

anthologia

#4 Gentrification Edition



Featuring

Julian Isaacs

Zoe Maynard

Thom Boulton
@greenbanddruid

Ruth Butler

William Telford
@wtelfordherald

Laura Quigley
@lauraqwriter

Tim Francis

Arushi Singh
@exodus1296

All work within this anthology remains the creative and intellectual property of the author or artist that created it.

Cover photograph ©Louis Weston 2017

The Gentrification Edition
Anthologia **May 2017**

The Gentrification Edition

This issue came out from a binge watching session of South Park (Season 19) and The Unbreakable Kimmy Schmidt (Season 2). Both series mock the increased gentrifying of locales in America, the displacement of poor or that some social groups see poor as cool. The shows reminded me of the song Common People by Pulp, here's a quote to get the gist for those who haven't heard it in awhile (or before)...

*Rent a flat above a shop,
Cut your hair and get a job.
Smoke some fags and play some pool,
Pretend you never went to school.
But still you'll never get it right,
'Cause when you're laid in bed at night,
Watching roaches climb the wall,
If you called your Dad he could stop it all.*

Renovating areas and improving services is not the issue. The issue being highlighted is the overloading change (such as similar shops all opening in a row) or this idea that run-down is bohemian and cool and desirable, like it's kitsch or something. The real irony is that when you focus your attention on one area another will slide. This is really obvious in Plymouth where Anthologia is based. As one area of town has had huge investment and development, the scales have leaned, causing the other end of town to become rundown, unloved, and riddled with empty shops and stores.

This issue is very interesting. The different contributors show varying aspects. We also have a great interview with William Telford followed by a fantastic piece of flash fiction written by the man himself.

I hope you enjoy this edition. I've enjoyed putting this one together!

- Thom

(Thom Boulton, Editor-in-chief of The Anthologia)

Links:

South Park 'SoDoSoPa' - <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=miXMWJyOdgw>

The Unbreakable Kimmy Schmidt - <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=lkAi6FjaGLs>

Common People by Pulp - <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=yuTMWgOduFM>

Silo

by Julian Isaacs

And so...
a history
une histoire
lines from a lime-coated bower

a flawed investigation
a ratted infestation
a Bauhaus installation

a silo depraved of grain
steeplejacked in the empty rain
by the biggest ball and chain
that ever I saw
no, never an eyesore
though maybe a blemish, a stain
interrupting the view of Spain

I dreamed a fooled speculation
to boat bulls from Pamplona
who'd run riot in its stone surround
but I awoke to devastation
and felt an escapee loner
the whole damned building had gone to ground





Traditional Strands. Modern Fabrics. *(2 pages)*
by Zoe Maynard

Look around. Buildings cover the skylines, their heads in the clouds. The glassy shapes and height of the buildings have soared. Only recently, the idea of the “Analemma Tower” has been proposed. Unlike the modern skyscrapers that sit in New York, this skyscraper will hover above the ground. It’s safe to say that the buildings we see in our childhood, turn into strands of nostalgia and outdated fashion. New ideas continue to revolutionise the world we experience today.

Look out of your window. Travel to a new part of town. Observe the new housing estates, the renovation of old buildings, and the birth of new ones. Take The Shard, as an example. The architecture resembles what the name states: a shard of glass. It reaches to an astounding three-hundred and ten metres, overlooking the other London landmarks. The aura that surrounds this triangular spectrum buzzes on the ground. You can feel the people buzzing past, but London residents don’t blink twice at the glass building as they stroll by. To them, renovation is the norm. Besides, a city has to keep changing its face in order to keep thriving in the economical world, full of endless possibilities.

However, it’s important to remember the foundations that made cities prosper. Take a look at the old buildings which had immense detail put into them. St. Paul’s Cathedral still stands as one of the most iconic buildings within the United Kingdom. After originally being built in 1300, it was last renovated in 1697. The dome is the gracious legacy of architect, Sir Christopher Wren. It’s one of the only buildings that unites us as a society because of the dense amount of history that it has seen, and due to the outstanding amount of detail that covers the walls. The dome even saw the marriage of Prince Charles and Princess Diana in 1981. Although, even St. Paul’s has had some renovation in recent years. The decaying walls have been touched by the hands of modernity, even if it is not noticeable to the eyes of visitors that flock to the cathedral each day.

