
David McLoughlin

BLUE DARK

I think I have seen it repeated: someone
silhouetted, as if climbing a line,
rising slowly. When he broaches the surface
he starts to die – his colours gasping
on the scumming pan of the concrete
some crowded day at the beach. There is
always that ocean. All I give him is the swarm
and bloom of algae in The Narrows:
not enough oxygen. There is another sea
when I go into the thicket
of an hour without guilt or kinship,
to be able to come back like someone
walking out of water. Albatrosses rise
to 10,000 feet, cock their wings, and glide
until the sound of spray wakes them.
When I am there, silence can open
like a sea rose, billowing. He goes down the ladder
of blue-dark, coming to rest on the substrate
where there is another kind of breathing.