

[Jackie Kay] Edwin Morgan's poetry, well, the world's your oyster. He can give us everything. He's a very, very dextrous and versatile poet. He's interested in everything. He's interested in all sorts of different forms. He can give us the tender Glasgow Sonnets, he can give us lyrics, he can give us concrete poems. He writes about everything and anything that interests him. He gives us amazingly fine translations. It's wonderful being inside Edwin Morgan's poetry because being inside Edwin Morgan's poetry is like being inside his mind and his mind was a wonderful, wonderful place to be.

[Damian Barr] I had no idea when I was taught Edwin Morgan at school that he was gay and that he was a poet who was alive. I thought all poets had to be dead. But Edwin Morgan was very much still alive and very much still writing about the country that he helped shape with his words. And what an incredible thing for a poet to shape a nation. A poet, Edwin Morgan shaped our nation with his words just as surely as politicians shaped it with their laws.

[Elaine C Smith] So, today, to go and sit with Edwin's poems and look at them and reflect on them and see how wonderful a poet he was, particularly his poem about the Opening of the Scottish Parliament, or for the Opening of the Scottish Parliament, you know, "Open the doors! Let the light of the day shine in." We need to do that, don't we?

[Alan Cumming] "Come down the Mile, into the heart of the city, past the kirk of St Giles and the closes and wynds of the noted ghosts of history who drank their claret and fell down the steep tenement stairs into the arms of link-boys but who wrote and talked the starry Enlightenment of their days – And before them the auld makars who tickled a Scottish king's ear with melody and ribaldry and frank advice – And when you are there, down there, in the midst of things, not set upon an hill with your nose in the air, This is where you know your parliament should be And this is where it is, just here."

[Damian Barr] And the poem ends, "So now begin. Open the doors and begin." I want to think about those words and think about the moment that we're in. I don't know where we're going through this door, I don't think anybody knows where we're going. Those are the words of Morgan that I want to think of - "So now begin. Open the doors and begin."

[Ron Butlin] Edwin Morgan's poetry is ideal for these strange and very difficult times we find ourselves in, when we're all having to live such isolated lives. His words inspire us as individuals, inspire us to live.

[Gerard Mulgrew] This is a small extract from... Eddie's brilliant translation of Cyrano de Bergerac. This is Ragueneau the baker describing Cyrano. "A rhymer! A fechter! A scientist; A musician! And whit a presence, whit an apparition! True. An auld fart like Philip of Champagne Will niver pent his portrait. Agin the grain! But auld Emilio Coia, oh, therr's the boay who'd Huv fixed this heich-skeich wild ootlandish dude Oan a canvas."

[Liz Lochhead] I loved you, Eddie Morgan, for saying yes. I loved you because, as someone wise once said of you, you were fuelled by the intrinsic optimism of curiosity. "The intrinsic optimism of curiosity." I particularly love The Apple's Song. "Tap me with your finger, rub me with your sleeve, hold me, sniff me, peel me curling round and round till I burst out white and cold from my tight red coat and tingle in your palm as if I'd melt and breathe a living pomander waiting for the minute of joy when you lift me to your mouth and crush me and in taste and fragrance I race through your head in my dizzy dissolve."

[Tommy Smith] "Bring back the wolf! He's not long gone, you know. He went out when sheep came in. Sheep cleared men and women. Now let wolves clear sheep. A little wildness please, a little howling to be heard from the chalets, a circling of yellow eyes at Aviemore. That legend much discredited, of the following of the sledges, let us test it in the Cairngorms, in the winter playgrounds with their merry cries, in the white paths through the forest. It would be good to get not a few scalps to crawl with fear when they hear that eerie arctic song as one by one the muzzles lift and open in the dark, and the dark is long."

[Imtiaz Dharker] I never met Edwin Morgan, except in poems, but what I enjoyed about the poems was the sense of fun, which could also slide into something quite serious, without any difficulty. I'll read one called A Gull. "A seagull stood on my window-ledge today, said nothing, but had a good look inside. That was a cold inspection I can tell you! North winds, icebergs, flash of salt crashed through the glass without a sound. He shifted from leg to leg, swivelled his head. There was not a fish in the house – only me."

[Carol Ann Duffy] "It is August still. The leaves hang fast and glisten. If there were no seasons, who would be singing? If there was no weather, who would be painting? If there was no earth turning, we darkly, partly think, no crow would have a lawn to stamp on. But created they are; born, I and the painter; really wet ruffled shiny black half-happy the feathers of the raucous-hearted clatterer."

[Jackie Kay] Poetry, in these particular times, can offer a huge consolation for everybody. It can hold your hands in the dark. It can help your worry and your anxiety. It can speak to your innermost soul. It can be playful, it can stretch your mind, and poetry is the form, really, the art form, that people turn to when they've just been recently bereaved or when they've just been recently fallen in love. There's no coincidence that people turn to poetry when they most need it.

[Kate Dickie] "When you go, if you go, and I should want to die, there's nothing I'd be saved by more than the time you fell asleep in my arms in a trust so gentle I let the darkening room drink up the evening, till rest, or the new rain lightly roused you awake. I asked if you heard the rain in your dream and half dreaming still you only said, I love you."

[Tam Dean Burn] "We cannot see it, it keeps changing so. All round us, in and out, above, below, at evening, phantom figures come and go, silently, just a magic shadow show. A hoarse voice singing come love watch with me."

[Eddie Reader] ♪ Now the air is tranquil Many once were killed Spirits of our warriors Taste spirits distilled Rain and grain and sunlight Weave a modern spell We'll raise a glass and savour Flowers in the dell. ♪ Raise a glass to Edwin Morgan.

[Andy Arnold] "A mean wind wanders through the backcourt trash." The first line of Glasgow Sonnets: 1. Edwin Morgan was and still is the voice of Glasgow.

SDH by Matchbox Cinesub