

fiftythros

PIP HEYWOOD

FIFTY THROWS

I've spent a great deal of my life as a documentary film editor, working for the first twenty years with real film, as a hands-on craft, before everything went digital. Film clips would be hung in 'trim bins', and with some light behind, you could go along the rows squinting at a few still frames, to remind you of the content of each clip.

I particularly liked constructing 'montages', where there would be a pause in the dialogue or the commentary, and perhaps with some music, or natural sounds, you would show a sequence of images relevant to the subject of the film. It was a space beyond the words, where as a viewer you could draw breath and consider in your own way what you had seen. I liked the notion that the choice and order of the montage shots would have a certain spontaneous quality, and in my mind I would take a bunch of images and throw them high into the air. As they fluttered down, I imagined myself catching them to right and left, and splicing them into my assembly.

The actual process was more down to earth, with shots being carefully placed, but my hope was to maintain some element of spontaneity to the montage.

And so I've come to write Fifty Throws with the same idea in mind. Not film clips, but words thrown into the air, seeing how they land....

(Reader's note, not for publication. All the Throws are to be printed on right hand pages. Some of them have extra thoughts or clarifications, to be printed on the reverse page. Others will be blank on the reverse, but I'm not including all those blank pages here.)

b

b

b ee
spring

b e
e

b b
g b
n e

b be
e

c h

e e
c r

i e
c

c

ech

p

h

e c h

c

s

e

e

b

h

s um

e

mer

c

b e

u **SUM**

b e c

a

c

e h u mer

t

C E t

u

H E u

m

HBE win

n

ECH ter

w **B** i **E** n **E** t **C** e **H** r

try to get some sleep

hush

*

I am trying

*

*

no NO!.....

*

*

don't go in there
that's oblivion

if you go in there
you won't sleep

*

*

you're trying too hard

*

this is exhausting

stop trying then
I'm trying to!

juice fruit muesli egg jam
yoghurt coffee sausage bacon
milk toast butter
marmalade

B R E A K F A S T

marghujuiastbac
jamilkmues
youitegga
gemalce
butfeea
detoc
ofsau
sfrter

Hotel breakfasts can be bizarre. To get your money's worth, you wander around amongst other bleary-eyed people, trying to decide what to have. There's kiwi fruit, watery porridge, salami, gruyere cheese, smoked herring... Once in France, dispensing muesli into a bowl, I couldn't get the tap to switch off. A vast canister of muesli poured all over the floor. Chaos.

so still....

beyond

a man

the elms

a standing
stone

?

a man beyond the elms so still....
a standing stone?

moon

the

lucky
sickle

to see

it's
without

g l a s s

it's lucky to see the sickle moon without glass

Searching for an explanation, it seems the opposite is more prevalent, that it is unlucky to first catch sight of the new moon through glass, or with a tree or other obstruction in front of it.

But I can't find a clear reason, and I don't really need one. To see the new moon, especially the very first sliver in a clear evening sky can be wonderful. You see a vast focus and stillness in the moon. To see it outside, without glass, is an added extra.

yes!!

aha!

so true!

CONFIDENCE!

confidence

confident

confidential

confidant

confide....confide

in

confidence

tall

of **b**
 i lines
 r
 c fall
 h
thro **e** ugh
 s

light

lines of light fall through tall birches

drop
d
r p
i
drip

wet moon
water t
r moss
rock i
c
k
light f l e c k s
e

pool e a
w i d e m i r r o r
l p
s h
i
f trees

blink
link
ink
..
.

and it's gone

WHAT HAPPENED BEFORE

**the
big bang**

**?????
???
?**

The Big Bang theory doesn't work for me: that the universe began at a point where space and time were reduced to zero. I am sure there are intricate parts of the theory that I am unaware of and might well not understand, but when I read the main statement it seems to me something is missing. It's as though, very simplistically, that within our own knowledge of physical space and time, when we observe that the universe is constantly expanding, the conclusion is that it began from zero. But what is zero, and how can something come from nothing? I see zero as a space, where other factors come in to play. What about infinity? What about eternity?

STRATEGY

nuance

humility

ACTION!

altruism

TALK!

subtlety

GOAL

empathy

OBJECTIVE

PLAN

compassion

...consequences...

seen

I

never

have

behind

me

MIST

d
o
n'
t
l
e
t
s
l
i
p
b
y

bluebells

spring!

chiff -
chaff

cowslip

wonders
the
of

garlic

primrose

unnoticed

TUNNEL
vision

We walked one day along the towpath as far as the western entrance to Sapperton Tunnel, where the derelict canal disappears into dripping blackness for over two miles under The Cotswolds. At the entrance stands an elaborate, castellated arch. I peer around the side and shout “Pip” into the blackness, the sound ricocheting into the distance, into the past, into deep internal space.

I left my

around here

I'm sure

some-

spectacles

where!

v III γ

YII

lv

IVI

YI_IW

_{nv}Y

V_{II}

vIVY I_IV

I walked in a wood the other day where many old
trees lean diagonally, forming letters and numerals.

further

my

trousers

a

t

r

s

o

i

u

a

n

w

d

m

y

t

w

h

a

a

y

n

d

a

o

l

w

l

n

t

m

h

y

e

l

e

g

tell me

it's

even

fields

fields

fields

fields'

SSSSSSSSSS.....

