

Digital Creation

Darkness. Silence. Void.

Start with a single point.

Stark white, it hangs immobile, untwinkling.

Let it expand...

The dot swells, writhes, and

Bursts into a galaxy of multicoloured stars

That rush madly past, streaming and pulsating as they whirl,

Then slow.

More calmly now, a planet approaches,

A blue-green sphere wreathed in haze;

Alien in its crystalline perfection,

It is yet eerily familiar.

Descending, the clouds part

To reveal a rich panorama:

Rocky heights become lush forests which slope gently down

To sparkling seas, and the coral depths below.

On the ground, the view diversifies;

Strange creatures move; large scaly tripeds

Stalk among the spiny trees with probing eyes,

While tiny winged shells hum and hover

Above a fizzing stream,

Within whose cool tranquillity

Myriad protozoans flit and wheel;

Smaller still, the very water dances,

A chaos of insubstantial particles.

The vision vanishes.

But the numbers which created it remain

In timeless limbo.

Wonderful, that from two blank digits

Such splendour can arise.

Reuben Thomas

Winchester, 25th–31st January 1992