
Longman
Dictionary of
POETS

Alan Bold

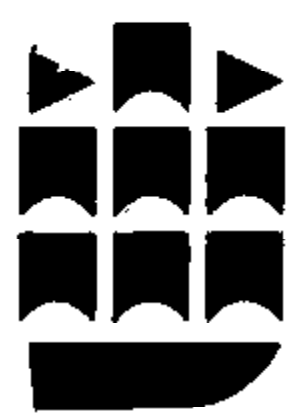


Alan Bold

Longman Dictionary of

POETS

The lives and works of 1001 poets
in the English language



Longman

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Introduction

POETS have rarely come to common conclusions about the purpose of poetry. When WH Auden, in his 'In Memory of WB Yeats', asserted that 'poetry makes nothing happen' he was rationalising a change of position, rejecting the political label that had stuck to him throughout the 1930s. Shelley, of course, had claimed that 'Poets are the unacknowledged legislators of the world' and Hugh MacDiarmid, in our own time, claimed that 'any utterance that is not pure / Propaganda is impure propaganda for sure!' Clearly, opinions differ and remind the reader that the poet is, above all, an idiosyncratic individual. That, at any rate, is the assumption on which this dictionary is based.

Through the centuries, critics have tried to contain poetry by devising a number of exclusive categories, some of them more useful than others. We have Metaphysical poetry, Augustan poetry, Romantic poetry, Georgian poetry, Modernist poetry, Pylon poetry, Movement poetry, Confessional poetry, Martian poetry – to name but a few. I have used some of these terms as a convenient shorthand in preparing the entries. I have also, however, used an illustrative quotation in each entry so that every poet can speak for himself or herself. Ultimately, the singular poetic voice is what we want to hear.

Wherever possible the exact dates of birth and death have been given and key works have been cited. The geographical placing of a poet is just that and indicates a national rather than a linguistic fact. Thus the term 'Welsh poet' means a poet associated with Wales and not one who writes in Welsh. Similarly, 'Irish poet' refers to a poet of Ireland and not a poet writing in Irish. For reasons of space the dictionary has been limited to English-language poets though the use of dialect has been enthusiastically acknowledged.

Preparing this book has been an educational experience and I have been impressed at the immense variety of poetry over the centuries. I believe that a dictionary admitting the very new as well as the very old, and including the intellectual ingenuity of Donne as well as the doggerel energy of McGonagall, can claim to be fairly exhaustive. If some poets are conspicuous by their absence then readers should (via Longman) inform me of this fact which may be utilised in a future edition. Meanwhile, I hope the reader will find the work entertaining as well as informative and will enjoy keeping the company of the poets in the following pages.

Alan Bold

About the author

Alan Bold was born in Edinburgh in 1943 where he attended university and trained as a journalist. Since 1966 he has been a full-time writer and visual artist. In addition to over twenty-five books of poetry, stories and nonfiction he has edited many anthologies, including *The Penguin Book of Socialist Verse*, *The Cambridge Book of English Verse 1939–75*, and *The Bawdy Beautiful*.

Books by Alan Bold

Poetry

Society inebrious
The voyage
To find the new
A perpetual motion machine
Penguin modern poets 15 (with
Braithwaite and Morgan)
The state of the nation
The auld symie
He will be greatly missed
A century of people
A pint of bitter
Scotland, yes
This fine day
A celtic quintet (with Bellany)
In this corner: selected poems
1963–83
Haven (with Bellany)
Summoned by Knox
Homage to MacDiarmid (with
Bellany)

Stories

Hammer and thistle (with
Morrison)
The edge of the wood

Nonfiction

Thom Gunn & Ted Hughes
George Mackay Brown
The ballad
The sensual Scot
Modern Scottish Literature
MacDiarmid: The terrible crystal
True characters (with Giddings)
The book of rotters (with
Giddings)

As editor

The Penguin book of socialist
verse
The martial muse: Seven centuries
of war poetry
Cambridge book of English verse
1939–75
Making love: The Picador book of
erotic verse
The bawdy beautiful: The Sphere
book of improper verse
Mounts of Venus: The Picador
book of erotic prose
Drink to me only: The prose (and
cons) of drinking
Smollett: Author of the first
dimension
The sexual dimension in literature
A Scottish poetry book
Scott: The long-forgotten melody
Byron: Wrath and rhyme
The thistle rises: A Macdiarmid
miscellany
Macdiarmid: Aesthetics in Scotland
The letters of Hugh Macdiarmid
The poetry of motion
Muriel Spark; An odd capacity for
vision
Harold Pinter: You never heard
such silence
Auden: The far interior

Acknowledgements & Bibliography

First of all I would like to thank all the contemporary poets who cooperated in this project and gladly gave me permission to use illustrative quotations from their work. I would also like to thank Fleur Adcock, Bill Costley, Robert Crozier, Catherine Froud, Hayden Murphy, Trevor Royle and Meic Stephens for lending me books and/or suggesting authors for inclusion. In preparing the text I found the books in the following list helpful and have pleasure in warmly recommending them.

