The Red Room Company, Macquarie Fields High School
& Sydney Conservatorium of Music present

Nine Visions For Citizens and Soldiers

a poetic response to Governor Lachlan Macquarie's inaugural speech, 1810
written by students at Macquarie Fields High School, 2010

I. I am Sanguine in my Hopes

Every finger
of every hand,
every arm
of every body,
every body
of every man.
Twist, coil, release.
They were not meant to be.
Conciliation, harmony, unanimity,
the fingers flex, bend and curl
ready to make a move
ready to take hold.

The finger of a Governor
slowly curls around a heavy pen,
looping, underlining, dotting,
securely fastening a deal.
The finger fusing with the busy page
as it scrawls across time.
The body of a man
happily absorbs the chirping cicadas of night,
sees the invasion of the busy fingers,
allowing eyes to stare into the sky,
allowing bodies to reflect the dark of day.

The grip tightens,
the imploring blood rushes to fingertips,
as if desperate to leave a stain.
I am sanguine in my hopes
I am not going to let go.

II. A Friend and Protector

A forlorn seed
adrift in the breeze
plants himself wilfully,
entrenched
in the sand.
Roots intertwine,
creating dense forests.
Leaves start to spread,
soaking up light,
pulling, straining,
moving ever outwards.

Roots protrude,
Like worms from the ground,
writhing, twisting,
sentinels in a murky sea.
Leaves dressed in
suits of salt,
hunting, searching,
for scraps of light.

III. The Rising Colony

This colony, rising.
The harbour's youthful sun, rising.
Invade indigenous lands, rising.
Proclaim them as savages, rising.
Bring in convicts, rising.
Clear away natural vegetation, rising.
Destroy the land with cattle, rising.
The golden population, rising.
Two world wars and a depression, rising.
Sea levels, rising.
Water bills, rising.
Cost of living, rising.
Petrol prices, rising
rising
rising.

Teetering on the precipice...
Don't slip.

IV. The Cordial Support of Those Gentlemen

Chained together
shackled to the world's austerity
ragged, unruly men
in worn out uniforms.
A Circular Quay
A Square Lock
You broke the chains
You broke the rules

A man is pulled from the crowd,
his cuffs removed from sore wrists
and in his hands, a gavel is placed.
One judge, one poet, one architect.
You gave them a living, gave them respect.

Your advisors
who once supported you cordially,
now condemn your ideals.
Waves crash against sandstone cliffs.
Confidence erodes, salting the sea.

V. All Classes and Descriptions

Like rich red lipstick
staining the rims of glasses,
you left an imprint of your dreams.
What did we turn it into?

Carpe Diem
Sees this Day

How far can you see?
We are brown bricks
brown lawns.
We are rust speckled jalopies.
We are botox on a yacht.
We are a gleaming Mercedes.

The shadows of equality,
slipping through our fingers.
We can't turn them into something of substance.
We won't

VI. In a Peaceable Manner!

We shall live together:
many streams merging into
one flow
one body

Taming the serpent,
the rivers and valleys
an empty canvas
fading to bone
united at point blank.

This world we live in,
just an illusion
as within it lie two more worlds,
two different types of people,
or a person and the shadow of a person
looking out to where the horizon meets the sun.

VII. All Species of Vice and Immorality

Pervading what we hold most dear
as your tight system conditions our ethics,
moulding us into perfect crusaders.
Oh Macquarie if you could only see us now,
our communion of beer and watching the footy.
Your words filter to us like sunlight through an awning,
spilling over the land as we see glimpses of faith,
echoes of your wisdom
in chardonnay, manicured lawns
and a newsreader's plastic smile.

VIII. Will Now Terminate.

Attention

We Will Now Terminate

Terminate Those Dissentions
Those Jealousies
Those Previous Errors

We Will Throw
Society In equilibrium

We will flatten
Caress
Trim
And Reboot Into
The Destruction Of The
Hierarchy

We Will Become
EFFICIENTLY STREAMLINED
And All Tarnished Cogs Will Work
Intricately

A Vivid Determination
A Destination For Society
The Final Station
Where All Dreams Are Met
Where The Evolution Of The Imprisoned World
Occurs

We Shall Be Free
All Of Us
And Not Constricted By The Whispers
From The Headphones That Degrade And Manipulate
And We Will Understand Our Beginnings
Those Roots Of
Loyalty
Generosity
Sincerity

We Will Now Terminate
And Society Will Fall Into Equilibrium,
As hoped
By him

IX. Strict Justice and Impartiality

He guards the pillars of life
with aspirations of a mended future.
He speaks in twists and turns,
hope's lustre like a burning match.
To assuage the world, to staunch
that rising tide of injustice,
those inequities that dwell like remaining wax,
to a candle's coarse surface.
clinging.

He searches for an ideal—a reality.
Threads of virtue woven,
unyielding in their soil.
The beginnings of a rope
thrown to an impartial society.
But small things still linger:
shimmering jealousies
or a gloried future
fraying at its ends.