



LLOYD AUSTIN

James Austin

Lloyd James Austin 1915–1994

Born in Melbourne, Australia, in 1915 [November 4], he remembers the father who first stimulated a small boy's delight in the written word, two elder brothers and a younger, each later to become an expert in his own field (History or Classics) and, especially, those teachers who, at different stages of schooling, conveyed an individual or idiosyncratic sense of how words work—in English, French, German or Latin.

THIS PARAGRAPH, from a Festschrift published in 1982, was elaborated upon by Austin himself in 1987; his father, J. W. A. Austin, is fondly recalled: 'Amongst my earliest memories are readings by my father to his four sons [Ken, Mervyn, Lloyd and Noel]; he brought alive Dickens and other English writers by his gift of empathy and his delight in felicitous expression'; he refers to Gresham Robinson, his headmaster at St Thomas Grammar School, Essenden, who taught his pupils to recite verse 'in such a way as to let the words speak for themselves'; to 'Edie' Dunn, his French master at Melbourne Grammar School, who gave him a rigorous grounding in French and kindled his life-long love of music; and to Karl Koepfel, his Latin master, whose 'feeling for rhythm and insistence on the poetic value of scansion, together with his sense of the finest shades of meaning, lit an inextinguishable light'. But the Festschrift paragraph also gives intimations of those character-traits which were to inform all Austin's scholarly life: his strong sense of family, both the blood-bonded and the spirit-blended, and his insatiable appetite for a learning which his own perspicacity transformed into a heady pleasure both for himself and others.

Intellectual brilliance took little time to make itself known: Austin

© The British Academy 1996.

graduated from the University of Melbourne in 1935 with a First, and, in 1937, he made his way to Paris, armed with a French Government Scholarship, to establish himself in the field of late nineteenth-century studies, not among the poets who were to become his life's work, but with Paul Bourget. His thesis, completed in 1939, was published the following year under the title *Paul Bourget: Sa vie et son œuvre jusqu'en 1889*.

These Paris years saw the forging of deeply beneficial and lasting friendships, notably with Paul Étard, the Librarian of the École Normale Supérieure and, through him, with Jean Pommier, Professeur de l'Histoire des Créations Littéraires at the Collège de France from 1946, in fitting succession to Paul Valéry. Austin was to have many opportunities to refer to his debt to Pommier in the course of his academic career; but his sense of gratitude to Étard was no less heartfelt:

. . . until his death in 1962, he read all my work in manuscript with close attention, and provided thorough and detailed corrections and suggestions. Few could rival the breadth and depth of his knowledge; many distinguished scholars owe him a debt that was rarely adequately acknowledged.

In 1940, he returned to Australia, to a lecturing post in French at his Alma Mater, the University of Melbourne, a post he held until 1947, though his tenure was interrupted by the war, and three years in the Special Branch of the Royal Australian Navy Volunteer Reserve. From there, he proceeded to a Lectureship in French at the University of St Andrew's (1947–51), after which he spent a further four years in Paris. It was with the volume published as a result of this period of research—*L'Univers poétique de Baudelaire: Symbolisme et symbolique* (1956)—that his life's work can be said to have begun in earnest, although one should not overlook the edition of Valéry's 'Le Cimetière marin' published with Henri Mondor in 1954, an edition accompanied by critical essays and facsimiles of the poem's three versions.