SU

SUR

SURF...

watching long grass in the wind

l d d a
o y
a remembering S
s w
n e

remembering old days as new

my

...these **mountains:**

tracks

down

the

years...

My dad converted an old laundry van. He had a turret put in at the back, so you could stand up and look out. I was eleven, and as we drove up the Llanthony valley into the Black Mountains on the borders of Wales, I looked out through the turret in all directions. Compared to home in The Cotswolds, this was wild country, with bare, open skylines on every side. Yes, I thought, this place is high and deep at the same time. I've been going there ever since.

crick rite
block sake
ink luck
chuck writer's joke
cloak trick lock
tryst writ book
fake wrist grate
blink neck
trait light

in the corner

o eye

f

m

y

the flicker of

ii

rg

eh

t

until I t

and see u

n r

the

sun

in the

stream

in the corner of my eye
the flicker of firelight
until I turn and see
the sun in the stream

every

detail

with

each

to see

more

precious

passing

year

perhaps

when I have...

these pages

will become more...

died

alive!

When someone dies, all their stuff is gone through,
and often diaries, writing and photos are seen by others
for the first time.

Q

RN

FE

IN

grief fury betrayal

Theresa

Grenfell Tower, June 2017.

the deepest things remain unsaid

l
i
s
t
e
n
i
n
g

....50%....

t
a
l
k
i
n
g

a

Blunderbuss

comes in

TO **hong** OR **kong** AUSTRALIA

a go n es d

s
 t
 r
 a
 i
 g
 h
 t

o
 u
 t
 a
 g
 a
 i
 n

“a blunderbuss comes in and goes straight out again to Hong Kong or Australia”
overheard from an antique dealer in Hay-on-Wye

eccenleerberfaftied

celebrate difference

In my sixties I still catch myself putting my hands in my pockets. I burnt both of them badly when I was two, and still sometimes feel the need to hide them. I suppose I'm embarrassed by them, but also I think I don't want to appear disabled. Perhaps, amongst strangers, or meeting new people, I don't want to shock them.

At other times, I deliberately use them, carrying a tray on my fingerless left hand, and so on. I like to show what I can do. I love it when people, especially children, ask me directly about them. "Cor, what happened to your hands?"

Ideally, we should all be accepted without prejudice. At the same time, though, each of us is different in our own way.

T
R
U
M
P

T
R
U
M
P

T
R
U
M
P

T
R
U
M
P

trust....? truth....?

his first one hundred days in office

**P
L
A
Y** **I** **S** **L
A
E
R**

V
V
v
V
V
v
i
n
g
a
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l
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m
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l
oo
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i
t
wo
n't
see
m
so
st
ee
p

many wonderful things

so briefly seen

or never seen at all

PARTRISHOW

k
n
o
w
i
n
g
y
o
u
a
r
e
t
h
e
r
e

Partrishow has one of the most beautiful small churches. Here is a place of sanctuary, integrity and focus that goes beyond religion. When we came out of the church, Ali said it reminded her of somewhere else. I knew where she meant. We had both been thinking about a small temple in Bhutan, which has the same still, strong energy. I think the world is better for the presence of such places.

n
S H A L L O W & W I D E

r
r
o
w

a
n
d

d
e
e
p

Vi and Cliff lived on a remote farm in the mountains, seldom ever leaving their valley, yet they had a strong, humorous and intelligent grasp of life. Ease of travel and the digital age have given many of us a varied and wide view of the world, yet I think it's a view that can lack certain qualities of persistence, acceptance and commitment.

e

ee *ee*

's *s*

n *h*

t *b*

k

the bee's knees: excellent, the highest quality

There may be some connection with the pollen sac on a bee's leg, where much goodness is to be found, but no-one's really sure. Perhaps it's to do with Bee Jackson, a New York dancer in the 1920s, who popularised the Charleston, and had very evident knees. Who knows?

“The bee's knees is one of the phrases that people seem determined to make sense of. But how much sense is there to find?” (Anon.)

an a c of

a l **i** e

n **r”** **c** r
e **i**

the **“u m S** as

“and you put snowdrops
on the mantelpiece,
with music
as an enlacer of the air”

from my poem ‘Home’

The other morning you put on some tracks by London Grammar, the band we’d both enjoyed on iplayer from this year’s Glastonbury Festival. Loud breakfast music can make the day start well.

s *w* *o* *l* *o* *s*
w *o* *l*
a *LIART* *l* *TEJ*
w *a*
S *w*
S

quarkquark

tooktooktook

quark

LITTLE GIRL WANDERS THROUGH HER GRANDAD'S JUNK SHOP

quark

tooktook....took....

QUA QUA qua qua

quark

quarkquark

took....

