THE PROSE POEM: AN INTERNATIONAL JOURNAL

Volume 6 | 1997

The fair starts . . . Jacques Réda

© Providence College

The author(s) permits users to copy, distribute, display, and perform this work under the following conditions: (1) the original author(s) must be given proper attribution; (2) this work may not be used for commercial purposes; (3) the users may not alter, transform, or build upon this work; (4) users must make the license terms of this work clearly known for any reuse or distribution of this work. Upon request, as holder of this work's copyright, the author(s) may waive any or all of these conditions.

The Prose Poem: An International Journal is produced by The Berkeley Electronic Press (bepress) for the Providence College Digital Commons. http://digitalcommons.providence.edu/prosepoems/

Jacques Réda

The fair starts just after the wing of the building bearing the sign *Public Baths:* it threads along the quayside, the shooting-galleries on the right with rifles and bunches of feathers, and on the left a few roundabouts, and not a cry coming from them. Arabs in their Sunday best stand apart, meditating, and on the benches between the booths retired couples doze off. The fairground people themselves stand with their backs to the deserted esplanade. In an aluminum fog over the newly-built factories on the outskirts, in the gardens where people stand looking at the smoke from heaps of grass that were scythed the day before, the daylight goes on and on fading. There is so much space around the place that it is better to stand still, or to go round in circles like the wooden horses with no music.

Translated from the French by **Mark Treharne**