The Baudelaire volume was designed as the first panel of a triptych, whose two other panels were to have been *Le Mystère poétique de Mallarmé* and *La Composition poétique de Valéry*. In the event, this *grand œuvre* took other shapes, as Austin's scholarly life yielded to diverse and urgent pressures, opportunities, impulses. The 'Introduction générale' has, therefore, a particular significance, since it sketches out a founding vision which was to underpin much of Austin's later work. All three poets are at the heart of Symbolism, and not just as a precursor (Baudelaire), or as a survivor (Valéry); they have that *esprit de famille*

which creates a *famille d'esprits*, a family to which other Symbolists, such as Ghil, or Merrill, or Moréas, could only dimly belong. French Symbolism is, in some respects, France's version of Anglo-German Romanticism—French Romanticism was too distracted and inhibited by its classical heritage to respond to symbolist and organicist currents elsewhere. But French Symbolism is in no sense out of its time, for it is a much more intense form of European Romanticism, seeking after quintessences rather than essences, and bringing to the creative enterprise an unusual discipline and lucidity; Modernism's subsequent, anguished equivocations about the powers, and modes of operation, of language are unthinkable without the tenacious investigations of these Symbolists into their medium. And Austin was of the persuasion that, however far language might retreat from its referential function, in order to recover some of its surrendered autonomy, in order to re-potentiate itself as signifier, such a retreat has a regenerative *choc en retour* which infinitely enriches our inner experience, and our perception of the world about us. As Mallarmé, the member of the triumvirate towards whom Austin's affections most naturally gravitated, puts it: while Symbolist language might have a large portion of the never-before-heard in it, it still retained 'la réminiscence de l'objet nommé', which now, however, 'baigne dans une neuve atmosphère'.

After this second, extended Parisian stay, Austin's life was to be centred in Britain, and specifically in Cambridge. But he remained profoundly committed to his Australian origins, not only in the generous declarations of his indebtedness to Alan Chisholm, but also in his championing of the poetry of Christopher Brennan—a role pioneered by Chisholm—in his contributions to a variety of Australian journals, and in his love of cricket. It should be said that Alan Chisholm, who died, with a poignant fittingness perhaps, during the preparation of the 1982 Festschrift in honour of his pupil, gladly returned the debt of gratitude:

In conclusion, I feel that I must, like many other Mallarmé enthusiasts, express my gratitude for the Austin publication [Mallarmé's *Correspondance*] in honour of which the present volume is issued. Without this superb piece of scholarship, it would not have been possible to follow the many tracks leading to, and through, the consciousness of a great and epoch-making poet.

Before Austin finally settled in Cambridge as a University Lecturer in 1961, and after an initial post as Fellow and College Lecturer at Jesus College (1955), he enjoyed a five-year tenure of the Chair of Modern

French Literature at the University of Manchester, as the successor to P. Mansell Jones, another path-finding scholar of late nineteenth-century literature. But once re-established in Cambridge, his career there gathered momentum, became irresistible: he was elected to a Readership in 1966, and in 1967 to the Drapers Chair of French. It was from this base that Austin all but bestrode the world of Baudelaire/Mallarmé/Valéry scholarship, in Britain and elsewhere. His assumption of the Drapers Chair coincided with his appointment to the General Editorship of *French Studies*, a post he held until 1980. During these thirteen years, he was showered with many further accolades.

Of Austin's honours it is difficult to speak, other than to recite them as the palpable evidence of the consistency with which his work attracted the respect of colleagues and institutions. The distinction of his research and writing naturally drew distinction to itself: he was elected to the council of the Association Internationale des Études Françaises in 1964, and became its president in 1969; he was elected a Fellow of the British Academy in 1968; created Chevalier de l'Ordre des Arts et des Lettres, 1972; Docteur *honoris causa* de l'Université de Paris-Sorbonne (Paris IV), 1973; Officier de l'Ordre National du Mérite, 1976; elected Membre de l'Académie Royale de Langue et de Littérature Françaises de Belgique, 1980; awarded the Prix Henri Mondor, 1981. But these honours also tell a story of an international animator of French literary study, for whom Cambridge was a point of radiation, as much as of gravitation. If Cambridge French managed to throw off a certain academic parochialism during the 1970s, if *French Studies*, in reflecting scholarly trends in Britain, seemed more in tune with critical trends abroad, then these things were in no small part due to the range of Austin's affiliations and the far-flungness of the Austinian diaspora.

