

ANDREW BURKE

*“The birds are still in flight. Believe the birds”*

*~ Jack Spicer*

Tuesday morning, 10.45am, Northbridge is dead.

The 'Deen, partiest pub on a Saturday night,

is a silent, empty shell. A Chinese youth

cleans down the window ledges

and door entrances – scrubbing,

rinsing, pushing sudsy water to the gutter.

The weekend news on television

and the front pages of the press

are often filled with images

of this pub's brawling patrons or

forensic close-ups of dried pools of blood.

Now all is silent except

a skipping note whistled from

a tiny beak. I look up at the top windows

and faded awnings long disused.

There a small finch hops and darts

delightedly between perches, hop, dart,

tweet, a single note whistled

over and over like she is singing

to herself, imagining a new nest

and little ones within it,

tiny beaks tweeting in

morning sunlight.