

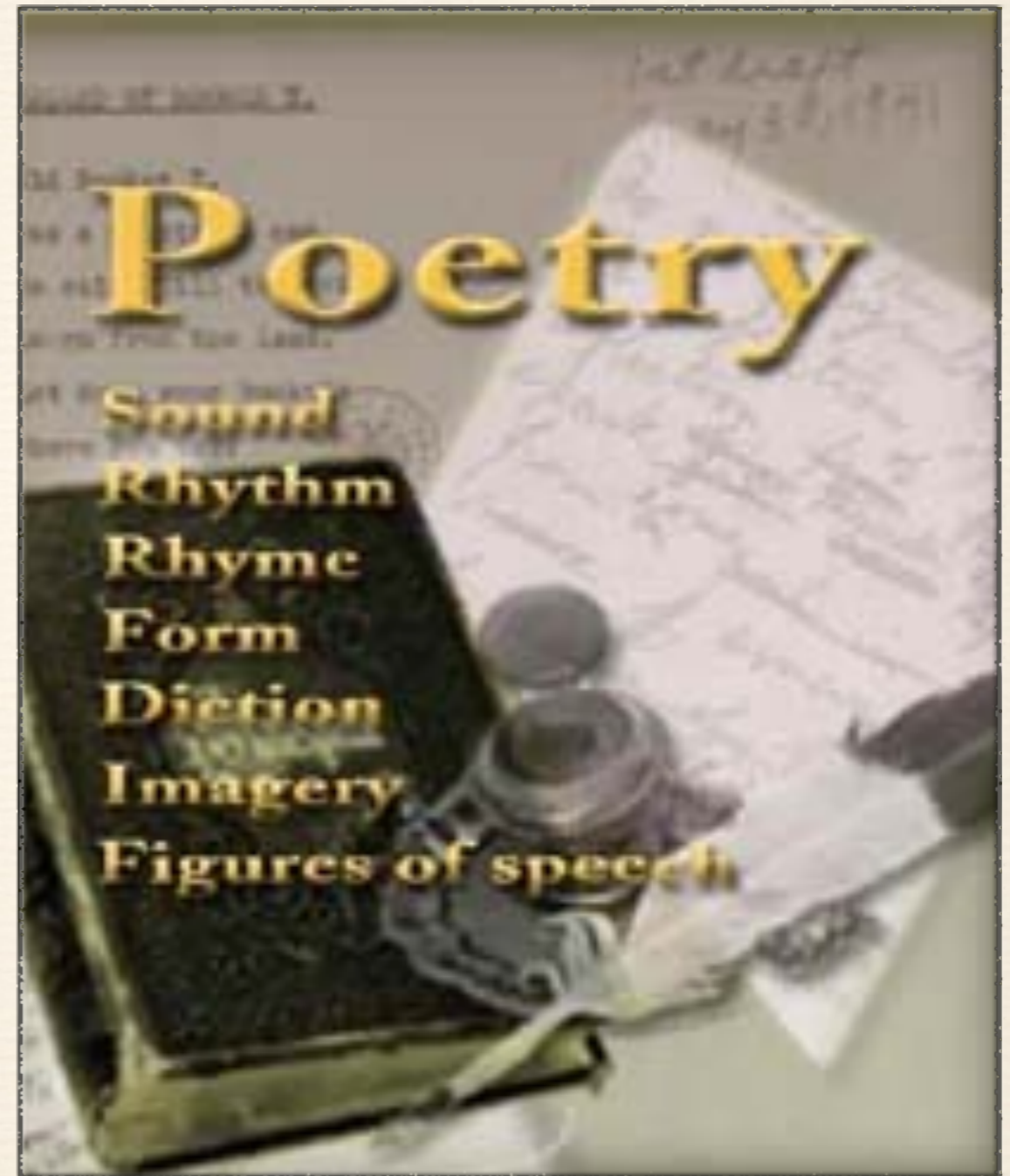
Paul Durcan



*Overview*

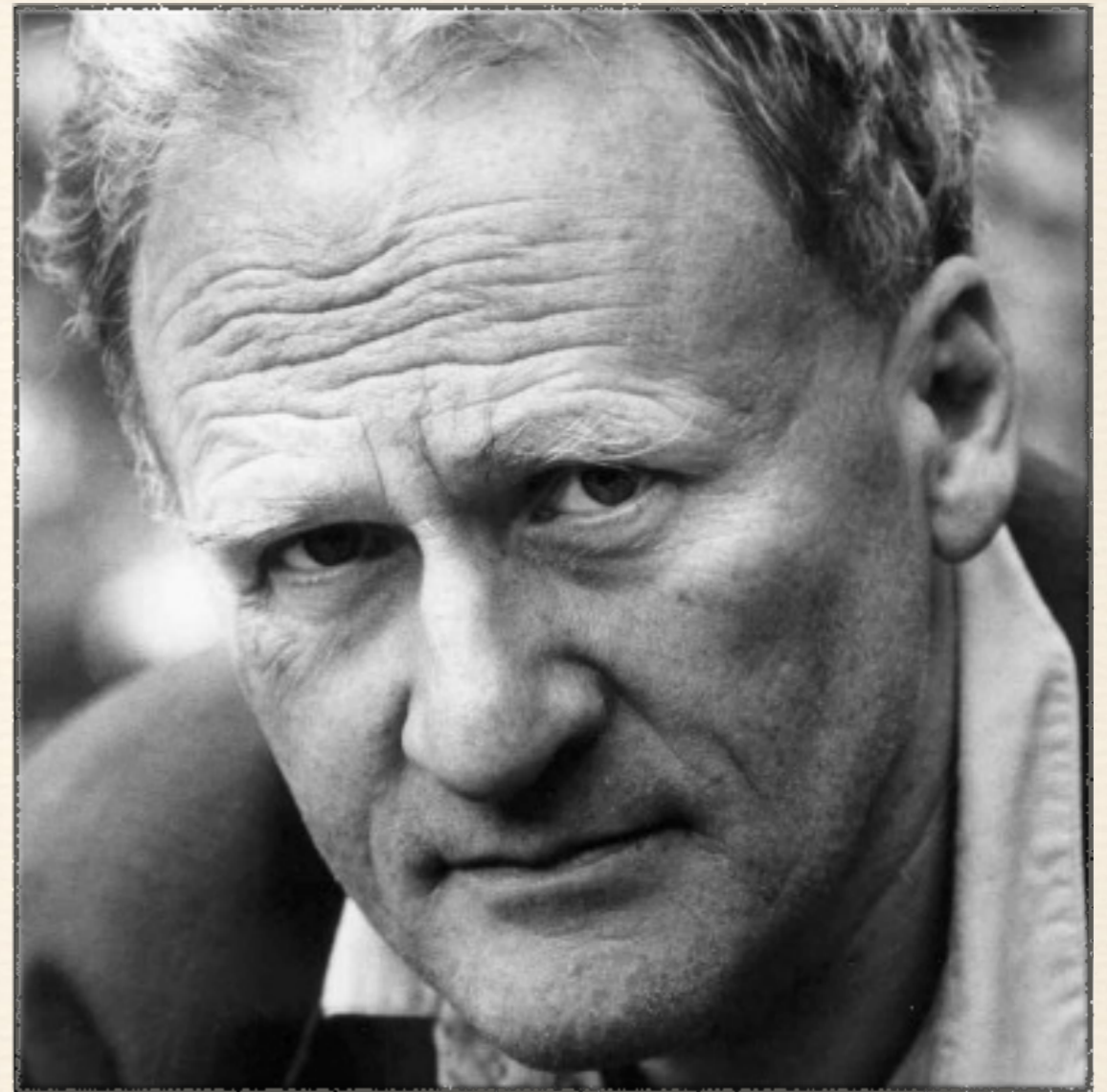
# Themes

- ❖ Love
- ❖ Marriage
- ❖ Family
- ❖ Childhood



# Said About Durcan...

- ❖ ‘Poetry can often seem remote and removed from the real world but the beauty about Durcan’s poetry is that it is of this world and, in particular, very much of Ireland.’ - Ciara Dwyer in the Irish Independent 18th October 2009



