

P R E S S R E L E A S E

EKSTASIS EDITIONS CELEBRATES THE RELEASE OF
NEW POETRY FROM JOHN O. THOMPSON

The Catch Club

John O. Thompson is a master of the unexpected and the unconventional. His poems are passionate, humane, funny, tragic, always surprising and mind-delighting. In *The Catch Club*, he does not fail to amuse, delight and enlighten. He builds observation upon observation to create poems that startle and gratify through the freshness of his vision. Like that other wit John Skelton, his poems move from obverse to reverse, seeing the permanence of change, the vices of virtue, the evanescence of solidities and the errors of truth. Thompson is best when he weds the quotidian with a sense of life's mysteries. In *The Catch Club* what you remember most after reading Thompson's poems is his sense of play tuned by a fine intelligence.

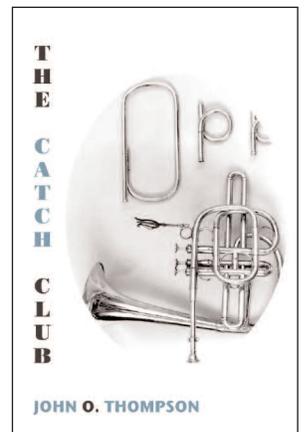
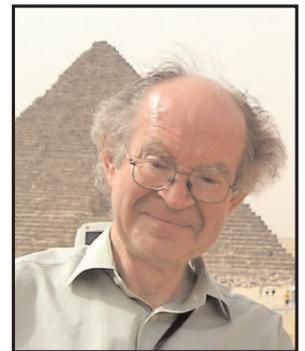
From lyric to Langpo to post-Langpo and back, with a "sensibility so fine [it can be] violated" by ideas, tears and wicked laughter ("rheum with a vow") in the blink of a seme, Thompson cuts up, jams and enjambes a world cum a mindful minefield, whether the mind he looses be simply "folk" or that "rediscovered" bland abyss he twists so close to the bone, weaves so tight with the word, in turn so uncannily open to a Spicer's outside.

Charles Noble

J.O. Thompson promises you "boundless / Catches of beings" — and boy, does he deliver. The catches are made on the fly, as in "flying high," because that's where you have to be to keep up with this dizzying cavalcade of virtuoso wit: puns, wordplay, contorted syntax, fleeting allusions (the ghost of Wilfred Watson hovers benignly over these pages). Yet it can all come down to something as basic as a Communist in underpants contemplating the fall of Communism. So, catch as catch can — and J.O. certainly can.

Stephen Scobie

John O. Thompson was born in Toronto in 1947, was immediately 're-settled' to a farm south of Edmonton, and studied at the University of Alberta. In 1969 he moved to the UK, and has lived there since then (London, Liverpool, London). He is married to Ann Thompson, with whom he wrote *Shakespeare, Meaning and Metaphor* (1987). His teaching field was film and media studies; now, as an independent scholar, he is enjoying getting back more to working with words. His published poetry prior to the catches assembled here consists of *Three* [1/3 of] (1973), *Echo and Montana* (1980), and, also with Ekstasis, *The Gates of Even* (2002).



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