

LOUIS MACNEICE  
'THE NATIONAL GALLERY'

The kings who slept in the caves are awake and out,  
The pictures are back in the Gallery; Old Masters twirl their  
cadenzas, whisper and shout,  
Hundreds of windows are open again on a vital but changeless  
world—a day dream free from doubt.

Here are the angels playing their lutes at the Birth—  
Clay become porcelain; the pattern, the light, the ecstasy which  
make sense of the earth;  
Here is Gethsemane scooped like a glacier, here is Calvary calmly  
assured of its own worth.

Here are the gold haloes, opaque as coins,  
The pink temple of icing-sugar, the blandly scalloped rock which  
joins  
Primitive heaven and earth; here is our Past wiping the smuts  
from his eyes, girding his loins.

Here saint may be gorgeous, hedonist austere,  
The soul's nativity drawn of the earth and earthy, our brother the  
Ass being near,  
The petty compartments of life thrown wind-wide open, our  
lop sided instincts and customs atoned for here.

Here only too have the senses unending joy:  
Draperies slip but slip no further and expectation cannot cloy;  
The great Venetian buttocks, the great Dutch bosoms, remain in  
their time—their prime—beyond alloy.

And the Painter's little daughter, far-off-eyed,  
Still stretches for the cabbage white, her sister dawdling at her  
side;  
That she grew up to be mad does not concern us, the idyl and the  
innocent poise abide.

Aye; the kings are back from their caves in the Welsh hills,  
Refreshed by darkness, armed with colour, sleight-of-hand and  
imponderables,  
Armed with Uccello's lances, with beer-mugs, dragons' tongues,  
peacocks' eyes, bangles and spangles and flounces and frills;

Armed with the full mystique of the commonplace,  
 The lusts of the eye, the gullet, the loins, the memory—grace after  
 living and grace  
 Before some plain-clothes death grabs at the artist's jemmy,  
 leaves us yet one more half-solved case.

For the quickness of the heart deceives the eye,  
 Reshuffling the themes : a Still Life lives while portrayed flesh and  
 feature die  
 Into fugues and subterfuges of being as enveloping and as aloof as  
 a frosty midnight sky.

So fling wide the windows, this window and that, let the air  
 Blowing from times unconfined to Then, from places further and  
 fuller than There,  
 Purge our particular time-bound unliving lives, rekindle a pence-  
 cost in Trafalgar Square.

## LAWRENCE DURRELL

### STUDIES IN GENIUS : VI

## GRODDECK

IF the work and teachings of Georg Walther Groddeck (1866–1934) are not as well known today as they deserve to be it is perhaps largely his own fault. His first job, he considered, was to heal; the writer and the teacher took second place. Over and above this Groddeck also knew how quickly the disciple can convert the living word into the dead canon. He knew that the first disciple is also very often the first perverter of the truth. And this knowledge informs his written work with that delightful self-deprecating irony which so many of his readers profess to find out of place; an irony which says very clearly 'I am not inviting you to follow me, but to follow yourself. I am only here to help if you need me.' The age does need its Groddecks, and will continue to need them until it can grasp the full majesty and terror of the 'It' which he has talked so much about in his various books, and particularly in that neglected masterpiece *The Book of the It*.