From the start we saw our editorship as something like an airport for incoming translations, an agency for discovering new foreign poets and new translators, who then might pass inland to more permanent residences in published books. We even toyed with the fantasy of sending to every known poet—offering to their curiosity a free copy of each issue. **Ted Hughes**

*MPT* issues unique and necessary challenges to that precinct of parochialism: the English-reading world. **Peter Bush**

Always intelligent, always discriminating, often spectacularly ahead of what comes to be seen as important, it is essential reading for anyone who does not wish to be imprisoned in a monoglot culture. **Elaine Feinstein**

*MPT* is the only truly international literary journal in Britain. **James Kirkup**

*MPT* performs a unique and invaluable service—extending the range of world-reading, and making all those who care about poetry feel grateful to be part of a larger community. **Andrew Motion**

No other magazine opens so many new and rediscovered windows in the ancient house of English. **Carol Rumens**

*MPT* has been invaluable. At a time of frequent provincialism and narrowing, it has opened windows on landscapes of feeling, of insight otherwise inaccessible. Danny, Weissbort's selections and editorship have been much more than a 'literary' act. They have argued for freedom against despotism, for the paradox of hope in even the darkest of poetry. One need only visit some of the more difficult points on the horizon to know what *MPT* has meant to its contributors and readers. **George Steiner**
the smell of the stone and of
morning air. A door will open.
The turmoil of the streets
will be the turmoil of your heart
in the lost light.

It will be you — still and clear.

[28 March 1950]

Halina Poświatowska
Poland

Translated by Anna Gąsienica-Byrcyn

Halina Poświatowska (1935-1967) published three collections of poems
between 1956 and 1965, and two more collections were published posthumously.
She studied at Smith College and Jagiellonian University in Cracow where she
graduated with an MA in History of Philosophy. Her health was delicate and
she was operated on twice for a serious heart disease; she died in 1967 at the age
of 32. For her literary work, Poświatowska posthumously received the Pierścień
award at the Gdańsk Autumn Literary Festival in 1967. She is well known and
widely read in Poland. In 1997 four volumes of her collected work appeared in
Cracow.

Anna Gąsienica-Byrcyn is a graduate student at the University of
Illinois and was awarded a PhD in 2000 for her thesis on ‘Aspects of Myth in
the Poetry of Halina Poświatowska’.

from Dzień dzisiejszy

inside me
a tree grows
the branches cling
to my veins tightly
the roots
drink my blood
dry my lips
turn brown
inside me
hunger

from Cda do rąk

Greetingsto you my palms, my grasping fingers, and my finger smashed
by the car door. My palm X-rayed looks like a sprained wing, like a tiny
piece of bone drawn by its own contour. My left hand’s annular finger
once decorated by a ring is widowed now, deprived of its adornment.
The one who gave me the ring long since has no fingers. His arms are
woven with the tree’s roots into one.

My hands have so often touched the frozen palms of the dead, and
the warm, strong palms of the living. They know how to caress
unusually by touch losing the space that separates existence from existence, and heaven from earth. My hands knowing the pain of helplessness cling to each other like two frightened birds, homeless, blindly seeking everywhere the trace of your hands.

* 

the river flows inside me

with infinite patience
I caress the rock
I run my fingers
along its sharp edge
so the rock would soften
humbly
and cling to my lips

the river flows inside me

I wash leaves for the trees
and deceitfully
from under their feet
I eat up the golden sand
so they would move inside me
with their swaying twigs
so they would touch my lips

the river flows inside me

I stretch my hand
over the cat’s back
fur sings
panic grows in the boughs
trees
flutter


the melody chimed in my ears
which they said simply existed
but they were kneeling and were immersed in listening
with closed eyes

my lips – they said
are not lips
but a hot glowing flame
dashing out sparks of words
the words they were unable to understand

my legs they said – but this is a lie
I am dressed in the gold of the earth
in a shining
silver skirt
made of angel feathers

from Wiersze wybrane

madonnas with infants in their arms
soothe the sadness of the universe
peaceful in their tenderness
eternal in their half-smile

the walls whitened with worry
congeal in perfection
the corners cling to each other
the proper dimensions blossom

and there is a garden
water lilies bathe in the pools
a woman with slender fingers
holds a boy on her knees

*

I broke off the branch of love
I buried it in the earth
and look
my garden has blossomed
one cannot kill love
if you bury it in the earth
it grows back
if you toss it into the air
it grows leaflike wings
dropped into the water
it flashes with gills
immersed in the night
it shines
so I wanted to bury it in my heart
but my heart was home to my love
my heart opened its heart's door
and it rang out with song from wall to wall
my heart danced on my fingertips
so I buried my love in my head
and people asked
why my head has blossomed
why my eyes shine star-like
and why my lips are brighter than the dawn
I wanted to tear this love to pieces
but it was supple it entangled my hands
and my hands are bound with love
people ask whose prisoner I am