Inside the dome, the stained glass covers the windows. Angelic faces let their eyes follow you as you walk past their transparent bodies. I suppose they have accepted that renovation has had to happen to keep their home alive. As a society, gentrification is resuscitating buildings that have a faint pulse beating inside them. Aside from this, acknowledge the new housing estates that have been built over fields. It acts as a confirmation that our society is growing. Our buildings grow in correlation, mirroring our ideas. Human beings move along with the times. Buildings are simply our servants of tradition or modernity. We, the masters of architect, are responsible for keeping the traditional strands within our modern fabrics. Fundamentally, we transgress as each day passes by.



Gentlyfication
by Thom Boulton

Hired plastic surgeons take to the streets, plotting red dotted lines on homeless faces, they don't have a warm sleeping bag but their noses and fake tits look nice.

Beauticians are beautifying the trees giving them the Rachel from F.R.I.E.N.D.S hairstyle. 90's is retro now so it's fine, they've even put fake nails on the frail twigs.

Rustication is just a word, and word is they've reordered the letters to spell Auction Stir, A Citron Suit, sold, to the gentlemen planning another 24 hour gym built inside a coffee shop.

It sits on a street where its neighbours are all charity shops.

Shelves stacked high, slabs of the former residents' possessions, lined up, a procession of poverty, yours for £3.99.

The food banks now have ATMs and fancy atriums that are quite agreeable, showcasing the latest art installations, plasma screens showing that Baked Beans have gone down 1.5points but SMASH is on the up due to a takeover bid.

The old Irish legend of the sidhe is being gently gentrified, talk of displacement being recycled, how the fae kinds were relocated to the hollow hills, it's happening again.

You can read about it in a book if you like, not from a library though, they've all been made into car parks, just like the fields, just like the ageing cinema.

It's necessary though, somewhere to park the car so people can ride their bicycles to work.

Houseproud
by Ruth Butler

Stylish, bright,
interior designed.

A delicate tracery
of leaves against white wall
sets off ceramics
up on that bookcase.
Plants: tamed, used, confined.

Roots growing
round polished pine shelves
spread among the paper-backs,
suck out words,
imbibe Plays and Poetry,
move on down through History,
follow Guides and Maps...

crumble masonry,
seek out cables as fast lanes...

Stems swell and sway,
enwrap picture frames,
make height,
tendrils tamper with switches,
reach up for lights...

Leaves unfurl,
cloak art,
festoon ceiling space
...It's getting dark...





SPOTLIGHT

Last month I got the chance to interview William Telford. It was a gloriously sunny day and we sat outside Drake Reservoir. Below is a transcript of our chat and following after is William's contribution for this edition. It is truly a brilliant piece of flash fiction - Thom

The Big Three



What fostered your love for writing?

To be quite honest when I was a really little boy I was always making up stories. My earliest obsession in life was watching TV programmes, sci-fi and westerns like Star Trek, Lost in Space, Bonanza. I would act them out with my toys and action men. I'd tell my mum stories about these things and she would think they were true. I went through my boyhood and teens, really interested in films.

When I was 13 I really wanted to be a film director or screenwriter and then when I realised that was difficult to get into I thought about being a novelist, that was when I was around 19 or 20. I was influenced by TV and films before I was influenced by books. I read a quote once that said 'The best pop music is a juvenile anti-room to real music.' – I think the guy that said it meant classical music. It's the same for TV and film, they get you into storytelling and characterisation, they act as a jumping point into the real stuff (novels).

What influences your writing?

