

***Nocturnes* by Will Kemp
(Cinnamon Press, £7.99)**

Where to begin? This is an extremely accomplished collection, almost unbelievably the poet's first. It has consistency of theme, tone and poem 'heft', with three sustained seven-part sequences and an impressive exploration of the experience of night: natural, psychological, social, spiritual, even formal (the concrete moon-phases of 'Lumiere' regressing like a Jaffa Cake eaten in reverse).

But it is line by line that *Nocturnes* truly shines:

"woods ... heaving like green wheat in June" ('Sleeping Beauty')

"a guitar ... notes twisting up/past shutters, roof-tiles, stars" ('Estoril a noite')

"night itself ... sprinkled with frozen light" ('Night Thoughts').

An essential purchase.

(JRB)