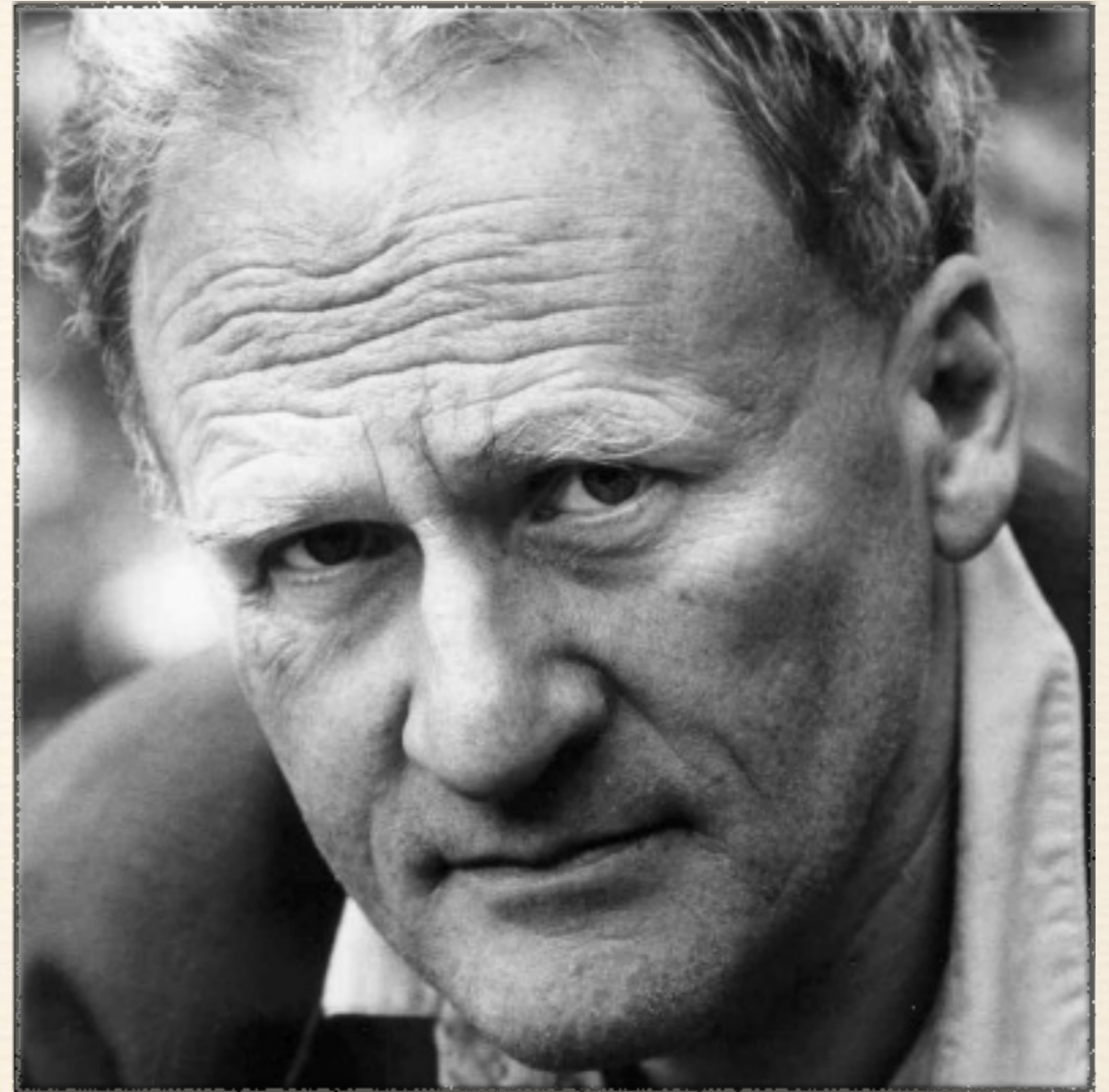
# Style

- ❖ Free verse - follows the rhythm of natural speech
- ❖ Couplet
- ❖ Sonnet
- ❖ Lyric
- ❖ Simple/ accessible
- ❖ Sense of place
- ❖ Colloquial
- ❖ Narrative
- ❖ Dramatic
- ❖ Surreal



# Said by Durcan

- ❖ So much of it is free verse, yes, but I feel it's every bit as strict a form as the sonnet. There is only one right word. You must find that word. The other part is music. All art aspires to the condition of music, so what you hear must sound right.'