I get influences from everything. The one thing you have to have is truth. Something has to come from inside yourself. It doesn't always mean that everything I write is something that has happened to me but maybe someone I know. I don't just reproduce it, I think 'How would I react to that?' People often read stuff and think 'You've done this.', the character has elements but you change it and take it into a new direction like 'What would happen if they behaved in this way?' You have to look inside yourself and be honest with yourself. I'm influenced by the news and everything I'm reading at the time. If I see a good programme on TV or hear some music lyrics and just the stories that are in some songs are absolutely brilliant narratives in a tiny bundle. Look at the guy who jumped off Tallahatchie Bridge ([Ode to Billie Joe – Bobbie Gentry](#)) it's a brilliant story, a young girl knows something about it but you never know or find out. If you'd written that down as a short story it would be perfect. Sometimes lines or jokes influence, you don't steal it but deconstruct it and put it back together with new words to try and get the same joke. I have done that, sometimes not as affectively as the original.



SPOTLIGHT

Continued...

What are you working on at the moment?

I've written a lot of short stories this year. The next one will be about gentrification (wink). I've got several on the go that I haven't sent off. I've got a novel and a series of short stories, some people call them the 'Georgio stories' because of the recurring character. I sent it off and got a few rejections which knocked me back but a lot of people said to keep going. I've continued with some short stories and had a few published. The main thing is I'm doing a lot more writing and the more you write the better you get.

The Scenario

It's the zombie apocalypse and you are trapped in a library. You have burnt all but three of the books in the library to keep you warm.

Which three have you saved from the flames?

Is there a book like 'How to Defeat Zombies and How to Rebuild Society'? If there was a book like that I'd have to save it.

You can have that as an extra.

The book I would re-read and never tire of is Clockwork Orange by Anthony Burgess. Probably my favourite book of all time. I could read that numerous times.

Anna Karenina by Tolstoy. I have started it and never finished it. It's one of those books everyone should read. It's also long so it would take up a lot of time. All those empty zombie filled nights.

One I haven't read for a long time is Milton's Paradise Lost, which is the most fantastic story (in every meaning of the word). The most fantastic ever written. I find it easier than Shakespeare, it's packed full of truth. And that's long as well! You could probably read it over and over again and get something different from it every time.

**The Calm, The Storm** (5 pages)

by William Telford

The last time me and my brother went out together drinking was the day he came home after being away in Thailand where he was also in the slammer. He'd been caught trying to smuggle counterfeit Viagra in to, or out of, the country, I forget which it was, and had been given some years in the hole, I forget how many. My brother had experienced all kinds of terrible stuff in that calaboose – guys cage fighting to the death at gun point, people forced to eat dead rat fricassée, a cellmate who wouldn't quit singing Steely Dan – none of which had affected him one iota.

'It was hell,' he said. 'The only English language books in that jug's library were by Danielle Steel. Look, there's only so many times you can read about a rich woman dating an asshole during a personal crisis.'

My brother had this big scar running down his face, from just above his right eye down past his cheek, looked a bit like a roadmap of the M1, but I couldn't remember if it was there before he went to South East Asia or he'd brought it back as a souvenir.

'Let's get a drink,' he said. 'Hey, what about hitting the Black Boar, remember that place? Remember the night they burned that place to the ground?'

'Yeah.' I said, scratching my chin. 'It's, well, not there now. Got burned to the ground, remember?'

'What?' my brother said. 'You mean no one rebuilt it?'

I shook my head. 'There's an apartment block there now, fifteen storeys, got a little supermarket at the bottom.'

My brother looked sort of crestfallen, then, raising a finger, said, 'I know, what about the Counting House, place that used to be a bank before it became a bikers' hangout, we had some great times there, didn't we? Is that still there?'

'It is,' I said.

'What are we waiting for,' said my brother, tugging me by the sleeve.



A few minutes later and my brother and me were standing at the bar in the Counting House. A big fan whirred up above, making all these potted palm leaves sway like they were doing a little slowmo dance. Some guys in suits and some women in dresses were discussing house prices and mortgage rates and stuff they'd seen on Netflix.

'What do you mean you don't serve beer?' my brother said at the guy wearing a bowtie, standing behind the bar.

'This is a cocktail bar,' the guy in the bowtie said. 'We only serve cocktails. We do shots though.'

'Great,' my brother said, 'we'll have two pints of shots.'
The guy in the bowtie explained the theory of shots and my brother still asked for two pints of shots and then we were asked to leave.

'How about the Hangman's Noose?' he said as the doorman showed us the door.

