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Vacant Block (Lismore)

Peter Mitchell

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Vacant Block (Lismore)

Wijabal custodianship is an eternal river
 around
 and across
this vacant block
 between the cinema and the cafe.

Once,
 a child called 'hopscotch one, hopscotch two',
 while others,
 brothers and sisters perhaps,
 joined dandelions in wristlets of natural jewels.

Now,
 fist-sized stones pock the dessiccated soil,
pebbles scatter the bare patches,
 farmers' friends tangle its neglected air.

This inattention is a gift as
 this lot is
 an oblivion to the local council,
 forgotten by planners and builders,
 an elision to the call of buildings.

 In the future,
 a sustenance of climbing beans,
 cherry tomatoes
 and cos lettuce will prevail
as community gardeners co-join
 the rivers of limitless stewardship.

-Peter Mitchell

Peter Mitchell is the author of the poetry chapbook, *The Scarlet Moment* (Picaro Press, 2009). Living in Lismore (Bundjalung Country, NSW), he writes poetry, short fiction, memoir and literary criticism. His writing has been published in international and national print and online journals, magazines and anthologies. In 2014, he was awarded the Dorothy Hewett Flagship Fellowship for Poetry (Varuna Writers' Centre) and, in 2015, completed the first draft of his memoir, *Fragments of the Lurgi*, on an Artist with Disability grant (Australia Council). In 2016, he will complete the second draft.