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THE LITTLE THREDBO RIVER; DISPUTING WITH LEE

Geoff Page

The Little Thredbo River

The Little Thredbo River
is all I need of nature

its conversation over rocks
the silence of its pools

its manageable scale perhaps
14 Ks in all

its clarity unspoiled
water as it wants to be

vegetation incidental
alpine grasses alpine moss

gums I've yet to learn the names of.
The Little Thredbo river is

not unlike a poem when it's
finally 'abandoned'

a subtle movement over stones
that stillness at the finish.

Disputing with Lee

A good solo doesn't care who plays it.
—Lee Konitz (1927–2020)

Like the universe in turn
the solo doesn't care.
It lingers briefly in a shape

that's born for evanescence
even when there *is* a tape.
The solo doesn't care

but knows in every detail
the person who has made it,
her exaltation and despairs,

his dogged hours in one small room,
the sound that is a signature
or billboard with a name.

It understands the shape of hunger,
the waywardness of rent.
It keeps the teachings of instructors,

the maxims that persist
from back before the instrument
became a voice in flight.

The solo knows its own uniqueness
and how, despite the press of chords,
it cannot be the same.

It knows its true epiphanies,
those very few across a life
defining their creator yet.

So, yes, the solo doesn't care,
no more than does a reach of stars,
but nor does it forget.

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Geoff Page

Geoff Page is based in Canberra and has published 25 collections of poetry as well as two novels and five verse novels. His recent books include *Gods and Uncles* (Pitt Street Poetry 2015) and *Hard Horizons* (Pitt Street Poetry 2017). His *Elegy for Emily: a verse biography* (Puncher & Wattmann) and *In medias res* (Pitt Street Poetry) were published in 2019. *Codicil*, a mini-selected translated into Chinese, was issued by Flying Islands (Macao) in 2020. He also reviews Australian poetry extensively and has run monthly poetry readings and jazz concerts in Canberra for many years.

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