



*ntamo* AKI SALMELA *Word In Progress*

**Word in Progress**

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**Aki Salmela**  
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*ntamo*, Helsinki



## **Pictorial Head**

Black Friday kicks off the holiday shopping season  
More pseudo Picassos, counterfeit Chagalls and other fakes

like

A sad day for the history of art  
Missed the metaphor, my fun

When the art unit executes a search warrant, they  
often find drugs and evidence of other crimes, such  
as fake Rolex watches, Detective Constable Ian

Lawson said, what

A fabulously mad thing it was.

## **In a perverse shadow**

It is not an uncommon thing for scholars  
to wonder from place to place

Words are only the shadows of speech

A man who mended his own clothes, who was  
often cold, hungry and shabby

*The observer is always at the center of things*

Libertes philosophica. The right to think, to dream,  
if you like, even to make philosophy

Think of poets speechless, great literary holes  
Was we that many – Crab. Ice. Hyperion?

But Writing; think of it as a battle. The alternative: think more  
Rather face it as anything, ghastly know

The better more speechless,  
Flat not better

What Virgin of what shadow,  
The late skate academy of spring

outside also of speech

This is the 80s sexual utterance  
been thinking of ya shell

I the zodiac            in the lateral night sky  
I a fly, that  
incurious wing



## Ode to Ern Malley

The umbel of markings on the carved time  
entangles staircase of rococo evening  
introverted obelisk of the pond-lilies

incestuous.

And consolations!

Palms! and trespassing  
transposed version blowing this lily 1495,  
I a gibbet in curious

Social Process. Sky  
he who — white Adonai:  
to themselves.

Assert: the caterpillar.

## Elegy for Ern Malley

Utterance;  
vile morass to uncover ear.

And why did truth, which magpie's carol has?  
Was it? Have your magical  
wise-grinning.

It may find, too, saying always: board. Together  
larger patterns than patines of etcetera.  
The universe

in its original glory.  
And you through my substituted  
reading-rooms.

Palinode,  
remember, in any cobra hood  
note and revision.  
The solemn awake too:

Else falls to Pericles  
intentions. Every swim has arranged disasters

as reading-rooms.  
My would be splash — like a brooding you, my cursed  
borer of the truth in swan's breast.

**A humming string**

By Virgil, we are in that cavern now!  
Things that come out of nowhere, a humming string,  
a luminous skull of a scholar, a hundred philosophical papyri,  
burning Roman hordes, strange bony buttocks.  
Now you, famous student of Aristotle,  
swallow your self like you swallow others  
.....mysterious gaps.  
Listen: time's flying like an arrow  
past the present and the future  
.....  
secondary reflection of the true source  
.....  
.....bugger!  
Do step twice in the same river;  
one sign breeds another.....  
.....  
like .....  
.....a pile of shit.....  
.....  
amid a crowd of stars.



"I heard thunshot, but nothing und of ghappened. Ear heavy so I turned tomy chest and looke-barrel frod at it. The pistol tlooked bidea what all the fuit had noss, was aboack as if ut. It migt-from the factory, me straighthe innoceht have cont gleam to chest. It was wet, I felt mynd sticky fnewness. I found troke beside my nippllet had be."

English, Finglish, Xinglish, Glinglish – or rather, all these mixed & fucked up to form a seminal work of new Finnish poetry, by Aki Salmela (born 1976), poet and translator, author of *Sanomat-tomia lehtiä* (2004), *Word in Progress* (first edition, 2004), *Valveillaoloa* (a selection of translations from John Ashbery, 2004), and *Leikitään kotia* (2005), and winner of the prestigious Kalevi Jäntti Award, 2004.

"Funny no one paid sidewalkany attentacrosssthion, I thong. It consoliugh me, it fel me good."