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Abse, Dannie

Welsh poet *born* Cardiff 22 September 1923

Brought up in a family of doctors, Dannie Abse qualified in 1950 and has practised as a chest physician in London. In his work he brings together his twin passion for medicine and poetry; his deeply emotional concern for life's casualties is expressed in precisely crafted verse. He is an exceptionally intelligent poet and 'Pathology of Colours' is characteristically contemplative; 'I know the colour rose, and it is lovely, / but not when it ripens in a tumour; / and healing greens, leaves and grass, so springlike, / in limbs that fester are not springlike.' Abse is also a fine prose stylist whose autobiography, *A Poet in the Family* (1974), is illuminating.

Acorn, Milton

Canadian poet *born* Charlottetown, Prince Edward Island 1923

After his military service in the Second World War, Milton Acorn worked as a carpenter. He then decided to abandon his trade to concentrate on writing poetry full time. He was given the Governor General's Award for poetry in 1975; in 1983 he published his selected poems under the title *Dig Up My Heart*. His imagination is always open to everyday experience and in 'Knowing I Live in a Dark Age' he describes his poems as follows: 'they show / pale bayonets of grass waving thin on dunes; / the paralytic and his lyric secrets; / my friend Al, union builder and cynic, / hesitating to believe his own delicate poems / lest he believe in something better than himself.'

Adams, Arthur Henry

New Zealand poet *born* Lawrence 6 June 1872 *died* 4 March 1936

Adams was educated at Otago High School and University before becoming a journalist in Sydney in 1898. He was in South Africa during the Boer War, covering the action as a special correspondent. For much of his life he worked in Australia, producing novels and plays as well as poems. From his collection *Maoriland* (1899) comes his 'The Dwellings of our Dead' in which he catalogues the graves of humankind: 'For some the common trench where, not all fameless, / They fighting fell who thought to

tame the tameless, / And won their barren crown; / Where one
grave holds them nameless – / Brave white and braver brown.'

Adams, Francis Lauderdale

Scottish poet *born* Malta 27 September 1862

died 4 September 1893

Son of a Scottish scientist, Adams was educated at a private school in Shrewsbury and in Paris. After working as a schoolteacher in England, he went to Australia and joined the staff of the *Sydney Bulletin* which published many of his poems. Suffering from an incurable lung disease, he committed suicide. He published *Leicester* (1884), an autobiographical novel, and *Australian Essays* (1886). His finest poems appear in *Songs of the Army of the Night* (1888) which includes 'To the Christians': 'Take, then, your paltry Christ, / Your gentleman God. / We want the carpenter's son, / With his saw and hod. / We want the man who loved / The poor and oppressed, / Who hated the rich man and king / And the scribe and priest.'

Adams, Léonie

American poet *born* New York 9 December 1899

Educated at Barnard College, Léonie Adams published her first book, *Those Not Elect*, in 1925. Her third collection, *Poems*, appeared in 1954. She was elected to the Chair of Poetry at the Library of Congress and to membership of the National Institute of Arts and Letters. In 1955 she was (with Louise Bogan) awarded the Bollingen Prize. She taught at various universities and was on the creative writing staff of Columbia University. Her work is romantic in mood and vividly descriptive, as in 'Grapes Making': 'Noon sun beats down the leaf; the noon / Of summer burns along the vine / And thins the leaf with burning air, / Till from the underleaf is fanned, / And down the woven vine, the light.'

Adcock, Fleur

New Zealand poet *born* Papakura, near Auckland

10 February 1934

A classics graduate of the University of Wellington, Adcock has lived in England since 1963 and her poetry suggests a highly emotional exile: 'Letter to Alistair Campbell', for example, cites a friendship comprising 'five years of marriage, twenty of divorce'. Her poems recall distressing experiences and record disturbing dreams. Though thematically sombre, she is stylistically bright as in 'Send-Off': 'Half an hour before my flight was called / he walked across the airport bar towards me / carrying what was left of our future / together: two drinks on a tray.' Adcock's poetry is not entirely autobiographical for she is adept at inventing entertainingly odd situations.

