

Untrue North



Nature Morte Vivante (Fast-moving Still Life) by Salvadore Dali, 1956

by [Peter Dreyer](#) (January 2022)

The pole has shifted—
our world is out of whack.
It's time to set the

compass needles back.

Once in Athens on Kolonaki

Square, I saw Wystan Auden,
his face like the mottled prow
of an old ship too long afloat.

I knew where he was coming
from—it wasn't hard to see—
but lacked the nerve to greet
the man; he'd never met me.

Poetry, he said, makes nothing
happen. Now the reverse is true,
not much makes poetry happen,
everything bad is good for you.

Envoi

Poetry being imagination's primal yeast,
rising, it demands a gravitas not confected
to season up the Internet's digitized feast—
plaints, even if proven, should be rejected.

[Table of Contents](#)

Peter Richard Dreyer is a South African American writer. He is the author of *A Beast in View* (London: André Deutsch), *The Future of Treason* (New York: Ballantine), *A Gardener Touched with Genius: The Life of Luther Burbank* (New York: Coward, McCann & Geoghegan; rev. ed., Berkeley: University of California Press; new, expanded ed., Santa Rosa, CA: Luther Burbank Home & Gardens), *Martyrs and Fanatics: South Africa and Human Destiny* (New York: Simon & Schuster; London: Secker & Warburg), and most recently the novel *Isacq* (Charlottesville, VA: Hardware River Press, 2017).

Follow NER on Twitter [@NERIconoclast](#)