'Yeah, well, it's a student pub now,' I sniffed, putting up my collar against the chill as we stepped on to the street.

'Student pub! Great!' said my brother, leaving his coat open. 'I love student pubs. Remember that time we were in that student pub and there was this anarcho punk band on and we took a whacking lot of speed and ended up getting arrested at an anti-vivisection protest.'

'Correction,' I said. 'You took a whacking load of speed and got arrested at an anti-vivisection demo. I stayed in the bar watching the band, remember.'

'Yeah, well, what a night,' my brother said. 'This is going to be great.'
Not long later we were at the Hangman's Noose and my brother was standing by the bar with his mouth wide open and looking about.

'Hey,' he said. 'Where's all the students?'

I pointed out to him that the place was rammed with students. I told him we were the only two people in the joint who weren't students.



‘These aren’t students?’ my brother said, dismayed. ‘These are like office workers or something, it’s like we walked into an estate agents’ convention. Since when did students start looking like ordinary assholes?’ Then he put his head to one side, raising his left ear and said. ‘And since when did James Taylor make a comeback?’

‘That’s Ed Sheeran,’ I said.

‘What!’ said my brother. ‘Students listen to this stuff? Seriously?’ I told him to hang fire with the criticism until after he’d heard Adele, but he was already putting his empty pint glass on the counter and telling me to get moving.

‘Let’s find a place with some life,’ he said. ‘Nearly everyone in here’s drinking tea, for Chrissakes.’

We walked down to the Tradesman’s Entrance, as my brother reminisced about the night it got trashed when a bunch of skinheads invaded an Anti-Nazi League ska gig.

‘They sure turned ugly that night,’ he said, giving a whistle. ‘Not that any of them were Robert Redford to start with. But what a show, remember how the band stopped playing and waded in among the scrapping? Who says trombone players ain’t tasty?’

I gave a brief, unenthusiastic, laugh. We’d arrived at the Tradesman’s Entrance, and when we went inside the place was full of people having a full-on sit-down dinner. My brother picked up a menu. ‘Pistachio tacos?’ he said. ‘Pickles in a mason jar? It’s like I’m back in that Thai cooler. Come on, I just lost my appetite, let’s find a real bar.’

I told him I knew a real bar, though I was praying it was still a real bar because, to be truthful, since the kids got born I’d given real bars, or even fake bars, a wide berth. But I sort of recalled being in this place on some work-related night out and it having beer and it looking like a pub, and so we headed there.



‘You’re kidding,’ my brother said as we strode into the Bunch of Roses. ‘Is that woman over there the only person in this whole dive not wearing a bushy beard?’

He ordered two beers and they came in little bottles with a green label. ‘This stuff is three and a half per cent proof,’ my brother grumbled. ‘You could give this to babies. And what does “gluten free, vegan” mean? I mean, it’s still beer, right?’

I told him it was and we settled back to watch a guy stood up behind a microphone stand at the end of the bar. He started reciting poetry. It had something to do with suffering from depression. When he finished the girl without the bushy beard got up and started reciting poetry too. It also had something to do with suffering from depression. Then a guy in a baggy jumper, but still with a bushy beard, got up and recited a poem which was not about depression but was about Syria, so it kind of fit. Everyone clapped. My brother said he wanted to slash his wrists with the jagged edge from a smashed bottle of gluten-free vegan beer.

‘Come on,’ he said. ‘Let’s get the hell out of here. There’s got to be a nightclub, a proper one, or a casino, or something, somewhere, with some action.’

I told him there probably was, but it was getting late, and I had kids now, and, besides, I’d drunk a pint of lager and a bottle of gluten-free vegan beer and I had a busy day tomorrow.

‘It’s half past eight,’ he said, looking at his watch and shaking his head. ‘What happened to this city? It used to be jumping, used to be happening? Where did all the fun go, the spirit, the excitement?’

I told my brother a lot of it had gone way out to the Far East with him. I reminded him that he’d been personally responsible for a lot of what had gone on in bars, particularly a lot of the broken glass and smashed furniture, the fights and even the fires. I reminded him that he’d been banned from every bar in town at one stage or another. I reminded him that I had too.



