

## NEVER MIND

Melanie Rands

never mind  
about getting there  
our 'primary purpose'  
is to sit  
inside this poem  
an air-conditioned car  
with the cd player on  
watching as  
the red tail lights  
in front  
disappear  
it's  
dew point  
in the ozone  
as we drive into  
a shrouded landscape  
of shrubland  
and mamaku  
if we were birds  
we'd be home already  
mustard seeds and tarragon  
the tide coming in  
we would fly over  
every  
thing  
sunlight falling on dairy farms  
bush flies on dog bones  
undoing boots  
at the back door  
salt spray white  
flowers shining  
in the tea tree  
as  
the dog looks up  
from his bones  
is this a bird day?

sail rock and the skyliner tearooms  
at the top of the brynderwyns  
bream head and the hen and chicks  
and all that  
environmental  
impact!  
ineradicable  
the last traces of the  
Carter Holt Harvey production forest  
clear-felled, the hills bare  
and we complain  
about

- climate change
- pot-holes

• relative humidity in the passing lane  
our love affair  
with gravity  
un be lieve able  
the  
line of logging trucks  
is still /  
not moving  
an hour's drive from home  
the gravel spits and cracks  
as salt marshes and mangroves move under  
motorways  
all the way to  
manaia  
but my 'primary purpose' is to  
read you  
this poem  
never mind about getting there  
and  
the low water tide mark  
is  
sand on my feet  
with  
water up to  
every where  
and  
the hum  
of waves on the shore  
is the hum  
of cars  
on the motorway





when the boat comes down  
 a dadakulaci lies unconscious on the ground  
 4 nights of singing the horizon away  
 the banana boat swinging  
 16 knots into diesel sunsets  
 on her twin Armstrong-Sulzer 6 cylinder engines  
 Bob 'Gin' rocking her golden whiskey cabin  
 for 3 days straight  
 the night my father came  
 with 2000 tonnes of ripening cargo  
 her quota of islanders bursting  
 to  
 over  
 f  
 l  
 o  
 w  
 kai vulagi on the bunks & everyone else down below  
 all their spirits rolled into one  
 the night my father came  
 with whales' teeth and a turtle shell  
 on the Matua  
 all 355.2 feet of her round  
 Cape Brett  
 and up  
 the Rangitoto channel  
**when the boat comes down**  
 to Mrs Harvey's boarding house  
 on  
 Hepburn Street in Freeman's Bay  
 a gas stove and a double bed  
 in her refrigerated hold

**Melanie Rands** is a visual artist, poet and businesswoman of Scottish, Hawaiian and Fijian heritage. She has a fine arts degree from Elam and completed her Masters of Creative Writing at the University of Auckland in 2011. She has spent a lot of time researching and writing for a company called ecostore which she started with her partner in 1993 when they were living in a permaculture eco-village up North. She believes that integrating art and business can be of huge benefit to both fields.

**Andrea Low** is an artist and writer living in Auckland. Andrea's family can be found in all corners of the Pacific and she comes from a long line of artists, performers, musicians and sailors. Alongside her practice as an artist Andrea is a Phd candidate in Ethnomusicology at the University of Auckland researching popular Hawaiian music in the early 20th century.

Figure 1. Andrea Low, *Fire Caravan*, 2011, Courtesy of the artist.