

## **F**eeling the Forty Thousand

This sea moves beneath my standing  
 Rolling to the rhythms of my tapping foot.  
 Faces, each with vision and visage singular  
 Enmassed to ocean: undignified, moot.  
 I see the lips that stammer my soul  
 And feel the roaring voices chanting  
 My laboured choruses, born in angrier  
 Moments, then nurtured to tenderer rantings  
 Suitable for crossover release. It is here  
 The distance widens in my viewing;  
 Not touching, knowing or harbouring these lives  
 unnoticed, where the darkest of storms are brewing.

Each new root pulses, pushing  
 Rough air into my rib cage.  
 He turns smiling as bottom  
 Drops in deftly, stages  
 Its long-awaited musical coup  
 And fleshes out his dream  
 Skeletons. Muscle, tendon and nerve  
 Gather and dance to themes  
 Pounded on skin by one dark,  
 Brooding and distant. And we  
 Together set the body politic reeling,  
 Moving with beauty, and momentarily free.

**Tim Ayers**