

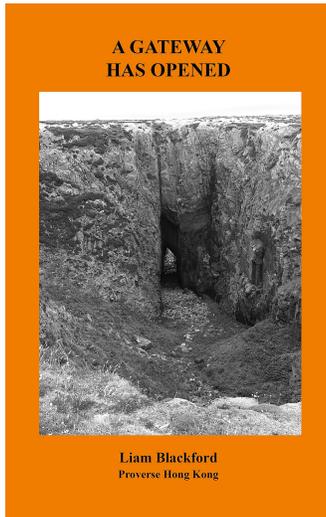


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## FOR FAVOUR OF REVIEW / NOTICE



**Title:** A Gateway Has Opened

**Author:** Liam Blackford

**Advance responses by:** Ryan Fenton, Andrew Guthrie, Jack Mayer, Philip Meade, David West

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### ABOUT THE BOOK

**A Gateway Has Opened** is a poetry collection by Hong Kong-based poet, LIAM BLACKFORD, containing 36 missives on truth and reality, anger and rage, complexity and change, and power as manifested in people, corporations, governments, borders and cultures. The poems inhabit a chaotic and psychedelic world where water flows into the sky, nightclubs have hundreds of floors and where banks and malls publish theories on knowledge and personhood. Therein, human society is fraught with harm and violence but also euphoric with the widening horizons of possibility. The collection is notable for its strict adherence to a unique poetic form (each poem has six stanzas, each stanza with six lines, and each line with six syllables), which in its red-eyed absoluteness suggests that the poems are giving voice to an alien, an angel or a machine. Though avant-garde and philosophical, the collection is highly reflective of the poet's place and time, in which Hong Kong is at the epicentre of epochal political and cultural change.

#### SUMMARY

36 missives in poetry on truth and reality, anger and rage, complexity and change, and power as manifested in people, corporations, governments, borders and cultures. All in a strict and unique poetic form. By an Australian living in Hong Kong.

### ABOUT THE AUTHOR

**Liam Blackford** is a West Australian poet living and working in Hong Kong. He has lived and worked in Greater China since 2012, mostly in Hong Kong and Shanghai. He is a trained lawyer specialising in trademark and copyright law. He has written poetry and prose since a young age. Since 2016, he has written poetry with a set form of six stanzas, each stanza with six lines, each line with six syllables.



### SOME COMMENTS

“The thirty-six poems in Liam Blackford’s *A Gateway Has Opened* ‘quiver with tension’ as the speaker straddles the liminal space between dreams and the mundane.”

—**Ryan Fenton**

“In Blackford’s verse, one is in *our* world, with its political and environmental anxieties, with its affluence and parallel unease.”

—**Andrew S. Guthrie, Proverse Prize Finalist 2013.**

“There is both grounding and psychedelia in Liam Blackford’s remarkable collection of poems composed within strict boundaries of 6 lines, 6 syllables, and 6 stanzas, suggesting our confines – our often sharp edges. Blackford’s poetic vision is simultaneously incisive, disturbing, and dream-like. His surprising rhythms and mind-bending energies run the gamut from cautionary wisdom to hallucinatory imagery. We feel his visions and dreams.

Though mindful of the perplexity and constraints of reality, Blackford breaks free. In deep philosophical dives, he shows us the spectrum, not the binary, and we are transported and challenged.

We are all constrained by the boundaries and exigencies of life, as if we too inhabit a world of 6 lines, 6 stanzas, 6 syllables. But what bubbles beneath the surface is the courage to find astounding beauty and inspiration amidst confounding and cruelty, and hold them both.”

—**Jack Mayer, Winner of the Proverse Prize 2019.**

“Liam Blackford works in an original and innovative space, with skill and imaginative power. The poems in this, his debut collection, are often surreal – or more often dreamscapes – sometimes with scifi or futuristic elements. Sometimes...they are moral reflections. These are unique explorations of poetic form.”

—**Philip Mead, Emeritus Professor, University of Western Australia.**

“Blackford’s worlds are jarring and harsh; psychedelic yet pungent with our reality. His strict form is muscular and fascinating. *A Gateway Has Opened* seethes with energy – I loved it.”

—**David West, Western Australia.**

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