Aiken, Conrad Potter

American poet *born* Savannah, Georgia 5 August 1899 *died* 1973

When Aiken was eleven his father – a doctor interested in the arts – killed the poet's mother, then committed suicide. As Aiken acknowledged, this traumatic event haunted him for the rest of his life. Taken to live with relatives, Aiken attended Harvard where his contemporary was T S Eliot. After producing some derivative volumes Aiken came into his own with *Preludes for Mennon* (1931) in which he considers, majestically, the destruction of innocence by the inevitability of death. His poem 'Obituary in Bitcherell' recreates his obsessive nightmare: 'And the morning quarrel, and shots, and then / four orphaned children taken north again.'

Alabaster, William

English poet *born* 1567 *died* 1640

Educated at Trinity College, Cambridge, where he became a Fellow, Alabaster was chaplain to the Earl of Essex on the Cadiz Expedition of 1596. Returning to England, he acknowledged his conversion to Catholicism and wrote his divine sonnets in prison. He subsequently went to Rome where his attitude offended the Inquisition; when he came back to England he returned to the Protestant fold then married and became a country parson. In his later years he published his theological conclusions in cabbalistic works. His sonnet 'Upon the Ensignes of Christes Crucifyinge' states: 'My tongue shall be my pen, mine eyes shall rain / Tears for my ink, the cross where I was cured / Shall be my book.'

Aldington, Richard

English poet *born* Hampshire 8 July 1892 *died* 27 July 1962

Educated at the University of London, Aldington was drawn to the Imagist idiom and in 1913 married the American Imagist Hilda Doolittle (the couple being divorced in 1937). During the First World War he served on the Western Front and was gassed. His poem 'Bombardment' vividly recalls the combative conditions he endured: 'Four days the earth was rent and torn / By bursting steel, / The houses fell about us; / three nights we dared not sleep, / Sweating, and listening for the imminent crash / Which meant our death.' He never fully recovered from the trauma of war and eventually abandoned poetry for prose protesting against the military mentality.

Aldrich, Thomas Bailey

American poet *born* Portsmouth, New Hampshire 11 November 1836 *died* Boston, Massachusetts 19 March 1907

Aldrich, thirteen when his father died, took a job as a clerk in his uncle's office in New York. He was nineteen when he published

his first collection *The Bells*, and twenty when he was appointed editor of the *Home Journal*; subsequently he edited the *Atlantic Monthly* (1881–90). He abandoned his editorial career to devote himself to creative writing, publishing *The Story of a Bad Boy* in 1870. In short poems, for example ‘Maple Leaves’, he uses images effectively: ‘October turned my maple’s leaves to gold; / The most are gone now; here and there one lingers. / Soon these will slip from out the twig’s weak hold, / Like coins between a dying miser’s fingers.’

Alexander, Sir William

Scottish poet *born* Menstrie, Logie, Clackmannanshire c1567
died London 12 September 1640

After the death of his father, Alexander was raised by his greatuncle in Stirling. Educated at the universities of Glasgow and Leiden he became a tutor of the Earl of Argyle who introduced him to the court of James VI. He was Prince Henry’s tutor and one of the Castalian Band of poets patronised by the King. He was knighted in 1609 and in 1621 obtained the plantation of Nova Scotia. He became Secretary of State for Scotland in 1626 and Earl of Stirling in 1633. *Aurora* (1604) contains his sonnets, number 26 beginning: ‘Cleare moving cristall, pure as the Sunne beames, / Which had the honor for to be the glasse, / Of the most daintie beautie ever was.’

Allingham, William

Irish poet *born* Ballyshannon, Donegal 19 March 1824
died 18 November 1889

Son of a banker, Allingham moved to London where he met Leigh Hunt and Carlyle and published several collections, culminating in *Collected Poems* (6 vols, 1888–93). After retiring from the civil service in 1870 he worked on *Fraser’s Magazine*, succeeding Froude as editor in 1874. His wife was the watercolourist Helen Paterson and he was friendly with the Pre-Raphaelites. ‘The Winding Banks of Erne’ is his farewell to his birthplace; ‘Adieu to Ballyshannon! where I was bred and born / Go where I may, I’ll think of you, as sure as night and morn, / The kindly spot, the friendly town, where everyone is known, / And not a face in all the place but partly seems my own.’

