

Releasing Keith

By Chris Giovacchini

The air was light until we got to the slot.

The ebb adverse to the 20 knot southwesterly

Created huge, choppy, breaking swells beneath the Gate.

The widows expectation of a reverent ceremony,

Incense, rose petals, and prayer, was curtailed by sailboat

Handling necessity windblown spray and hanging on.

As the skipper nodded it was time,

She fussed with the funerary paraphernalia, albeit

Abbreviated by preconditions, and emptied the contents

Of the plastic bag to leeward.

He swirled in our wake east of the north tower,

She glanced back over the stern, "There's Keith!" she said.

A milky gray apparition in the blue-green trough between the waves.

A nebula of stars,

Frozen pulse of the Northern Lights,

A cloud formed by a paintbrush dipped
Into warm soapy water,

As a wisp of fog falling
Over the headlands, he swirled and
Expanded, a few rose petals floated above his countenance,

Remnants of a life now water soluble,
The tail of a shooting star momentarily iridescent,
“He’s free now,” I thought, “To go around the world.”

Sailor’s Last Wish

By Chris Giovacchini

If only to be the sea,
Of a Bristol sailboat
I’d have no need.
Nor for manly masks and banners flying,
Finally, ropes and lines untied.
No worrying over charts in dim red glow,
No fear of storm, no watchful eye,
Nothing to stow,
No tide, fog, nor errant fix plotted
Could lead me astray.
Eddies of sunlight diamonds on water

Would swirl through my veins.
Come the time, my helm to lash,
Stoke my bones in a driftwood fire,
Bubbling in black creosote,
Then, scatter what remains of the ash.
On a fresh breeze, moon less night
High sea or low, let me mingle
With phosphorescence,
At last,
At one,
With the flow.

Ahead of Her Times

By Chris Giovacchini

Her bosom braced the bow of the clipper
Heaving, her white breasts taut
Against foam and froth of the Horn
Salty tears rained down into the deep
Hair blowing, sword clutched
Tightly between her thighs
She flew, faster than any
Angelic tomboy in a mans world
Of tar, oakum, rum, and tobacco
Smelling of whores, of harbors

She remained a virgin, lily white, impenetrable
Hardened white pine to the core
Her virtue uncompromisable
By the relentless lashing of Poseidon's tongue
Finally, seduced to ruin, on the rocks, by San Juan

Now, at a hundred and twenty four
A contented purse to her lips
Briny sparkle in her eye
She gazes out over the boats at El Rosario
These “sailors” that stopover can’t fathom
The oceans she faced down
Nor the countless nights spent at sea
So alone and so in love.