1982 saw the publication of *Baudelaire, Mallarmé, Valéry: New Essays in Honour of Lloyd Austin*, a celebratory volume whose list of contributors reads like a roll-call of all that has been best over the past fifty years in the criticism of Austin's chosen period. And all of these contributors are direct forebears, colleagues, friends and pupils: Barrère and Bowie, Fairlie and Finch, Hackett and Hytier, Pichois and Poulet, Richard and Robinson, Sez nec and Starobinski, to name but a few. The chief purpose of the Festschrift was to honour Austin's completion of the eleven volumes of Mallarmé's *Correspondance* (the later volumes still in manuscript at the time), a task he first became involved with in 1959, when Henri Mondor, who had just edited the first volume with

Jean-Pierre Richard, invited him to coedit the remaining volumes. After Mondor's death in 1962, Austin continued to work on the project single-handedly. The final volume was published in 1985.

Those who know him more closely will realise the care and stimulus he has always given to undergraduates, research students and colleagues; . . . Here, he combines rare qualities: unfailingly encouraging over a long period when he believes in the worth of a project; able to present that worth freshly to the researcher; forthright and friendly in pointing out flaws.

These words from the preface of the Festschrift are borne out by other testimony. One former pupil recalls this piquant combination of the caring and the exacting. Another mentions the readiness with which he would commit all his energies to assessing work so that the best and most detailed advice could be given. And another speaks of the irrepressible enthusiasm which was itself the source of the demanding standards. To know how to blend the inspiring with the properly critical, to instil in the student the right mixture of self-assurance and self-doubt, these remain the pedagogic ideals of the academic teacher so thoroughly embodied in Austin.

Austin's collected papers in English on the three poets were published by Cambridge University Press in 1987 (*Poetic Principles and Practice: Occasional Papers on Baudelaire, Mallarmé and Valéry*). The Prefatory Note provides us with a profession of faith:

We live in an age when discussion of the theory of literature tends to become an end in itself. For me it is the poetry which matters above all; but the exceptional level of poetic expression attained by these poets can be largely ascribed to their penetrating insight into the nature of language and its potentialities. . . . But, by the very nature of language, the most distinctive of human creations, these poems . . . are not enclosed in an isolated realm of self-reflectivity, but illuminate the heart and mind of man.

Austin had no difficulty in reconciling the Symbolists' absorption in their own medium with his own desire to see literature reaching out into, giving shape to, informing, the lives and memories of all its readers. We are exhilarated, exalted, by these literary works, and these feelings owe as much to the poets' care for their own craft as to our care for the craft of reading.

By this time, Baudelaire was playing a relatively small part in Austin's output. *Poetic Principles and Practice* contains only one item devoted entirely to his work, dating from 1956 and specially revised in 1985 for inclusion in the volume. But it is an item which admirably exemplifies Austin's implicit insistence that large ques-

tions—‘Baudelaire: Poet or Prophet?’—can only be addressed, and perhaps answered, after an intimate inhabiting of the text in all its self-renewing eventfulness. The lion’s share of the volume goes to Mallarmé. ‘Presence and Poetry of Stéphane Mallarmé’ is still quite the best available short introduction to the poet, a wonderfully penetrating and fluent account, which, in the space of thirty pages, manages not only to visit the majority of Mallarmé’s *œuvre* and assess his *rayonnement*, but to do so in a way which gives no hint of constraint, or unseemly hurriedness; what is odd is that in such a confined space such expansive justice is done to the subject. When this essay is put alongside ‘Mallarmé on Music and Letters’ and ‘Mallarmé and the Visual Arts’, then we truly have in place the critical keystones of Mallarmé’s poetic edifice. Accompanying these essays in synthesis are articles devoted to the analysis of individual poems: ‘Toast funèbre’, ‘Prose pour des Esseintes’, ‘Le vierge, le vivace et le bel aujourd’hui’, ‘A la nue accablante tu’, ‘Quand l’ombre menaçait de la fatale loi’, ‘Le Tombeau de Charles Baudelaire’. All these are classic interpretations, established items in the critical canon, none more so perhaps than the study of ‘Le Pitre châtié’ in its two versions (1864, 1887), a study whose closing lines give some idea of how far Austin communicated his vivid experience of text to his own writing:

