

## Making Sounds, Making Poems week 2



### **The Whistler and His Dog**

The HMV dog, a little boy and his dog,  
an ugly dog and a beautiful woman,  
a whistler from 1913, and it's not short either.

I wound up the gramophone my dad brought home  
and played that record to destruction.  
And we all sang along, at seventy eight  
revolutions per minute.

### **Bread, Love and Dreams**

Saw them at the Traverse  
*Switch out the sun*  
That was Glasgow, 1969.

*Last night I hit the bottle  
and today it hit me back*

What a night.  
There was thunder  
in my head.

### **Whistle While You Work**

Whistle and bring the devil.  
It was not ladylike to whistle.  
In the 1940s my friend and I  
were so disappointed if no-one  
gave us a wolf whistle.

Now no-one whistles.  
I really envied the lads who could whistle,  
two fingers in their teeth.  
It's all to do with your teeth.  
Orthodontists have probably  
wrecked it, these days.

### **She Loves You**

Culture shock on a family holiday in Folkestone.  
I was sent to the pictures with my sister  
to see A Hard Day's Night.  
It was 1964 and I was thirteen.  
I'd only ever heard classical music at home.

This week I found Peter Sellers reading  
the Beatles, in four different accents.  
She Luffs You. Ja! Ja! Ja!

### **That Old Shady Nook**

I ran a Scout troupe and I remember all the campfire songs.  
Clementine, and By the Babbling Brook.  
That was Donald Peers in 1944.

*That old shady nook  
by the babbling brook  
That's where I fell in love with you*

A sweet voice, high tenor, old fashioned.  
Bear in mind, those were the war years.  
We were in dire straits.

### **National Service**

I was very naughty and got out  
of parade by offering to work  
the gramophone at the bottom  
of the Control Tower.

They were all out there  
square-bashing  
to the Royal Airforce March,  
left, right, left, right.  
And I'd move the needle.  
left, right, left, right – left –  
left, right, left...

### **Equestrienne**

The waltz, the three-time beat  
that saddles the cantering pony in my head.  
*Her spangles twinkle, his pale flanks shine*  
*Every hair of his tail is fine*

I was a child in June  
on the northern hills  
where *his hoof beats fall like rain*  
*over and over and over again.*

### **I can't give everything away**

What gets me is the rhythm  
and that blistering sax solo  
and that opening line  
*I know something's very wrong*

*Saying more, but meaning less*  
*Saying no, but meaning yes*  
I've cried to this one often.  
It means a lot, on so many levels  
*I can't give everything away*

**Starting Today**

*Pick yourself up*

*dust yourself off*

*start all over again*

music and poetry

are touchstones

for our lives

**Creative Conversations** | Mayfair Centre | Poems inspired by Desert Island Discs, in collaboration with musician Adrian Plant, with the words of Joanna, Robin, Patsy, and Gordon. Edited by Jean Atkin [www.jeanatkin.com](http://www.jeanatkin.com)