedia tells us, is an early Chinese poetic form in which a place, An object, a feeling or some other subject is described in exhaustive detail and from as many angles as possible.

For the translator Burton Watson, the Fu 賦 “consists of a combination of prose and rhymed verse, prose serving for the introduction that explains the genesis of the piece, as well as for occasional interludes, with verse taking over in the more rhapsodic and emotionally charged passages...”

bon chance! 9 pages



Pier One Walsh Bay  
S.S. Hongkong Surety out of Hoboken  
and Oakland two familiar tea chests swinging down

Foodstuffs? any Medicines? *nope*  
any Books? *here's a list*  
Portrait of An Artist - he's no good  
*with 26 Horses ~ he's ok*  
any Magazines? eye to gimlet eye *nope*  
Off y'go

*Mr Natural ~ Angelfood McSpade ~ we're home!*

midnight City holds its breath  
inner harbour foghorn chorus hoots and toots this NewYear in  
canines howl

1969

Pier Four

No White Bay's concrete plain flour job No.1 hold  
*in yr own time get it in and go home*  
hatchman's newchum welcome  
*E wouldnt know if you were up im*  
*dumbstruck--*  
port winch to the rescue *It'd be true mate if it was you mate*

Snails Bay dolphins timber job midday transfer launch  
sparkling--  
through the shadow and three bays east the Finger Wharf  
and look--  
down the gangway off the Mariposa come the Hari Krishna  
~ not your songbook comrades

Bellowing supervisors pannikin bosses called [long o] pannos  
The Hurricane Lantern *he's not too bright*  
his son The Wick  
The Mass Murderer Aub—*three DUIs*  
*and two pedestrians*  
Brown Sugar

1970~

*Spindrift* Saturdays  
hoist the Squadron burgee to the peak  
*now take a turn around that stay and pull down— hard*  
*now take a turn around that turn and see— they cross*  
*pull down to make it fast—*  
done—  
the lad's learned the locking knot

*Spindrift* Huon Pine  
two men to lift the pole and lock it on  
haul aft on the sheet and guy and pop the kite  
*Gretel's cut-down hand-me-down*  
postmortems in the bar      bare feet and beer on the Squadron's  
blue shag pile

sealegs last all night  
1962

Flying Angel

George Street North

The Coroner

*The Sun'll want this bloody story* deadline 2pm  
morning tea      by Dr Oettle's gentle invitation  
below the Bridge's echo in the Morgue  
["The Act Of Seeing With One's Own Eyes"]  
turn guts to text      *tone it down for Granny*  
get it in and go home

1963

Ship Inn midday schooner  
pegleg seagull wants my chips

Sitting on the dock      waiting  
for a freighter home

dock strike up in Portland  
running out of cash  
waiting for a call  
at Local 6

East Bay longshore pickup gang      we're Harry Bridges' mob  
dockside snafu      timbers all askew      Huey's lost the plot  
Huey inhales—  
*Man you bin in the Navy man      I seen*  
*you threw a Matthew Walker round that block*  
[careful with the argot      don't say yacht]  
*Nah man      sailboats      'sa locking knot*

1969

*MV MyEnid*

out of Mosman Bay

[home of the *Bumblebees*]

skipper Cap'n Smith (retd.)

retired from piloting the Torres Strait          at night          no lights

grizzled cheek    horizon eyes          we're bound for Broken Bay

for Spencer          Wiseman's    Woolloomoorang          Freeman's Reach

Keep to the high bank or you'll have us aground

two apprentice helmsmen    a dad    and mullagatawny soup

his    mullagatawny soup

eh          mullagatawny soup

1952 ~

albatross          following our dawn service to The Heads

charred *MyEnid* out of Mosman Bay          hove-to in the swell

two lads          a father          and          Commander K, R.N.

ashes to the wind          saltwater          deep

Farewell, *MyEnid's* skipper

albatross heads east

1958

Chowder Bay

1941 ~

Sunderlands in C-major      Catalinas F-sharp  
soar right to left across my memories      panorama to The Gap  
barefoot down the steps      slim magnolia      buds beyond my reach  
steep      serried crimson tigerlily terrace  
unloved persimmon      barren Snow Queen peach  
slip      prickly pear      creaking bamboo stand  
itchy toes      down down down      all fiftytwo  
*Morella Road ~ quick*      over the melting tar  
behind the Moreton Bay behind the pub      the squishing figs  
New Year's dragon spluttering in the park  
and on the sand      soft bellygrunting      wharfies picnic tug 'o' war  
and archived—  
The Colonial Sugar Refining Company Limited      parasols and boaters  
and [perchance] grandfather Harry... *there!*      *in spats*  
their outing done      assembled  
for the photograph and the ferry home  
from Chowder Bay

scatter my ashes in Chowder Bay

on Saturday March 7 1959  
I take the ferry and the bush track home  
to Chowder Bay Morella Road  
to gather up belongings  
for my exile  
at born-to-rule St Paul's lectures commence Monday

unannounced and unwelcomed  
I skirt their sotto voce vortex  
and from the safe haven of my room  
retrieve my belongings and depart unknowing

*she'll get the furniture  
he's off to live in sin*

not ever to set foot again in barefoot paradise  
no dog no dinghy  
*unforgiven*

anthems lead to this

*“ We can, of course, bear in mind psychoanalytical methods  
for determining the personality of a poet, and thus find a  
measure of the pressures--but above all of the oppressions  
--to which a poet has been subjected in the course of a life.  
But the poetic act itself, the sudden image, the flare-up of  
being in the imagination, these are inaccessible to  
such investigations...”*

Gaston Bachelard  
The Poetics of Space

Envoi ~

The dolphins still stand in line off Long Nose Point: the timber--  
archipelago meranti-- all but logged out now; the freighters,  
dismembered on a beach in Gujarat.

On George Street North, the gold-leaf public entrance to the Coroner's  
Court is locked. The rear stone steps look down two flights to a square of  
dead blank ground... the Morgue. Departing souls buy UggBoots in the  
Courtroom proper, and next door at The Angel, they tuck in to Thai  
before they join the rattle and hum of wardrobes on little plastic wheels  
rolling up to board a mega-deck *Pacific Odyssey*.

The barracks on the northern shore of Chowder Bay-- now that the  
ministry for flogging off the foreshore's had its way-- is yet another  
restaurant with a view. [History's prescient: the barracks once had tea  
rooms stencilled on the roof, subterfuge to fool the Japanese.] And at  
this restaurant with its view across the channels to its twin at Watson's  
Bay, I understand they serve, with their cafecitos and espressos, a  
"Colonial Brown Sugar ~ the Taste of Yesterday" — neither coarse unrefined.

solstice            08:00  
leave the wharf    the diver  
poised on the gunwale of the launch  
brass helmet spanner'd tight    lead boots eddy in the tide  
leave the dinghy beneath the jetty gently rocking  
*Gurugal, Gurrugal*  
barefooted  
over the pocked sandstone  
past the basking seal  
out to the southmost point  
*Gurugal, Gurrugal*  
*Koreé, Koree*  
not a ripple  
  
the midden



*“Look well at the Pacific before you die. The best  
of the promised paradises have neither  
its hues nor its splendour. ”*

Etel Adnan  
SEA and FOG

“Description is my anchor.  
The sight of the sun is  
my security. ”

Anna Couani  
The Harbour Breathes