Then the summit of the poem is attained *before* the end: ‘Ne sachant pas, ingrat! que c’était tout mon sacre’ (with all its physical and symbolic associations of coronation and anointing with oil), in order to allow for the deliberate, subtle and lovely diminuendo of a last line which, after the final summary of sense and echo of sound in ‘Ce fard’, tails off into distant space and past time, evoking once again in its own movement and in a dying and whispering fall the royal consecration now washed away to nothingness, ‘noyé dans l’eau perfide des glaciers’.

A sentence like this expresses the cumulative delight of personal discovery, and communicates the transformation of *connaissance* into *volupté*, by postponing the end of its own critical savouring. And the reader can only relish the play between progressive amplifications and suspensive symmetries, between ever-renewed departures and interruptions equally renewed. Special mention should also be made of ‘New Light on Brennan and Mallarmé’, an article which originally appeared in an issue of the *Australian Journal of French Studies* (1969) honouring Professor Chisholm. As already mentioned, in championing Brennan, Austin was following in Chisholm’s footsteps, for Chisholm had not only been a lifelong friend of Brennan, but had published

Brennan's *Verse* (1960) and *Prose* (1962), and biographical and critical studies of him. Austin had no illusions about Brennan's stylistic originality—'Brennan's own poetic idiom was predominantly that of Victorian aestheticism'—but he had a justifiable pride in the achievement of Australia's only Mallarméan disciple, a disciple who unerringly understood the importance of Mallarmé's work, from the moment he encountered it in 1893. Austin took great pleasure and satisfaction in the discovery, by his research student, John Foulkes, of a missing portion of Brennan's papers in the Moran Collection in St John's College, Cambridge, and in the publication, by Axel Clark, both of a critical biography (in 1980), and also of Brennan's two earliest pastiches of *Un coup de dés* (in 1981).

That Austin responded to Mallarmé with a special empathy is borne out by the articles on Valéry gathered here: sharply intelligent, individualistic, authoritative as ever, they are not suffused with quite the same excited warmth. Perhaps some of the fault lies with Valéry. Both 'The Genius of Paul Valéry' (first given as a public lecture in 1963, as Austin's year as Herbert F. Johnson Visiting Professor to the Institute for Research in the Humanities at the University of Wisconsin, Madison, was drawing to an end) and 'Valéry's Views on Literature' enable readers to find their bearings in a work as multiform as it is extensive; 'The Negative Plane Tree' and 'Modulation and Movement in Valéry's Verse' examine more closely Valéry's poetic method. But throughout these papers, Austin's purpose remains unswervingly single: to help readers to a richer relationship with the poet, by retracing his own exploratory steps and by enacting, in his writing, the regenerative power of insight. Reading and criticism are not to be surpassed as the real sources of an individual's spiritual autobiography. To be an informed reader, and at the same time a reader available to all the promptings of *émerveillement*, this is the target that Austin sets for us.

In reading Austin's obituary notice on Jean Pommier, one might believe that he had found embodied in that past master all the qualities he himself valued and so admirably emulated: 'a rare ability to combine . . . intellectual rigour with sensitive response, an extreme *finesse* with imaginative insight, prodigious learning with verve and vitality of expression'. And one has only to look into his reviews to see, too, that Austin relished polemic to a similar degree, that his intellect was just as combative. Straight thinking of extreme acuity made it difficult for Austin to swallow inflated expression, or the exotic flavours of excessively metaphorical formulation. He hesitated to accept, even

