

You loved your last book...but what
are you going to read next?

Using our unique guidance tools, Love**reading** will help you find new books to keep you inspired and entertained.

Opening Extract from...

Rough Music

Written by Fiona Sampson

Published by Carcanet

All text is copyright © of the author

This Opening Extract is exclusive to Love**reading**.
Please print off and read at your leisure.

FIONA SAMPSON

Rough Music

CARCANET

First published in Great Britain in 2010 by
Carcanet Press Limited
Alliance House
Cross Street
Manchester M2 7AQ

Copyright © Fiona Sampson 2010
The right of Fiona Sampson to be identified as the author of this work
has been asserted by her in accordance with the
Copyright, Designs and Patents Act of 1988
All rights reserved

A CIP catalogue record for this book is available from the British Library
ISBN 978 1 84777 045 5

The publisher acknowledges financial assistance from Arts Council England



Supported by
**ARTS COUNCIL
ENGLAND**

Typeset by XL Publishing Services, Tiverton
Printed and bound in England by SRP Ltd, Exeter

for Sasha

Acknowledgements

Grateful acknowledgements are due to the editors of the publications where some of these poems originally appeared: *Areté*, *Contourlines* (ed. Neil Wenborn and M.E.J. Hughes, Salt, 2009), *The Kenyon Review*, *New European Poets* (ed. Wayne Miller and Kevin Prufer, Graywolf, 2008), *Horizon*, *The New Republic*, *Poetry*, *Poetry Europe*, *Poetry International*, *PN Review*, *Poetry Wales*, *The Spectator*, *Sou-Wester*, *Dove Release* (ed. David Morley, Worple Press, 2009), *The Warwick Review*. Some of these poems first appeared in translation in the magazines *Apokalipsa* (Ljubljana), *Beagle* (Tokyo), *Confluences poétiques* (Paris), *Knishevnik* (Banja Luka), *Orfeo* (Sofia) and the volumes *Pjesme* (Fiona Sampson, trans. Miloš Durdević, Croatian PEN, 2008) and *Zweimal sieben Gedichte* (Fiona Sampson, trans. Nicole Richter, Weiser Verlag, 2009). I would like to thank Tim Liardet for reading the manuscript and Ioana Ieronim for the original translations on which 'Charms for Love' is based.

'Skater' was commissioned by BBC Radio 3's *The Verb*. 'Angels and Dirt' was commissioned for the Tate Gallery's poem of the month. As 'Charms for Love', 'The Miracle Tree', 'Bushes and Briars' and 'Vigil' were set by the composer Sally Beamish in a commission by the Coull Quartet and the University of Warwick. 'Rough Music or Songs without Tunes' was commissioned by the Guildford International Music Festival for a chamber cycle with the composer Steven Goss, and published by Cadenza (2010). 'Schubertiad' was written for performance alongside the Coull Quartet as part of a Fellowship in Performance and Creativity at the University of Warwick's CAPITAL Centre, for which I am most grateful. I'm also very grateful to the Estonian Literature Centre and the Estonian Writers' Union for a stay at Käsamu, which enabled me to work on this book.

Rough music: *charivari*, *scampanate*, *Haberfeld-treiben*, *Thierjagen*, *Katzenmusik*, in parts of Britain also called rough riding or skim-mity-ride. 'Might include the riding of the victim (or proxy) upon a pole or a donkey; masking and dancing [...] mime or street drama upon a car or platform; the miming of a ritual hunt; or (frequently) the parading and burning of effigies; or, indeed, various combinations of all these.'

E.P. Thompson, *Customs in Common*



I cannot dance upon my Toes –
No Man instructed me –

Emily Dickinson

The Betrayal

Something is broken –
Milk not rising from the floor
to resume the shape of a jug,
the stone splashed
with creamy stars

Something has broken through
what was clear –
It makes a dark star in glass –
the way distance
draws on the unseen

Broken and new
as a staggered chord,
the next moment
comes racing back
along your glance

Skater

Out into the cold
goes the line you draw
 across this pond.

Under deep dark
its track runs true as a dream,
 bruised and blue.

Night is its own weather.
A stillness gloves
 sheet-ice and sedge,

that cluster of willows above
the darkening rim.
 When you move and break the silence

alarm thuds an ice drum
tuned tight as the skin
 that binds your bones.

In an elegant
enlarging lens – silver, *ornée* – you
 and the moon must drown

together. Go on, then,
where glass
 waits to splinter

and every step's new,
your skates *hush-hush*
 your water-double

through that broken mirror
where moonlight
 hurls your shadow forward –

The line behind you brightens
with crystal, then darkens
as you draw it out

of your perfect future, that blank
you recognise
at every turn as you bank

on a widening curve,
and the ice-star at your foot pulses...
Night, dark water

and this is you, slicing
the dream membrane
that holds them apart –

when out into the pond's
cold eye
you go alone.