I'm watching a short film on my laptop, enjoying the very natural background sound of chickens, never seen or explained, but just there in the distance. Then the film ends and the soundtrack continues.... The window is open, and our neighbours' chickens are quarking away, down the garden.

t

r S

i

h

r

s

ks!

t

c c
o s o s!
s k

r

e

o

S

u

shirt
shirt
trihs

trou uort
sres sers

socks
sockssocks
socksskcossocks

a y wa a l w k e a c m n a l k y b ver g y ni di n ff ru er t e e n r t

e

Retracing my steps, the view can be very different.

I don't have eyes in the back of my head.

f lo
fl oo
flo floo
lood ful
flloo d
ful fl
cas f
l c l
o d o
o a L o
F d O
L T E d

D O L

O R F

R L O

E F D

t r e e

N L O

b r o l l y

D T O

b u m

Drawing breath, half-way through a walk, I rest at Gospel Pass, looking out from the escarpment across the curling River Wye in the wide valley below, cloud shadows racing through the little combes down there, interspersed with bright shafts of sunlight. A brisk wind is blowing.

I stand and look behind me, into the confines of the Black Mountains. Half a mile away I see a wall of water. A storm is advancing up the valley, so fierce and dense that the landscape is totally disappearing into greyness. I start to run, not away from the deluge but in madness straight towards it. With no plan, I run across the lane and down the carpark. At the lower end, it drops steeply down a shaley bank. And there's a tree! The only one around, a little thorn, but at least it's a tree. I slip down to it, unzip my knapsack and pull on a plastic mack. I've not worn it for years and somehow it seems rather small for me, but at least it's something and it's even got a hood. And then, I'd forgotten, I've even brought a little folding umbrella. All set up, I hunker down under the tree, feeling well installed.

The rain comes. Its hard line approaches like infantry and then sweeps across me and up the bank behind. There's hail thrown in as well and I cower under my scant cover. But all goes well. My knapsack is tucked in under the umbrella and everything seems remarkably dry. After a couple of minutes, the rain eases slightly, but it's still far too strong to make a move. The sound has been intense – that shshshsh – almost interchangeable between hard rain, frying and radio interference. And then there's another noise, also water, but different. It's behind me. Looking up, I see the cascade first appear over the lip of the carpark. It arcs down, directly hitting my backside, pouring through my old canvas shoes. I struggle out of my sheltering place, but it's all too late. I'm drenched, and muddy, from the waist down. The little thorn tree had enticed me into the worst place on the mountain. Thousands of gallons from the downpour had gathered into the funnelling gradient of the carpark and come as a torrent over the edge. I scramble out of its way, the flash flood charging on down the valley.

My little knapsack still offers me half a bottle of water, but no dry clothes, or shoes. As the receding wall of the storm disappears over the escarpment towards the Wye, I slosh and squeak back up onto the road, hoping the rest of my walk will wring me out a little.

d t
t d a h
h a e g
g e h i
i h l

c
h
a i r
i c
r h

Just inside our bathroom door is a tiny child's chair. It was once painted cream, but I've only ever known it to be chipped and worn, with the wood showing through.

I first remember the chair in the 1950s in my grandmother's bathroom. She lived in a block of flats in Chelsea and I used to stay sometimes as a little boy. If you went into the bathroom at night, there was no need to turn on the main light because the street lamps were bright enough. Late taxis would drop people off down below, and as they drove up, the beams from their headlights would travel around the bathroom walls. There would be loud talk, laughter and a banging of doors, and then as the taxis moved off, the headlights would disappear behind the bath taps.

Perhaps, when they are a little older, Billy and Ollie our grandsons will sit on this chair.

can't
it
do
you
do
all
you
enjoy
what

you can't do it all

enjoy what you do

I can

find

surely

ten minutes?

**THE
TREE**

still

stands

**for a
lifetime**

....shshshsh....

the tree stands still, still stands for a lifetime
surely I can find, I can surely find, I can find surely
ten minutes?

O

P

ey *f* **es**

E

EO

P

x

L

catch the stare of a vixen
imagine her lair, her hunt
as with people in a crowd
each life

missing you!

wish you were here!

what a wonderful day!

Dear Ann,

I don't know where to begin. I'm writing you a real letter because emails are too impersonal - you never know who might read them. Sometimes internet is like a yippee fizz that whizzes along never really dealing with things. I hope some people still write letters. I can somehow think things through and write them down privately. I'm rambling.

Yesterday.....

wow, love the photos!

my tan is amazing!

we saw dolphins I'm sure they looked at me it was the most incredible thing I've ever seen

e
n
j
o
y
b
e
i
n
g
a
l
o
n^e

VEINS

O

F SOAP

F

EEDH

E

RSTEP

S

veins of soap
feed her steps
you can hear she
scrubs her hallway

from my poem 'Pattern'
set in Cappadocia, Turkey

Swifts are congregating on the telegraph wire,
a sign that autumn is close.
Soon the tiny birds will fly to Africa.

**t
h
e
o
i
l
a
g
e**

what on earth were you doing?

Great grandchildren.... Good luck....

shhhhhh...

Also by Pip Heywood:

The Eye of the Hare, an autobiography

Spring Head, poetry 1966 – 2016
(including 'Pattern' and 'Home')

Moving On, poetry Summer – Autumn 2016

available from

www.pipheywood.com

Fifty Throws

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