

# Brief Investigations Metaphysical poetry:

Katherine Phillips: *Lucasia Poems*

Richard Lovelace: *The Grasse-hopper, To Althea*

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#### *To my excellent Lucasia on our friendship*

- Read through Philips' *To my excellent Lucasia on our friendship*
  - In stanza 5, what is the force of the comparison made?
    - If the context had not been explained, would you have read this as a conventional love poem?
      - Or are there sufficient clues to indicate its background?

#### *To Lucasia in defence of declared friendship*

- Trace the masculine imagery of power and conquest in *To my Lucasia*
  - Place against it more obviously feminine images of growth, maintenance and sustenance
- Pick out two other analogies and work them out
  - Do they seem fairly conventional?
- Or do they have the Metaphysical originality we see in Donne or Herbert?
- In stanza two, Philips talks of 'our noble aims'
  - Pick out other words of aim or purpose
  - Can you say what these aims are?
- How representative of friendship are the feelings expressed in the poem?
- What do you find most striking about the poem?

#### *The Grasse-hopper: Ode*

- Read through *The Grasse-hopper*
  - If you like C.S.Lewis or J.R.R. Tolkien, you might see some similarities in their society called The Inklings.
- Can you pick out any other classical allusions?
- Are the two friends not 'messaging around' as much as the unfortunate grasshopper?
  - Compare this poem about friendship with Katherine Phillips' *To my Excellent Lucasia on our Friendship*

#### *To Althea, from Prison*

- Read through Lovelace's *To Althea, from Prison*
- Note the song-like quality of the poem
  - Would it make a successful song, do you think?
    - What does he mean: 'Our hearts with Loyall Flames'?
- Where does Althea come into it?
- What is actually the captivity of the first stanza, and the freedom in it?