Alvarez, A

English poet *born* London 5 August 1929

Educated at Oxford, Alvarez became an influential literary critic, contributing to the *Observer* and *New Statesman*. His anthology *The New Poetry* (1962) demonstrated his faith in Confessional poetry and he was the leading English advocate of the late work of Sylvia Plath and the psychologically brittle poetry of Robert Lowell. *The*

Savage God (1971) is a study of suicide which concludes with the author's recollection of his own attempted suicide, an experience that informs 'Back': 'I recall / Nothing of death but the puzzled look on your face, / Swimming towards me, weeping, clouded, uncertain, / As they took the tube from my arm / And plugged the strange world back in place.'

Amabile, George

Canadian poet *born* New Jersey 1936

Founding editor of *The Far Point* and *Northern Light*, George Amabile was educated at the universities of Minnesota and Connecticut. His collection *The Presence of Fire* appeared in 1982. Like many of the Canadian poets, he is fascinated by the appearance of a landscape uncontaminated by urban artefacts. 'Prairie' lyrically explores the implications of the title: 'a light word / filled with wistful spokes / of sun through the overcast at dusk / or smoke totems bent at the top / wisping away into beige emulsions // an earth word / a moist darkness turning / stones and roots / fossils and tiny lives / up to the sun.'

Amis, Kingsley

English poet *born* Clapham 16 April 1922

Educated at Oxford, with his contemporary Philip Larkin, Kingsley Amis was a university teacher of English until 1963. His novel *Lucky Jim* (1954), a spectacular success, established him as a witty enemy of pomposity. His poetry shows similar qualities of clarity and control and he has emerged as one of the best modern exponents of light verse. Using traditional rhythms and rhymes, Amis has produced a series of sharp verse commentaries on the shabbiness of the modern world. His sardonic sense of humour is well expressed in 'Delivery Guaranteed': 'Death has got something to be said for it: / There's no need to get out of bed for it; / Wherever you may be, / They bring it to you, free.'

Ammons, A R

American poet *born* Whiteville, North Carolina 1926

Ammons was a businessman before he became a lecturer at Cornell University. He published several volumes of verse including *Selected Poems* (1971) and *Six-Piece Suite* (1979). His highly subjective accounts of his experience project him as an individual confronting the elements of the natural world. 'Corsons Inlet' begins with a morning walk by the sea then reaches out to a conclusion about the nature of poetic perception: 'I will try / to fasten into order enlarging grasps of disorder, widening / scope, but enjoying the freedom that / Scope

eludes my grasp, that there is no finality of vision, / that I have perceived nothing completely, / that tomorrow a new walk is a new walk.'

Anderson, Patrick

Canadian poet *born* England 1915 *died* 1979

Educated at Oxford and Columbia, Anderson came to Montreal in 1940 and earned his living by teaching. A member of the 'Preview' group of Montreal writers, he published his selected poems, under the title *Return to Canada*, in 1977. His long 'Poem on Canada' brings a strong social concern to bear on the landscape of Canada which older poets had applauded uncritically: 'Mine are the violet tones of the logs in rivers, / my tallness is the tallness of the pines and the grain elevators / tubular by the scarps of coal, at Quebec. / My caves are the caves of ice but also the holes of Cartier / where the poor squat, numb with winter, / and my poverty is their rags and the prairies' drought.'

Andrew of Wyntoun

Scottish poet *born* c1355 *died* 1422

Andrew of Wyntoun was canon regular at St Andrews and from 1395-1413 was Prior of St Serfs Inch, the island on Lochleven (where Mary Queen of Scots was imprisoned in 1567). For his patron, Sir John Wemyss, he composed the *Orygynale Cronykil of Scotland* (published 1795), a verse history from the Creation to the reign of Robert the Bruce. Written in octosyllabic couplets, in nine books, it comments on such characters as Macbeth: 'In till this tyme that I of tell, / That this tressoune in Inland fell, / In Scotland fell neire the like cais / Be Fynlaw Makbeth that than was, / Quhen he had murtherist his aune eme / Throu hope at he had of a dreme.'

eme uncle; *at* that

Arnold, Sir Edwin

English poet *born* Gravesend 10 June 1832 *died* 24 March 1904

Son of a Sussex magistrate, Arnold was educated at Oxford where he won the Newdigate Prize for 'The Feast of Belshazzar'. He became a teacher at King Edward's School, Birmingham and was, in 1856, appointed Principal of the Government Deccan College, Poona. Returning to England in 1861, he worked for, and eventually edited, the *Daily Telegraph*. His experience of the East led him to write *The Light of Asia* (1891), a poem on the life of Buddha: 'So saying the good Lord Buddha seated him / Under a jambu-tree, with ankles crossed - / As holy statues sit - and first

began / To meditate this deep disease of life, / What its far source and whence its remedy.' He also wrote *The Light of the World* (1891), a poem about Christ.