from the pens of admired colleagues, those kinds of scholarship which toyed with the decorative or ludic, when, given the depth of his feeling for literature, so much was at stake. Austin was not averse to withering observations: 'If the word "thought" can be applied to what may seem to some readers the product of a mind whose predilection for philosophical terminology is not matched by any conspicuous skill in its manipulation . . .'; 'But they [three argumentative reasons] are developed into a book only by being laboured beyond reason, in a repetitive indictment of both Poe and Baudelaire that defeats its own ends'. But when not driven to exasperation, when, on the contrary, challenged, or moved, or impressed, he was an extremely appreciative and encouraging reviewer, who none the less liked to use reviews to sort through issues still outstanding, or to recall nagging questions: 'Inevitably, some points call for discussion. . . . What did Mallarmé mean when he said . . .'; 'Inevitably, there are details which others may see differently. . . . In "Tout Orgueil", is *console* an "occasional table" . . .?'; 'Inevitably, not all students of Mallarmé will agree with some of the judgements made here: do *Les Noces d'Hérodiade* really offer "the substance of effective theatre" . . .?'; 'Not all readers will accept without question some of the editor's statements'. 'Inevitably, not all students/readers will agree': in this persistent reactive stance lies a further key to Austin's view of the reading community: it is peculiarly resistant to convenient consensus; it is restive, as though afflicted with an incurable intellectual questing and questioning; it is impossible to please it entirely, since it is a law of nature that its members should disagree, that great works should invite them to disagree; its disagreements are its life force, are what keeps it healthy, committed, and its members interdependent; its disagreements are what makes every member indispensable, unsupersedable.

In this 1987 volume of collected papers, Austin announced that a draft of the Mallarmé book had been prepared in 1964 (in two versions, one in French, the other in English) and that materials for the Valéry project were accumulating. But he was compelled to acknowledge: 'Work will continue on the triptych, although, at the age of seventy, it is perhaps presumptuous to count on completion'. If he did not have the opportunity to put the finishing touches to this vast enterprise, we can at least, gratefully, piece them together from all that he had already published. The same would not be true of the eleven volumes of Mallarmé's correspondence. Without the twenty-six years of energetic and tenacious scholarship which Austin devoted to the task, this price-

less document would either be still unavailable, or available only in a form which left much of the work still to be done. Austin's is a tremendous achievement, and one can but return to it. Not only was the task of collection and detection immense—Mondor's own collection of Mallarmé's correspondence (comprising some 1,200 letters), initially believed to be fairly complete and publishable in some four volumes, turned out to include less than half of the extant letters (3,380 to date)—but the process of annotation, given the diversity of aspects which required commentary, tested the whole range of Austin's formidable scholarship:

His annotation contains a wealth of precise information on the personalities with whom Mallarmé corresponded, on the aesthetic issues of his age and on the multifarious literary circles and *cénacles* within which those issues were debated. In addition, his notes contain much penetratingly expressed critical thought and remind the reader tactfully and firmly, page by page, that Mallarmé's world will make its fullest sense only to those who are prepared to accept the many difficult challenges it still presents and to bring their own powers of independent literary judgement to bear upon the documents which that world has bequeathed to us.

Fittingly, the 1982 Festschrift from which this editorial tribute is extracted, has among its contributions an article by Alison Fairlie entitled '“Entre les lignes”: Mallarmé's Art of Allusion in his Thank-You Letters', an article designed both to set in motion and anticipate the rich harvest of research which the *Correspondance* could not but attract.

