

**Malcolm Guite**

## **Cheese is the medium**

Poets have been silent about cheese  
Because whilst every subject is the message.  
Cheese is the very medium of their work.  
We drink in language with our mothers milk  
But poets curdle words until they bite,  
With substance and a flavour of their own:

So Donne is sharp and Geoffrey Hill is sour  
Larkin ascerbic, Tennyson has power  
(But only late at night, taken with port)  
I like them all and sample every sort  
from Creamy Keats with his mossed cottage trees  
tasting the words themselves like cottage cheese  
To Eliot, difficult, in cold collations  
Crumbling and stuffed with other folk's quotations..