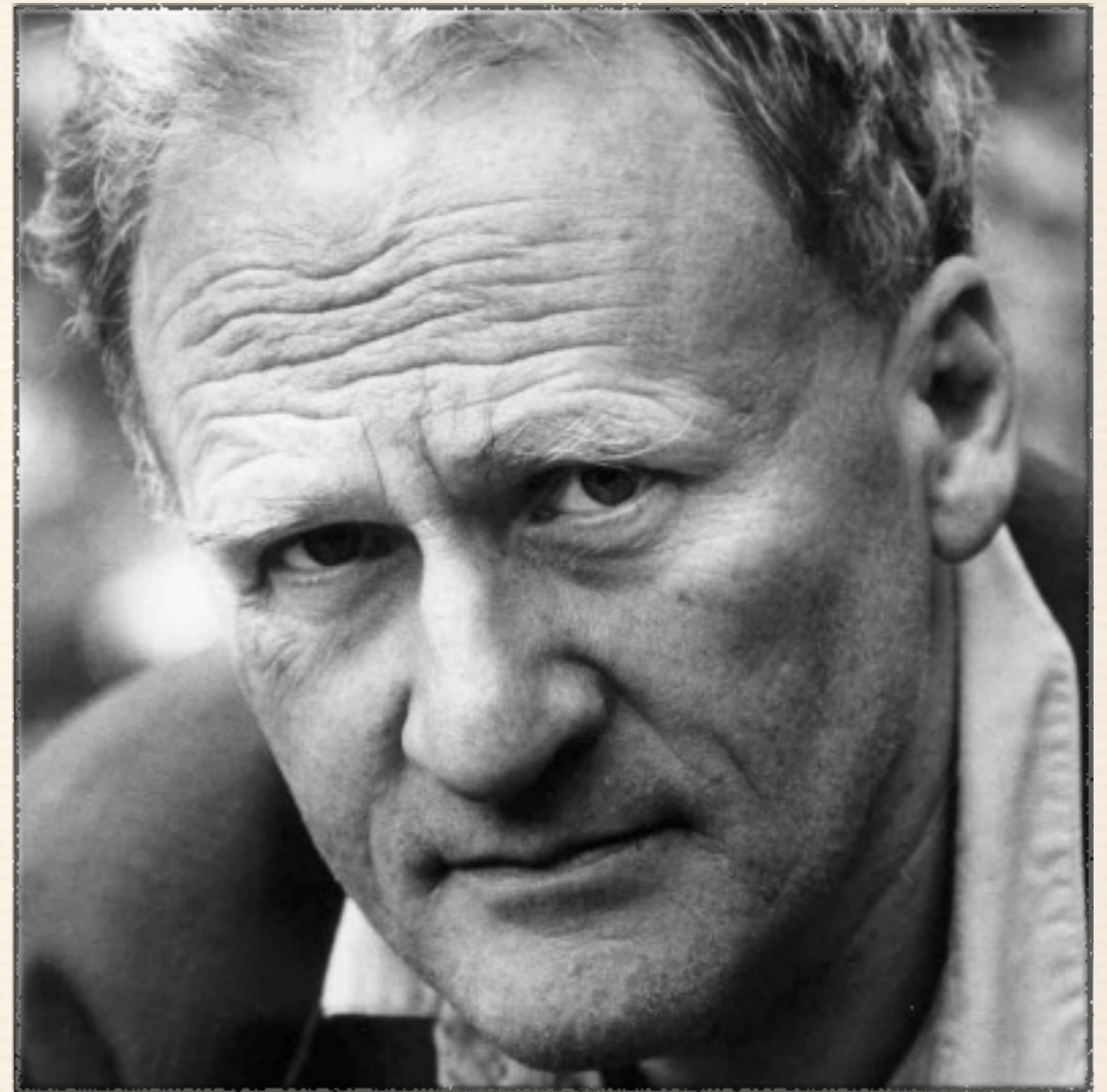
# Tone

- ❖ Self-deprecating
- ❖ Humorous
- ❖ Satirical
- ❖ Honest
- ❖ Nostalgic
- ❖ Filled with longing
- ❖ Loving



# Said by Durcan

- ❖ ‘I have been asked many times over the years, especially by people who genuinely do not like what I write: Why is it that you present prose as poetry? In my defence, I say that I have spent most of my life trying to write poetry, I have given it a lot of thought through the years, and I am preoccupied with metric structure, as I’m sure anyone who writes poetry is. Everything I’ve ever published in verse has had to obey rules of metre; if somebody doesn’t hear that, then I wonder did I get it right.’