The pleasures to be had from these volumes of letters are manifold; not least, their resistance to completion leaves open countless opportunities for readerly speculation and tantalisation. In each introduction, Austin provides a fascinating inductive biography for the period concerned, catching the hints and glimpses of a pattern reflected in the letters; but, as Austin reminds his readers, 'il y en a d'autres que nous n'avons pas mentionnés, et que le lecteur découvrira lui-même'. As we eavesdrop on these exchanges, trying to reconstruct the *lettres-fantômes* (the letters whose existence is attested but which remain undiscovered) and to piece together relationships, private events, we are often left empty-handed: where Mallarmé remarks to Méry Laurent, 'Qui veux-tu dire, après " . . . Madame Grogos" que tu as été froissée? Je ne comprends pas, du tout', Austin can only add, unabashed, 'Nous non plus, évidemment'. But frequently our editor can suggest how a mystery might be unravelled: Mallarmé notes, in a postscript to a letter

addressed to Catulle and Judith Mendès, '—Je pars à Chislehurst, pour souhaiter la fête de mon souverain'; Austin takes up the challenge with relish:

C'est à Chislehurst, petite ville dans le comté de Kent, à quinze kilomètres au sud-est de Londres, que se réfugia Napoléon III après 1871. Il y mourut le 9 janvier 1873. Mallarmé plaisante, sans doute. Quelle était la fête de Napoléon III, né le 20 avril 1808? Peut-être le 15 août, anniversaire de Napoléon Ier, ce qui permettrait de dater cette lettre du 15 août 1871: c'était bien un mardi.

Our fullest insight into Austin's editing of Mallarmé's *Correspondance* is provided by two articles (one dating from 1968, the other from 1985) collected in his posthumous *Essais sur Mallarmé*, edited by Malcolm Bowie and recently published by Manchester University Press. This edition was a project that had played no part in his plans; if it had not been for his other collaborative work with Henri Mondor, and the honour of working closely with the critic who had done so much to establish and gather the documentary corpus on which all subsequent Mallarmé scholarship was more or less to rely, Austin would have left well alone. But he increasingly understood that, far from acting as Mondor's assistant, he would have to take the whole project upon himself; for all his learning and critical acumen, Mondor lacked training in scholarly method, and the first volume of the correspondence showed evidence of that lack: incorrect copies, doubtful dating, superfluous annotation. But if Austin could bring more rigorous scholarly procedures to bear on the edition, he could not reverse the decision already taken, to publish the letters over an extended period of time, volume by volume, rather than to wait until all possible collection and research had been completed, and then produce a single, multi-volume publication. As a result, Austin found the need to publish supplements to earlier volumes, and to catch up on errata and addenda, inevitable. In fact, however regrettable to Austin these untidy processes may have seemed, however offensive to his own formidable standards of scholarship, they are in no way a blemish on the *Correspondance*; quite the contrary. Intriguingly, they make available to us the very processes of scholarship, they put before us the researching mind which is never done with its subject, which worries away at the unsolved, long after less tenacious minds would have quietly let it slide from consciousness. The revisions and addenda corporealise the scholarly conscience, the intellectual vigilance which is impelled by the awareness that only further error can be begotten by error. And these revisions also help to maintain

the critical openness, the challenge of the unfinished, that Austin wanted to generate from this work. But as Austin looks back, in the 1985 article, over the long and wearying and frequently frustrating road he has travelled, he cannot resist some wry smiles at his own expense. Among the gifts that Austin reckons indispensable to the aspiring editor of a French writer's correspondence are: ubiquity, the art of pleasing (librarians, curators, custodians, collectors), an insatiable appetite for insignificant details and infinite patience in their discovery, and the ability to prevent strikes at the Bibliothèque nationale, or documents being away at the binder's, etc., on one's research visits. And then there are the Chaplinesque vicissitudes of the pioneer 'pilots' of early microfilm readers:

On connaissait des moments d'exaltation euphorique lorsque, à la moindre pression sur la manivelle (comme le manche à balai d'un avion), le film parcourait à une vitesse vertigineuse les jours, les mois et les années. En ralentissant, vous constatiez que vous aviez dépassé de beaucoup le but. Vous renversiez la vapeur, et vous dépassiez dans l'autre sens. Quand, par une combinaison de tact, d'adresse, de ruse et d'enjôlement, vous approchiez finalement du but, le film se calait, et refusait obstinément de bouger— jusqu'au moment où il démarrait subitement de nouveau et filait irrésistiblement en avant et où vous étiez obligé de tout recommencer.

