AT THE FLASH & AT THE BACI

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abstract

The thesis consists principally of a book-length manuscript of poems, called *At The Flash & At The Baci*. An exegetical essay forms the second part of the thesis. The prospective book's title derives from the purely incidental fact that most of the poems were worked on at those establishments (the Flash and the Baci) and some were begun and even finished there. The collection does not pursue any particular theme. It is organized chronologically and divided into three parts: the middle, dividing section is a group of three poems, elegies that mourn or reflect upon the death of poet John Forbes and my responses to it and to him. These poems differ from the rest of the collection in being less concerned with 'everyday life' and in being more expressly 'focused'. The third group are labeled 'newer poems' and include a group begun in Rome—not, then, the 'everyday' of Adelaide.

The exegetical essay is written as a poem. This was done as a way of achieving a tone not at variance with the poetry itself, but also for the access it gives to a more mobile, elliptical approach to the poems and my memory of their motivations and connections. The exegesis does not explain the poem's 'meanings' to any great extent—these, I think, are fairly clear—but considers the poems' relation to each other and to poems written in the past. In fact it casts the poems as developments of past strategies, as alternatives to those strategies: variants, continuations, alternatives, changes of tack.