Arnold, Matthew

English poet *born* Laleham-on-Thames 24 December 1822
died Liverpool 15 April 1888

From his father, the famous headmaster of Rugby School, Matthew Arnold acquired a reverence for learning and his intellectual clarity made him one of the ablest critics of the century, as witness *Culture and Anarchy* (1869). Believing that poetry should be a 'criticism of life', and that the man of letters should spread 'sweetness and light', he wrote poems that were both shrewd and sensitive. 'Thyrsis', a monody in memoriam Arthur Hugh Clough, commemorates a friendship in Oxford, 'that sweet city with her dreaming spires'. 'Dover Beach' is a more direct statement of his sense of isolation in a faithless world 'Swept with confused alarms of struggle and flight, / Where ignorant armies clash by night.'

Ashbery, John

American poet *born* New York 28 July 1927

Ashbery has been active as an art critic, as editor (of *Art News*), as a dramatist and as one of America's most distinguished poets. The technical polish of his poetry presents disturbing incidents in an artistically acceptable way. The title poem of his collection *A Wave* (1984) is a successful attempt to write a triumphant refutation of the idea of death as a defeat. With its references to 'a man and his wife' and 'Our story', the poem is a remarkably objective account of a relationship that has ended abruptly. In stressing the importance of survival, Ashbery insists 'Much that has drained out of living / Returns, in those moments, mounting the little capillaries / Of polite questions and seeming concern. I want it back.'

Asquith, Herbert

English poet *born* 1881 *died* 1947

Son of the Liberal Prime Minister replaced by Lloyd George in 1916, Herbert Asquith was associated with the Georgian movement in poetry. A friend of Rupert Brooke's, he served with the artillery on the Western Front during the First World War and wrote romantically of those who died in action. 'The Volunteer' is a tribute to a clerk killed in battle: 'he lies content / With that high hour, in which he lived and died. / And falling thus he wants no recompense, / Who found his battle on the last

resort; / Nor needs he any hearse to bear him hence, / Who goes to join the men of Agincourt.'

Atherstone, Edwin

English poet *born* Nottingham 17 April 1788

died Bath 29 January 1872

A dramatist and novelist as well as an epic poet, Atherstone published 'The Last Days of Herculaneum' in 1821. It tells, in blank verse, of the destruction of the city by the eruption of Mount Vesuvius in AD 79: 'Soon the storm / Burst forth: the lightnings glanced: - the air / Shook with the thunders. They awoke: - they sprung / Amazed upon their feet. The dungeon glowed / A moment as in sunshine, - and was dark: - / Again a flood of white flame fills the cell'. Atherstone's main work, *The Fall of Nineveh*, appeared in thirty books from 1828-68. He also wrote *The Sea Kings of England* (1830), an historical romance; and *The Handwriting on the Wall* (1858), a prose account of the fall of Babylon.

Atwood, Margaret

Canadian poet *born* Ottawa 18 November 1939

Internationally known as a novelist with books like *Life Before Man* (1979), Margaret Atwood has also written *Survival: a Thematic guide to Canadian Literature* (1972). Her first collection of poems, *The Circle Game* (1966), won the Governor General's Award for Poetry. Her *Selected Poems* came out in 1976. Her poems luxuriate in lyricism and she takes a highly subjective approach to experience. Her 'Variation on the Word *Sleep*' is a tender expression of love: 'I would like to follow / you up the long stairway / again and become / the boat that would row you back / carefully, a flame / in two cupped hands / to where your body lies / beside me, and you enter / it as easily as breathing in'.

Auden, W H

English poet *born* York 21 February 1907

died Vienna 29 September 1973

A doctor's son, Wystan Hughes Auden was educated at Oxford where he met Spender, Day Lewis and MacNeice - who all adhered to the Leftist principles Auden expounded in the 1930s - and renewed his friendship with Christopher Isherwood with whom he collaborated on three verse plays including *The Ascent of F6* (1936). Auden's return to Christian ideals is expressed in *New Year Letter* (1941): 'We can love each because we know / All, all of us, that this is so: / Can live since we are lived, the powers / That we create with are not ours.' In later years he lived in Austria, wrote poems in praise of his domestic life with Chester Kallman

(*About the House*, 1966) and continued to pursue his vision of the Just City.

