

## EDITORIAL

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After a successful debut, *Etchings* is once again filled with a cosmopolitan mix of writing, remaining true to its mission to juxtapose Australian writing with writing from around the world, and to adopt an international approach by exchanging and communicating ideas across borders.

With the Internet becoming one of the most powerful mediums to date for travelling across cultures, the push and pull, the intermingling, of local and global ideas has become an everyday reality.

In this issue, John Tranter, acclaimed poet and founding editor of the online magazine *Jacket*, as well as speaking about his own poetry, takes us into cyberspace where literature and stories are collected and distributed without boundaries. *Jacket* has become one of the world's most widely read poetry magazines. By opening up poetry to the Web, Tranter has managed to establish a global portal for poets, creating an audience that is by far larger than it could ever be in any specific geographical place at any one time.

As much as there exists a buzz over the potential of the Internet, there is always the potent energy that is created by artists themselves. We find that precise exuberance in the work of Melbourne poet, sculptor, and painter Basil Eliades. Particularly his paintings exude an encapsulating, all-embracing energy, reflecting a desire to penetrate, transcend, and connect with the Australian landscape.

Narratives generate energy, and narratives come in many forms. History creates one form of narrative, and fiction another. In the context of Australian literature, Dominique Hecq in her essay 'Passports to the Past' ventures into the controversial domain of historical versus fictional truth. She explores the experience of exile and the ruptured notion of history that comes with it, claiming that fiction creates a connection between the past and the present as valuable and vital as the one assigned to history.

Translators are responsible for another form of connection, namely that between original text and translated text, between original language and target language, between one culture and another. Ton That Quynh Du explores the (in)visibility of the translator, talking about his experience of translating the work of the Vietnamese writer Pham Thi Hoai into English.

And last but by no means least, our fiction and poetry, once again the connective tissue of *Etchings*, take the reader into the streets of Sydney, New York, Edinburgh, into a Thai village, a retirement home, a candlelit room where tradition, philosophising, and a modern marriage in Vietnam collide, over jazz-filled rooftops, and deep into the darker recesses of the mind.

SABINA HOPFER