**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