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## Spaces in Vincent Buckley's Poetry

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### Abstract

This paper traces some of the forms taken by space in Vincent Buckley's poetry and some ways in which spaces are opened, closed off, filled, invited and shaped. It loosely follows a poetic development that itself loosely follows the trajectory of the life: from country to city and imaginatively back; from a separation of Australian and Irish matter to a pattern of connections and continuities. In early poems that deal with childhood the inside of the house is shut away. In the next phase, set in early maturity and the city, rooms become important, inhabited but set apart. That pivotal poem *Golden Builders* multiplies ideas about space in a tumultuous process of breaking open, breaking down, linking, imprisoning, provisionality, construction and regrowth, in which the self and its thoughts and cries compete with others to be heard and felt. After this, space is used much less defensively and in *The Pattern* it is mapped and traversed to close the major separation in both the poetry and the life, the separation of the two source countries. In *Last Poems* boundaries either vanish or are contemplated without anxiety. Spaces are at ease with forms.

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