



The Dancers Inherit the Party: Early Stories, Plays and Poems

Ian Hamilton Finlay

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Ian Hamilton Finlay is one of the most innovative and wide-ranging artists working in Scotland. The distinctive classicism of his graphic work and sculptures are instantly recognisable, whether set in the heart of busy public spaces in Europe and the States, or photographed in the oasis of Little Sparta, the garden in Stonypath in the Borders which is home to his poem-sculptures. Fishing boats, Panzer tanks, the French Revolution, the pastoral tradition of English art and the principles of Neo-Classicism run through his graphic and sculptural work, the logical extension to his fascination with concrete poetry.

Yet Ian Hamilton Finlay was first known as a poet and short story writer. In America, poets like Robert Creeley and Lorine Niedecker found affinity with his poetry decades before his work began to receive the respect it is now accorded in the UK. This fully revised and updated edition of the 1996 Polygon selection of his work is expanded to set his earlier poetry like *The Dancers Inherit the Party* and *Glasgow Beasts* in the context of his fiction, short plays, and later uncollected poems.

The main selection of poems in the 1996 edition, and the preface by Robert Creeley, have been retained; in addition, there are stories from his earliest published work, *The Sea Bed and Other Stories* (1958), and a selection from his little-known plays of the same period. A new essay by the editor, Ken Cockburn, sets this previously neglected material in context.

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