

## **The Sea is Slavery**

Four hundred years across the waves, the nameless dead are  
gathering.  
Bodies cast from their wooden dungeons  
Engulfed by the mighty Atlantic waters.  
Eroded by the constant movement of the wild, restless waves deep  
beneath.  
Corroded by the salt.  
Finally erased

Where are our names?  
The ones we pass on to our children.  
No, not those imposed upon us by captors and dealers, as our  
stolen bodies are marched and coffled towards the waiting slavers.  
Nor those attached to us in the tortuous fields of cotton and cane,  
or in the homes of rich 'masters.'

No! Where are our own names?  
The ones bestowed upon us by those who brought us to life, who  
loved us, who shaped our identity.  
Sold, resold renamed again, again, again.

"Yarra yarra, kickeraboo kickeraboo"  
"We are sick we are dying"

On this hellish 'middle passage'.  
Our torture, sustained for hundreds of years across the wild, roaring  
Atlantic waves – the space we will always occupy, limbo.  
We will not die.

You made your wealth from the theft of our bodies, our selves  
From the slave labour that you forced upon us.

Our memory, opaque  
Our history fractured  
Our present  
Haunted by loss  
Our unknown predecessors  
Our names, for which Malcolm took an 'X'  
No, we will not die

Still we struggle to be 'Free at last'

Dave Clinch