‘Occupational hazard,’ he said, as we headed for the exit. ‘That’s what it was like back then. Every single night. If there wasn’t an ambulance in the street and a cherry top ablaze no one had had themselves a good time. Come on, where’s all that gone?’

I told my brother times had changed. People had changed. Places had changed. But what I didn’t know was whether the people changed and then changed the places or the places changed and then changed the people. ‘But whatever,’ I said. ‘I’ve got to get home.’

‘Sure,’ he said. ‘You don’t mind if I...’

‘No,’ I said, shaking my head. We embraced. I zipped up my jacket, started walking away, then for a second stopped and glanced over my shoulder. I saw my brother walking in the other direction, walking into the night, into the dark. I went to give a little wave, but stopped. He wasn’t looking back. I remembered this thing I once read, that someone once said, about how people sicken of the calm, once they’ve known the storm. And then I turned around and walked towards home. And that was the last time me and my brother ever went out together drinking, ever again.

Stonehouse Market

by Laura Quigley

A true story as a poem
for the Stonehouse Timebank
100 Homes Project
April 2017



Mrs Margaret Graham,
Aeronaut,
ascended in her
hot air balloon
surrounded by
fifty thousand
flocking into
Stonehouse Market.
In the murmur
of bright faces, she saw
maids come from milking,
young drummers a'drumming,
at least nine ladies dancing,
lords eagerly leaping -
the birds of all feathers,
they shouted 'hurray!'
as they looked up together
on that glorious day.

Mrs Abigail Williams,
Zero-hours-worker,
sits alone in the café
having a latte.
Around her, vans dancing,
lorries rumbling,
shopfronts crumbling,
cars jamming in the car park at Lidl,
deserted Executive Lets
locked by crazy paving
behind security gates
and hoardings shut out
the sky.
Above her an etching
of a hot air balloon,
one hundred years rising
but she's too busy texting to
look up.



Gentrification (2pages)

by Tim Francis

My mama wasn't a Sloane spouse
High drama doesn't disown Strauss
Dalai Lama mustn't flee Stonehouse

Sly apathy give for banning meat meant for her
Try Manly bib score angling seat for councilor
My Family lived in Manor Street half ounce for sir

Car is urging past the fenced off station
Far from working class and gentrification

Two room tenement
New boom decadent
fuse spoon detriment
Use rune sentiment

Coy and latrine expressionist
Soya canteen geneticist
Royal marine anesthetist

Deadened curled sure
Second world war

Naff fight reach sub in human heat
Laugh right teach hub in fusion beat
Half pint in each pub in Union Street

Par with quirky lass with sailors inflation
Far from working class and gentrification

My daughter went to High Street School, crack in the way
same one as my mama she was no fool, back in the day
Seen it on the BBC
Heard it on the Q and T
Is it the end of the TCE
Now there's a new community

Are you Shirking past the rented new nation
Far from Working Class and gentrification
Theatre spared no malice sold for an E
We've shared the Palace for an Academy
Bared though Firking last Doghouse with elation
Far from Working Class and gentrification

Hull Awakening

By Tim Francis

Note: This is an audio/video poem. The following link will take you to vimeo where you can watch/listen to the poem.

[Hull Awakening](#)

Big Brother

By Arushi Singh

And in a blip
The screen turned
Big Brother is watching
Your every dream
Your lies are truth
Your war our peace
His world enamoured
With The expanse of
Corporate reality
Try your luck at the job market
Of liars and politicians
It's the only dystopia
His post war dream
Your lies are truth
Your war our peace
Don't let them tell you
What words to spill



Smoke Springs

by Arushi Singh

Or we a drunken class of heroes
Created winds out of smoke springs
Or we prostitutes of the gun
Traded bullets for our airy nothings
Or we lovers of the narcotic haze
Faded yesterday to yesterday
Or we a children of the corporate frenzies
In despair that love in paper see
Or we bastards of the political
Sold our souls to the judiciary
Or we soldiers of the war on peace
Doomed to shed your blood for these
Or we strangers in an empty space
That love from lust didn't separate

END OF FEATURE