

I didn't really know Martin personally, although we were both often present at various literary events and occasions during the 1970s and 80s. But he had a memorable and distinctive presence. He was an erudite, creative and insightful figure in Australian Poetry – kaleidoscopic and syncretic. I recall discovering his work in the early 1970s not long after I returned from living in London, just after my first poetry collection was published there. I was drawn to his long sequence poem 'The Blood Aquarium', and its magnetic title. I recall reading it in a journal. And I was fascinated by a later poem 'The Typewriter, Considered as a Bee-Trap' – with its marvellous and ludic stratagem. The final line of 'The Blood Aquarium' is epigraphic :

'and all these words have teeth like hungry rivers.'

Joanne Burns