**Pictures and Poetry July 2020. The art of L S Lowry**

**Poetry inspired by the workshop**

**Girl with Red Shoes by J Brady**

The red shoes are far more than
a piece of footwear.
They are the beating heart of a girl
that youth alone can paint.
Her head bowed low marks the
beckoning tale of a woman’s life.
She quickens her pace…to outstep
the marriage thief.
Her shroud-like gown carries the dead weight
of women’s history.
Unseen blackened lives.
A woman, she knows, is a
diminished thing.
She who sacrifices red for black.
Black paint.
The grieving garb of a
mother with an unwanted male child.

**First Appearance, Second Appearance by PS (written to “Going To Work” Lowry painting)**
At first appearance:
People like clods of earth
A bus noses forwards haltingly
Wires drawn tight across the skyline
Buildings like blocks – some with towers,
Others with chimneys belching black smoke

At second appearance:
The people’s feet are moving
Everyone wears a hat
Murmurations form
Humanity dances with industry
And the colour catches my eye

**L S Lowry by Sue Bicknell**
He put industrial scenes on the map
Peopled with matchstick men wearing a flat cap
Trudged around collecting rent
Kept himself detached
People were dispatched
To factories with black bent backs

He also painted calming sea
Sketch pad balanced on his knee
Capturing the ghostly silent scene
No people lumbering around
Wondering ‘what if’ we all drowned
Under the ocean of aquamarine

**Long shoes big hats, fashion does distancing by Sue Bicknell**
She wore clown shoes and felt safe
Topped with a big hat
to keep others away
Underneath the brim
she was masked

Important to be safe
in this Covid world
Fashion doesn’t matter
only lives matter

**A Renga of Haikus by David Winbow**
Flat ‘ats for the lads,
the foreman wears a bowler,
just think it over.

Top-hats for the nobs,
Up-class vicars, and Your Grace,
All heads know their place.

Mortar-boards for hire,
To wear for graduation-
Such celebration!

Bare heads? For tinkers!
Turn your pockets inside out?
That’s just for drinkers

Headwear’s litany
Has changed its meaning often,
And now forgotten.

**Lockdown headlines   Don’t take your dog for a walk in Cumbria-it’s closed, by David Winbow**
Don’t take me for a walk, I’m closed.
Don’t take me into your house- untrained,
my distance is unsocial.
The safest thing is to ignore me,
imagine I don’t exist,
which should be easy,
I very rarely do,
not in your country, the here and now.
I’m mostly “then”.
Much more me, and more fulfilling;
less full of fools, those self-obsessed.
I’ve looked at Self, and found it lacking
Most of the qualities I admire.
I go elsewhere.
Don’t take me for a walk-
I’ve been there.

**Red Shoes, by Jayne Arnott**
Black against the white
solace in my solitude
the splash of scarlet

Black of Sunday best
my secret smile well hidden
the joy of red shoes

Black hat turned up brim
so plain and unembellished
red shoes my story

**Lowry people? by David Winbow**
That was me, I grew up there,
but we were no matchsticks
discarded after Woodbines.

Into the sulphurous valley we came,
by bike, on foot
in the sweated suits we wore for years.

Into the choking splutter
of half-lit coke stoves-
the only warmth in our day

except the well-greased cap pushed back
as Teddy Bees held court,
his humour lifting this to something else.

What held us here? Grim satisfaction
of hard graft, done well-
of being trusted.

Not by the bosses- the ones we cursed,
or estimators we tried to beat,
but by other grimy souls.

Only outsiders saw us as matchsticks-
they had time to paint.

**Footstep by Footstep by Sean Summers**
Footstep by footstep
Dreamless gloom punctured by dark
Covering the world

Footprints and tracks
A repressive atmosphere
And rusty grey hew

Sunless sky and heart
Wings of birds melt away
As balloons soar

The days merge
Entwined with masses
So trudge along

To wish and to want
Feeble minds manipulated
An artificial solution

Necks and spines suffer
The labour of earthly desire
So trudge along
But do so with purpose

**Going to Work by Gill Betts, based on the painting of the same name by L S Lowry**
The air is cold.
It’s early.
Too early to be drawn from bed.

The factory calls.
Weary workers wend their way.
Relentless day ahead.

Trudging to the factory gate
Through Winter snow
And heat of Summer.

Spin the yarn. Weave the cloth.
Cotton picked in far-off lands.
Slaves to a different Master