

JOE'S TASTINGS

LYN CHATHAM

Malaysian girls with pink hair and cleavage
German anaesthetists from Christchurch
and grey-haired greeters from Target
gather in the houses of Jesus to taste
some sacred ladies—not because they all believe
but for dark panelled hallways with parquetry
floors, angels in oils above softly lit landings
and white-skinned Jews in blue-stained glass.
And for disciples like Joe in sparkling jacket
and bowtie, throwing around metaphors
like he's a poet—and for altar boys like Kevin,
with his orange freckles and words for sale,
playing down that he's a librarian, by day,
answering the call for another glass,
allowing us that state of grace, until tomorrow.