

University of Canberra

Monica Carroll

Prose poems, written by members of the Prose Poetry Project, November 2014 to July 2017, compiled by the editors

Biographical note:

Monica Carroll holds a PhD in philosophy and poetry. She is a Donald Horne Creative and Cultural Fellow for the Centre for Creative and Cultural Research. Her academic publications include papers on poetry, space and writing. Her research interests include phenomenology, poetry and empathy. Her widely published experimental prose and poetry includes the book *Isolator* (Recent Work Press 2017).

This is the dress of my drowning. Like pebbles in the pits and pearls in the tide, my colours only sing when submerged. I tack pieces to the toile, worn as I sew, stitching myself in. The fabric is harsh on my hands. Cutting. Each pattern piece a layer of silk under shards of clear diamond, sea sapphire, blood garnet. Every stone gaoled by a silk cross stitch. Amethyst, the tint of lightning at twilight. Emeralds, green as Spring's aggression. My hands milked as I suture my body into heavy beauty. The Haberdasher promised this black-iron buckle the weightiest. I baste it to the waist of gold-laced rick-rack. I tend to shirring on the upper sleeves, puck the gusset underneath, pleat the bodice, so I will fill. Swell. Dark silver braid at the cuffs. Godets inside godets and the skirts are flat felled seamed with sand pressed into the join. Raw edges masked. My collar stays are lead. I will float low to the silt shelf bottom and settle. Shining. Each basted ruby stealing its moment to capture the shifting sun and blaze through black.

(from *Seam* 2015)