

Track 4 Rhyme (1'38'')

Narrator

Jackie Kay and Paul Muldoon.

Jackie Kay

I don't necessarily use rhyme in a completely formal way, so I like using rhymes out of the way that ordinary people speak. I like using repetitions and rhymes from their speech patterns. I'm very influenced by the way that people talk. I've always loved listening to how people talk and listening to them say things like, my mum will say to me, 'I'm not hungry, hungry but I'm hungry,' and I'm supposed to know exactly what she means [*laughs*]! So I love that, those kind of almost, kind of nonsense that people speak and we all know exactly what it means, and I like to try and capture that so ... But I think that if you rhyme in such a way that you're struggling to make something rhyme just for the rhyme's sake, then it's a bit like you wagging the tail of the dog rather than the dog wagging its own tail. So I only have poems rhyming when I feel that the voice of that poem needs to, when there's a natural facility within the poem for the rhyme.

Paul Muldoon

One of the things I would say about it of course is that imposition is not part of the deal either in terms of the formal stanzaic patterns or in terms of what's happening within the line. There is a tendency for the language first of all to fall into that iambic pattern – that's the way the English language is built, there is that tendency – and also for words to find chimes and rhymes; that's intrinsic to the language rather than something that's imposed upon it. So one's simply availing oneself of what's there.