Austin, Alfred

English poet *born* Headingley, near Leeds 30 May 1835

died 2 June 1913

A wool-stapler's son, Austin was educated at Stonyhurst and Oscott College and was called to the Bar in 1857. He switched from law to literature, reporting for the *Standard* and editing the *National Review*. He was appointed Poet Laureate in 1896 in recognition of his deeply traditional views. In poems such as 'The Last Night' he combines his conservatism with his love of rural England: 'O, Winnie, I do not want to go / From the dear old home; I love it so. / Why should I follow the sad sea-mew / To a land where everything is new, / Where we never bird-nested, you and I, / Where I was not born, but perhaps shall die?' He also wrote novels and an *Autobiography* (1911).

Avison, Margaret

Canadian poet *born* Galt, Ontario 1918

After an education at the University of Toronto, Margaret Avison earned her living as a secretary and librarian. Her collection *Sunblue* appeared in 1978. She is a poet who finds herself fascinated by the extraordinary appearance of everyday events, like 'Janitor Working on Threshold' (to cite one of her titles). 'Tennis' is an ingenious sonnet that combines the athletic and the aesthetic: 'Purpose apart, perched like an umpire, dozes, / Dreams golden balls whirring through indigo. / Clay blurs the whitewash but day still encloses / The albinos, bonded in their flick and flow. / Playing in musicked gravity, the pair / Score liquid Euclids in foolscaps of air.'

Aytoun, Sir Robert

Scottish poet *born* Kinaldie, near St Andrews 1570

died London February 1638

Educated at St Andrews University, Aytoun studied law in Paris. He went, with the court of James VI and I, to London and became secretary to the Queen. He was knighted in 1612. A brilliant linguist, he wrote poems in Latin, Greek and French and was one of the first Scottish poets to write in English – under the influence of the Metaphysical poets. His sonnet 'Upone Tabacco' begins: 'Forsaken of all comforts but these two, / My faggott and my Pipe, I sitt and Muse / On all my crosses, and almost accuse / The heavens for dealing with me as they doe.' He wrote a poem 'Old Long Syne' which was later reworked by Burns with international success.

Aytoun, W E

Scottish poet *born* Edinburgh 21 June 1813

died Edinburgh 4 August 1865

Although he aspired to write heroic poems in the manner of Macaulay – as witness his *Lays of the Scottish Cavaliers* (1849) – William Edmonstoune Aytoun is best remembered for his humorous verse. He was a lawyer who contributed regularly to *Blackwood's Magazine*; a Scottish nationalist who played a leading part in the Association for the Vindication of Scottish Rights (1853). As his poem on 'The Scottish Christmas' shows, he was an enemy of Calvinistic grimness. His own irreverent attitude is seen to advantage in his light verse on Scottish subjects, such as 'The Massacre of the Macpherson'; 'For he did resolve / To extirpate the vipers, / With four-and-twenty men / And five-and-thirty pipers.'

Baldwin, James

American poet *born* Harlem, New York 1924

As a novelist James Baldwin explores the human predicament of the black citizens of America. As a polemicist he has articulated the anger of American blacks in powerful works such as *The Fire Next Time* (1963). His poetry, like his prose, alternates between savagery and well organised black humour. 'Staggerlee wonders', for example, addresses a US president ironically: 'Oh, towering Ronnie Reagan, / wise and resigned lover of redwoods, / deeply beloved, winning man-child of the yearning Republic, / from diaper to football field to Warner Brothers sound-stages, / be thou our grinning, gently phallic, Big Boy of all the ages!'

Baldwin, Michael

English poet *born* 1 May 1930

Baldwin has worked in radio and television as a broadcaster and presenter. His sequence *King Horn* (1983) was written, at Montolieu in old Languedoc, during a period of convalescence, when Baldwin was sensitive to the sights and sounds of the area. Regarding the local peasants as a crude 'unforgiving people' he turned to the flora and fauna and produced poems that bring the landscape to life vibrantly. In the first poem there is a glimpse of 'a whole crop of vipers / With others in their belly'; thereafter he contemplates the special creatures (including the peasants) of the area in poems that constantly put language under poetic pressure.

Baraka, Imamu Amiri

American poet *born* Newark, New Jersey 7 October 1934

The poet was born LeRoi Jones and served in the Air Force from