

In Memoriam Garry Schrum

*Say you want a revolution
We better get on right away
Well you get on your feet
And out on the street*

In the frozen savannahs of the ochre plain, the glacial fjords of the Northern horizon,
from their last retreat, wrapped in animal skins in the cairns of the dead,
The Ilmarinen lay, the first song-teller, his lustrous wavy strands of burnished red,
bronzed by the raging winds through the forest depths, pierced by the boundless polar light,
creating the storehouse for precious metals, essence of flour, salt, and gold
the flowing tongues of fire and the gift that reindeer sing in piercing cries, into human
song etched in the bay and headland of the silt waters, becoming the backbone of memory,
entering the earth as the smoke of the wraith, and bottle-breath of the talisman
in the song of words.

*I was the dreamweaver
But now I'm reborn
I was the walrus
But now I'm John
And so, dear friends,
You'll just have to carry on
The dream is over*

Your furled ribbons of silk, of the incantation of strumming men and ancient harmonies,
sounds of clashing exaltation, worn as a sheet of armor against the chill of brazen
indifference, Arthur Lee and the elastic love ballads, “a bluebird sitting on a branch”
extinguishing waves of regret with lush melody, singing “of love’s sweeter days”
the nakedness of John’s epistolary of song, his mother in the silent, blue-bleached
flowers of absence for all to see, as a flyleaf in the unguarded hour of a soul cracking open

nakedness, an angel burning like a torch in the frosted air, threaded like a scarlet rose
a ballad of blossoming street-signs, a blue-tongued guitar suspended like a shout,
a voluptuous flame as pure as the unembarrassed breasts of sexual delight,
amplified by the luster of your tufted, calm insistence, you balladeer of memory,
tilted in exuberant song-clap, the endless engine of childhood renders mute
the later ravages of grace denying age, slowing, weighted in joy,
and warm, walking now in trivial delights.