

Apollo's Temple

With Cuchulain and Maui

he asks for Orpheus, Apollo's priest,
in his restored temple.

The husbands have been here,
dismembered him, sent the lyre
flying to Lesbos, his head swimming

there too singing visions where the serpent
came and spoke prophecies so much
Apollo himself intervened

and silenced the snake like Maui's eel.
So the songs and the music are very faint,
drowned out by howitzers,

made Montecassino one enormous fort
full of craters, fox holes, cultural treasures
scattered with every heroic quest.

To a Theme by Hone Taiapa

Is that my soul's spark spiralling? Hone Tuwhare

His soul's spark catches the chips
as they spiral off the tapping tā

the fire takes all the rain

his soul's spark spirals
round the limbs of Tā Hone's
carvings/tree rings

so they turn

silent echo of the carver
silent spark in the carvings' eyes
mauri running through the carved house

each chip could reassemble into the tree
each insect and bird on the Lord Tāne's command
could bring it back

so we give thanks to Tāne
who was supported by his mother
as his soul's spark bites the sky

Robert Sullivan