

*Etchings 1*

There are [...] some gems in *Etchings*, a lush publication.

Meera Atkinson's 'Désincarné/Disembodied' is a well-constructed short story about a strange kind of love affair that would have been unthinkable ten years ago. A seductive chat-room dialogue is powerfully revealing about fundamental human needs, as well as Internet protocol.

Lee Kofman's 'Melbourne—New York Line', about the phone conversations between a Jewish man and his mother, is also superb. On different sides of the world, they are bound to each other by their 'jungles of Russian, Hebrew, Yiddish (that neither of us mastered) and recently English'.

Subhash Jaireth's story Charulata's Silver Anklets' — which might be described as mythic realism — was also gripping. It is about an Indian truck driver, convinced in childhood to stop 'dreaming about heaven', who finds a version of it in Charulata, a refuge from Dhaka. The phrases he invents for the back of his truck, including 'Smile Mister, I'm Not Your Sister' and 'Hallo Hallo, Don't Come Close to My Chamukchallo', are not the only moments that resonate.

James Friel and Delailah M.K. Grondin both draw sympathetic short story portraits.

Christopher Lappas suggests that the motto of street stencil art might be 'to subvert the constant barrage of corporate advertising'. *Etchings* features stencil art by FORM, which touches on the magazine's own professed ethos: 'street art is not created for anyone, it's created for everyone.'

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