

## *Libertine*

With its light, astringent colour, *Libertine* is free-flowing, unconstrained: the work of someone in touch with their essential self. Its freshness and cleanness strike you every time you look at it; everything about it is both spontaneous and exact. But what can be said about it in a relevant way? Even the colour is hard to describe: a diluted reddish/ochre or sienna, that appears quickly brushed over wet raw canvas, though ‘brushed’ doesn’t seem the right word for this delicate veil of colour, down which some grains of semi-dissolved pigment bleed. Right on the lower corner there’s a little semicircular cusp of reserved canvas – how did it get there? The whole painting seems to depend on it. Near the top margin is a long horizontal white brushstroke – both spontaneous and exactly placed; the painting depends on that too. In fact in any painting that looks right, no matter what style or manner, everything is exact; nothing is superfluous, and nothing is lacking. People are apt to dismiss this kind of painting – painting that seems to have so little in it; but in fact this little contains everything the work needs to succeed highly. In other words, slenderness of means doesn’t mean the work is slender as art at all. On the one hand, then, there’s this simplicity – and on the other, the vitality and life-affirmingness that spring from these very straightforward means. That’s the meaning I get from the work.

*Alan Shipway*



## Ruse

### *Night-song*

*Between Ordeal and Wonder.* All last night

I slept capacious – lulled by childish snores.

Spacious between dreams, I dreamt my mother  
stumbled – piss turned to ice – and in my head  
a yellow trinket tinkled down the cliff.

I woke up scared, worked, shook off the shadow  
of the dream, retrieved some covers. Sonnet.

Son-let, leveret, Son long-side me – still –

Less-let – more man now – sonnet. Song-long-let,  
linen to lip, sound strong, sweet song, swaddled –

*Rock-a-bye Rokeby, broken down tree-top boy –*

Love's work – my work – is work that's sticky picking.

Love is a muscle and mine's sack slack. Locked in  
with all my loves this slack-seam's turned to tat.

*Roxy Walsh*



## Seer

11 January 2020

165 emergency personnel and 31 vehicles descended on Cologne Cathedral in the early hours of Friday morning. At around 1.10 am, a guest at a nearby hotel called the emergency 112 number to report plumes of smoke rising from one of the Cathedral's iconic towers.

Upon investigation, it quickly became clear that the supposed smoke was actually a patch of cloud that had become stuck over the tower due to the weather.

“The cloud got stuck on the tower so it looked like smoke from below,” said a fire department spokesperson, adding that the caller was not at fault and would not have to pay for the large-scale operation.

The mission was called off about an hour later. The cloud's whereabouts are currently unknown.

(based on: Carter, A., 2020. Major fire brigade mission at Cologne Cathedral after cloud mistaken for smoke. [online] Available at: [www.iamexpat.de](http://www.iamexpat.de))

*Jenna Collins*



## Stole

The raw linen's the thing here. Whether it is a space, a surface, a background – or something else, is up for grabs. The temptation to search for a narrative to fit the title, the name is undeniable. What or who is stealing in - or out? A contained mist, perhaps? A boat in fog on some unnamed, vast sea, (only a portion of which we see here)? A flag? A ghost? A pointer to elsewhere...? Stole is creeping up on me; its few lines are barely a presence and yet it states its position clearly. It is here. It is most definitely here and not easily ignored. It's a flash, a marker, a distinct being, a shape I make with a fuzzy middle in an open, airy element. The uncertainty of what I am seeing is unsettling. I'm disorientated. The way up is clear; what is underneath, less so. I'm making up a horizon, or at least a fixed place-setting for this spectral vision. What it means is a redundant question. The point is (and it is a point) is that it is here, confronting me, while minding its own business, travelling on, regardless. Stole is not still. It's on its way somewhere, while I remain transfixed. I feel queasy. I want to know what it is telling me. There's a message here in its haste to realise itself, as if I've caught it mid-animation, moving to its next frame, transforming into an other.

*Libby Anson*