Essais sur Mallarmé comprises eighteen articles on Mallarmé (covering the period 1951–91) and a substantial obituary notice on Henri Mondor. This is the totality of Austin's short pieces in elegant French on Mallarmé, but leaves uncollected other articles in French, nine on Baudelaire and six on Valéry. These Mallarmé articles are frequently companion pieces to English ones, and concern themselves with texts and issues already mentioned: 'Prose pour des Esseintes', 'Le Pitre châtié', 'Mallarmé critique d'art'. But there is also material on the early Mallarmé, an engrossing study of Mallarmé, Hugo and Wagner, culminating in an intrepid analysis of 'Hommage' (to Wagner), an analysis of the 'Cantique de Saint-Jean', and a pair of capital pieces on 'L'Après-midi d'un faune' (comparison of the poem's lexicon in its three versions, and an *essai d'explication*). It is gratifyingly apt that Austin's final published piece, 'Verlaine et Mallarmé' (1991), should be a reconsideration of, and supplement to, Mondor's *L'Amitié de Verlaine et Mallarmé* of 1940, filling out Mondor's picture with more recently acquired documentary evidence, drawn particularly from the *Correspondance*.

We have spoken much of debts of gratitude fully paid in Austin's

life. But two vital ones have hitherto been omitted. Many of Austin's articles carry, as their first footnote, an acknowledgement of the help provided by Alison Fairlie, reading drafts, making suggestions, establishing references and so on, not to mention the assistance she provided in the classification of Mallarmé's papers (she was particularly engaged in an inventory of his library). Austin declared that his written work had been constantly improved by her sensitive and constructive criticisms, and enriched by detailed and stimulating suggestions. But there were others, too, who were piecing Mallarmé together at Valvins, cataloguing, taking copies, making calculations: his son James, a professional photographer, his daughter Suzie, and his wife Jeanne. Throughout his fruitful career, and from the first, Austin enjoyed the indefatigable support and succour of his wife Jeanne-Françoise (Jeannot) Guérin, a graduate in English from the Sorbonne, whom he met and married during his first research visit to Paris (1937–40). Her contribution to his work is clearly not to be measured by the number of acknowledgements or citations; it exceeds all measure. But in these acknowledgements, one feels the huge pleasure Austin took in being able, publicly, to celebrate a partnership in scholarship and mutual devotion.

Austin died peacefully on 30 December 1994, after sustaining a series of strokes. Their incapacitating effect was borne with the fortitude and dignity with which he had lived the whole of his challenging life, and in no way diminished his unquenchable appetite for vivid, animating experience, and for the arts which he had so unswervingly loved. At his funeral on 12 January 1995, Malcolm Bowie referred to this love in these words:

Lloyd believed in art, not as an aesthete or a dilettante, but as one who, in a post-theological age, looked to the work of art as a model of coherence in the world, and to the rapture that artistic experience could bring as an exemplary engagement of heart and mind and senses in the fabric of the real world.

It would be foolish to suppose that one could do justice in a brief summary to Austin's truly remarkable accomplishments, to a bibliography which contains something over 160 items, to years of inspiring and inspiring leadership and supervision, to the range of his committed interests, to his indefatigable energy. But one might be excused for suggesting that there *are* words which apply very appropriately to him, words he used of his triumvirate of poets: 'But the influence which a master most wants to exert is precisely that by which his disciples may become themselves, and masters in their turn. It was Baudelaire who

revealed Mallarmé to himself, just as Mallarmé was later to render the same service to Valéry.’

Austin’s writing and teaching belong to that all but lost, and certainly lamented, tradition whereby the master wants nothing better than to acknowledge his own masters, and, in his turn, to confer mastery, inexhaustibly.

CLIVE SCOTT

Fellow of the Academy