

‘GOT TALENT’- COLOURS OF THE CITY

1. The map of the city, Thom Gunn

I stand upon a hill and see
A luminous country under me,
Through which at two the drunk sailor must weave;
The transient's pause, the sailor's leave.

I notice, looking down the hill,
Arms braced upon a window sill;
And on the web of fire escapes
Move the potential, the grey shapes.

I hold the city here, complete;
And every shape defined by light
Is mine, or corresponds to mine,
Some flickering or some steady shine.

This map is ground of my delight.
Between the limits, night by night,
I watch a malady's advance,
I recognize my love of chance.

By the recurrent lights I see
Endless potentiality,
The crowded, broken, and unfinished!
I would not have the risk diminished.

2. Block City, Robert Louis Stevenson

What are you able to build with your blocks?

Castles and palaces, temples and docks.

Rain may keep raining, and others go roam,

But I can be happy and building at home.

Let the sofa be mountains, the carpet be sea,

There I'll establish a city for me:

A kirk and a mill and a palace beside,

And a harbor as well where my vessels may ride.

Great is the palace with pillar and wall,

A sort of a tower on top of it all,

And steps coming down in an orderly way

To where my toy vessels lie safe in the bay.

This one is sailing and that one is moored:

Hark to the song of the sailors on board!

And see on the steps of my palace, the kings

Coming and going with presents and things!

3. Come, Here Is Adieu To The City, Robert Louis Stevenson

COME, here is adieu to the city

And hurrah for the country again.

The broad road lies before me

Watered with last night's rain.

The timbered country woos me

With many a high and bough;

And again in the shining fallows

The ploughman follows the plough.

The whole year's sweat and study,
And the whole year's sowing time,
Comes now to the perfect harvest,
And ripens now into rhyme.
For we that sow in the Autumn,
We reap our grain in the Spring,
And we that go sowing and weeping
Return to reap and sing.

4. Dawn in New York, Claude McKay

The Dawn! The Dawn! The crimson-tinted,
comes Out of the low still skies, over the hills,
Manhattan's roofs and spires and cheerless domes!
The Dawn! My spirit to its spirit thrills.
Almost the mighty city is asleep,
No pushing crowd, no tramping, tramping feet.
But here and there a few cars groaning creep Along,
above, and underneath the street,
Bearing their strangely-ghostly burdens by,
The women and the men of garish nights,
Their eyes wine-weakened and their clothes awry,
Grotesques beneath the strong electric lights.
The shadows wane. The Dawn comes to New York.
And I go darkly-rebel to my work.

5. Venice, Frances Anne Kemble

Bound by her emerald zone
Venice is lying,
And round her marble crown
Night winds are sighing.
From the high lattice now

Bright eyes are gleaming,
That seem on night's dark brow,
Brighter stars beaming.
Now o'er the blue lagoon
Light barks are dancing,
And 'neath the silver moon
Swift oars are glancing.
Strains from the mandolin
Steal o'er the water,
Echo replies between
To mirth and laughter.
O'er the wave seen afar
Brilliantly shining,
Gleams like a fallen star
Venice reclining.

6. Paris In Spring, Sara Teasdale

The city's all a-shining
Beneath a fickle sun,
A happy young wind's a-blowing,
The little shower is done.
But the rain-drops still are clinging
And falling one by one --
Oh it's Paris, it's Paris,
And spring-time has begun.

I know the Bois is twinkling
In a sort of hazy sheen,
And down the Champs the gray old arch
Stands cold and still between.
But the walk is flecked with sunlight

Where the great acacias lean,
Oh it's Paris, it's Paris,
And the leaves are growing green.

The sun's gone in, the sparkle's dead,
There falls a dash of rain,
But who would care when such an air
Comes blowing up the Seine?
And still Ninette sits sewing
Beside her window-pane,
When it's Paris, it's Paris,
And spring-time's come again.

7. Barcelona Inside Me, Robin Becker

Give me, again, the fairy tale grotto
with the portico-vaulting overhead.
Let me walk beneath the canted columns
of Gaudí's rookery, spiral
along his crenelated Jerusalem
of broken tiles, crazy shields.
Yes, it's hot as hell and full
of tourists at the double helix,
but the anarchists now occupy
the Food Court, and the arcadian dream
for the working class includes this shady
colonnade cut into the mountainside.
I've postponed my allegiance to
the tiny house movement, to the 450
square feet of simple, American maple
infrastructure and the roomy

mind suspended like a hammock
between joists. Serpents and castle
keeps shimmer, and a mosaic invitation
to the Confectionery gets me a free
café con leche on the *La Rambla*

8. The City By the Sea -- San Francisco, George Sterling

*At the end of our streets is sunrise;
At the end of our streets are spars;
At the end of our streets is sunset;
At the end of our streets the stars.*

Ever the winds of morning
Are cool from the flashing sea--
Flowing swift from our ocean,
Till the fog-dunes crumble and flee.

Slender spars in the offing,
Mast and yard in the slips--
How they tell on the azure
Of the sea-contending ships!

Homeward into the sunset
Sill unwearied we go,
Till the northern hills are misty
With the amber of afterglow.

Stars that sink to our ocean,
Winds that visit our strand,
The heavens are your pathway,

Where is a gladder land!

At the end of our streets is sunrise;

At the end of our streets are spars;

At the end of our streets is sunset;

At the end of our streets the stars.

9. On Broadway, Claude McKay

About me young careless feet

Linger along the garish street;

Above, a hundred shouting signs

Shed down their bright fantastic glow

Upon the merry crowd and lines

Of moving carriages below.

Oh wonderful is Broadway — only

My heart, my heart is lonely.

Desire naked, linked with Passion,

Goes trotting by in brazen fashion;

From playhouse, cabaret and inn

The rainbow lights of Broadway blaze

All joyful without, all glad within;

As in a dream I stand and gaze

At Broadway, shining Broadway — only

My heart, my heart is lonely.

10. Springtime in Paris, Jordan Rowan

Fallen eyes and wandering leaves

It's a wonder why anybody leaves

Can you help me find my way to nowhere at all?

Can you kiss me up against the tower wall?

Sunglass eyes and sun-dressed skin

A whole city wondering where you've been

Is there anywhere else you'd like to fall in love?

No one here can do it just once

Drink to dream your color queens

Stuck between movie scenes

Where we beg time to just give us a break

And wonder how long this perfect twist takes

Laugh and play and cry and sing

A perfect place perfects all things

Springtime never ends on the Paris streets

Where you can fall in love with everyone you meet