

Fire Poi

We dipped wire wool in paraffin
and spun it round on lengths of chain.
Fiery orbits whooshed and spat
sparks into the moonless night.

A gang of men with goatskin drums
beat the shadows and the stars
through the needle of the now,
sweat dripping from their shiny brows.

They stopped beside the old oak tree.
The MC in his ragged shirt
read lines about the universe
he'd scribbled down that day.

Two women lit the labyrinth
and people braved the paraffin
fumes and leaping flames to enter
the mysteries of midsummer.

Then wild dancing, downtime spent
sharing chocolate in a yurt.
And some way off, the children dozed
dreaming in geodesic domes.

It took all day to fold the canvas,
to take down struts and pole lathes,
and pack the stove into the truck.
The convoy ground its way across
the field, and rumbled down the lane.
It dispersed along the web of grey,
towards the dole, to schools and jobs,
the rentier life, or who knows what.

Yet every vehicle held a spark
buried deep within a tool box,
tucked inside a glove compartment,
or smouldering within the heart.