

Red Pulse II: Poetry To A Local Beat

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ISBN: 978-981-09-2346-4

Published under the imprint Ethos Books
by Pagesetters Services Pte Ltd
#06-131 Midview City
28 Sin Ming Lane
Singapore 573972
www.ethosbooks.com.sg
www.facebook.com/ethosbooks

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Cover design by Lee Jiaying (<http://www.artjelly.com/>)

Layout and design by Pagesetters Services Pte Ltd

Printed by Ho Printing Singapore Pte Ltd

National Library Board, Singapore Cataloguing-in-Publication Data

Red pulse II : poetry to a local beat / edited by Kevin Lam and Tan

Xiang Yeow. – Singapore : Ethos Books, [2014]

pages cm

ISBN : 978-981-09-2346-4 (paperback)

1. Singaporean poetry (English) I. Lam, Kevin, 1991- II. Tan, Xiang Yeow, 1989-

PR9570.S52

S821 -- dc23

OCN891604899

RED PULSE II

POETRY TO A LOCAL BEAT

Edited by
Kevin Lam and Tan Xiang Yeow



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*I claim citizenship in your recognition
of our kind.
My people, and my country,
are you, and you my home.*

(From *My Country and My People*, Lee Tzu Pheng)

The Singapore Grand Prix

Kevin Lam

Ferrari cars zooming past
Padang, Nicoll Highway—
Die die cannot finish last!

Ask *Ma*¹ help with arts and craft.
Say ‘cause you want go play
Hot wheels. Toy cars zooming past.

Today, I a bit downcast—
Heard *Ah Seng* he got more pay.
Die die cannot finish last!

Last night party had a blast!
Really went all the way;
*Machiam*² sports car zooming past.

My boy *ah*, knows ‘chloroplast’—
Tuition there learn today.
Die die cannot finish last!

Ah pa all his friends outlast,
*Proby*³ better airway.
But when hearse zooming past,
Die die cannot finish last!

¹ Ma – Mother

² Machiam – Just like

³ Proby – Probably

The Jaguar

(A parody of William Blake’s “The Tyger”)

Cara Neo

Jaguar! Jaguar! burning bright
In the cold jungle of the night,
Low rev, your fearful symmetry
Was ransomed by a COE

That could have paid some family’s rent.
But in this town, we all are bent
On riding, driving, having things
That make up for our foundering.

So the banker, who by day is
Wretched, still can—if he can pay—
Turn hero, once he turns your key
And prowls the buzzing CBD.

A panther of the darkest sort,
His eyes are lamps. His fur is bought.
And as he stalks his skulking way,
You purr the words that he can’t say

And pave a smooth path for his wheels,
For here are hidden men who steal!
We seal their crimes within careers
And cheer these men—no heart, no fear.

Oh, Jaguar! Jaguar! burning bright—
In richness of constructed light.
Your artificial symmetry
Is all the real world now to me.

This Is Not A Love Poem

Peter Huen Kam Fai

This is not a love poem.
THIS is about deceit, and hurt, and vengeance, and
letting go, finger from finger, memory from mind. This is about
how roses have thorns, and violets die; how we both grew apart, you and I.
Forget those candlelit clichés, schmaltzy Hallmark sentiments: Be my one and only,
now and forever. Now all I recall are bright brutal eyes, keen edge of lips,
barbed passion carving those words you'd speak. Losing you wasn't
hard, no weepy farewell nor unfeigned regret; we parted as
we came, whole and intact. So why then, am I missing
you, a stranger, no more, who walked out my
door? Perhaps I'm waiting—for that final
moment—you say the words that I
can't say. To take us back to
yesterday.

The Wine In The Wineglass

Jonathan Liautrakul

The glass is filled; it overflows
with gushing Merlot. I
try in vain to contain the
the splurge of richness and
flavour in such a small glass.
Too much and it loses the
grandeur of smell and feel.
Then again, too little wine
does not give it enough
taste. Maybe I
should
widen
my
wine
glass
like the way
I write my poems.
Then, I can enjoy my glass of wine.