

## The Rap-Up Ballad

Now I've been jotting a few things down  
you've probably seen me wandering round

this is the result: a rap-up ballad  
kind of equivalent to aural salad

a palate-cleansing leafy precis  
in case your brains are feeling hazy

but what a great day! I'm levelled up!  
My career's an overflowing cup

and what a great job the team have done  
they deserve a quick cheer, everyone!

Now... I've learnt stacks and stacks of facts  
and I'm kicking off with Clare Hallifax...

Clare's happily back in the ACT  
she knows it's the place to be

she says we're such a creative lot  
the weather's cold but we are hot

so here's what I learnt from Clare:  
please don't write in green underwear

or was that something about green covers?  
and why do publishers have weird parameters?

Clare said no lectures, no circuses  
don't ask why, that's how it is

she said *write as a child* – that struck me  
I've let my inner child break free...

which brings me to Isobelle Carmody  
and the tale of her books beginning with e

she signed away her e-book rights  
these publishers, what a bunch of...unpleasant people

Isobelle is taking back control  
those publishers can't have her soul

she's militant, it's the way to go  
*do it yourself* is her manifesto

what next? Irma strutting her editing stuff  
too much editing is never enough

she said *after a session, you should drink some wine*  
(unless, like me, you drink wine all the time)

O and it's time to digress here and say  
what about that table in the foyer?

James Redden going the extra mile  
selling books with his trademark smile

what a trouper, here without fail  
I hope he's chalked up excellent sales

and while I'm entered on a digression  
what about that quiet procession

people disappearing behind closed doors  
writers and illustrators exposed to their flaws

are critiques the place to increase your powers  
do you come out in bloom after Tony Flowers?

Is a gentle share with Clare?  
Or a touch of the axe with Hallifax?

but back to the session where guts groan and stretch  
brave folk standing up, doing The Pitch

there was quality here, some of it funny  
Jellyboy, xylophones, Supernova, bunnies

Aunt Angelica's Airship, a creepy school camp  
and Odus the Alien in a choc bar romp

then onto Tony Flower's session  
is a big kid? No, he's a dragon

a self-described silly boy's illustrator  
makes me feel like a total L-plater

fact is he keeps coming up with winners  
he's done more series than you've had hot dinners

Tony Mantra is *Story is King*  
he works so fast his lines are smoking

and now it's time to wrap this rap  
probably I should shut my... mouth

before I do, there were things I missed,  
sad to say, a bit of a list

Tanya's fabulous picture book craft  
the Special Panel, full of laughs

and I can't forget, at the end of the day  
we're breaking through (always) with Susanne Gervay

and frankly that's all I have to say

Harry Laing September 9<sup>th</sup> 2017