# What might you be asked?

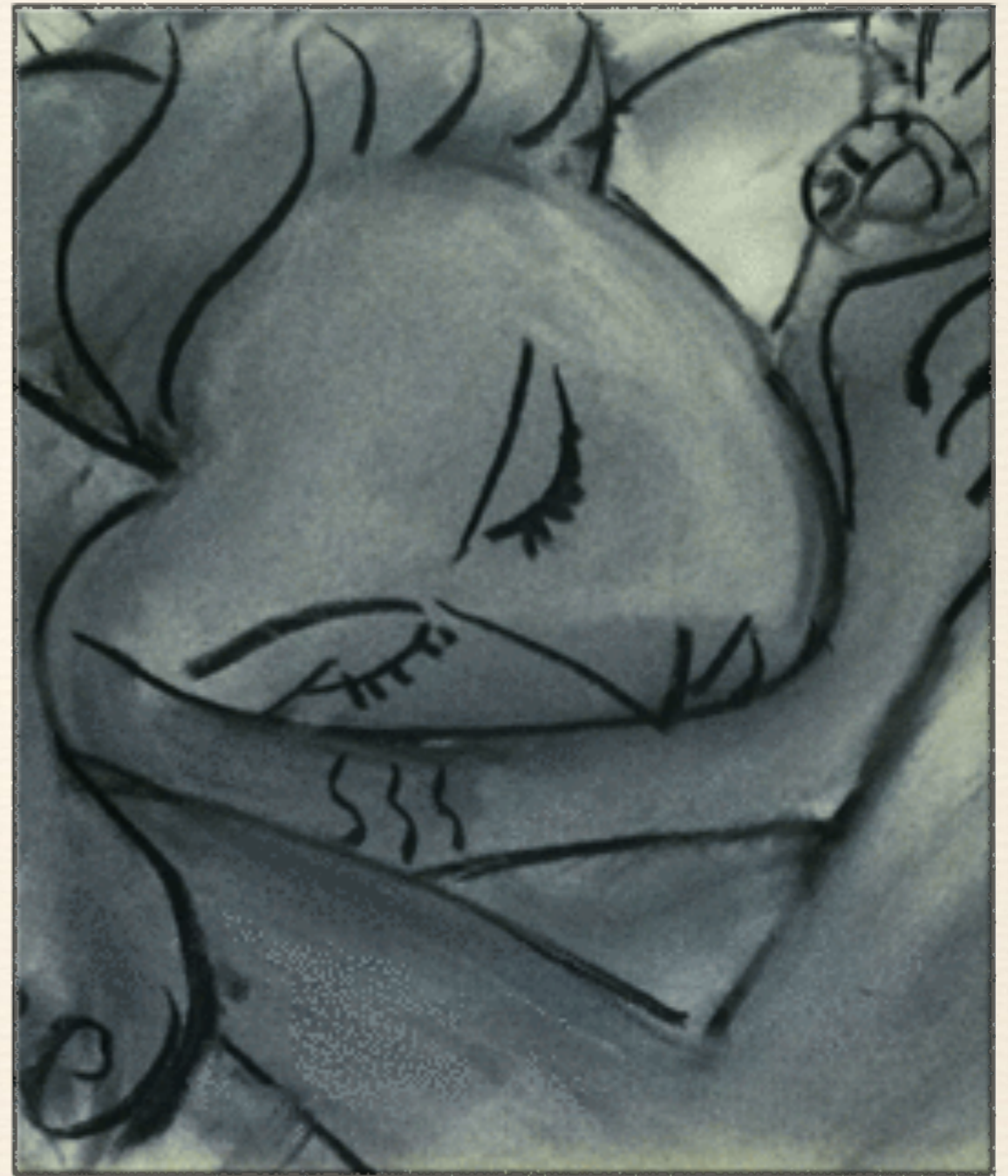
- ❖ Simple language - deep insights
- ❖ Accessible, appealing - asks questions, thought-provoking
- ❖ Humour and sadness
- ❖ Unusual approach to relatively common dilemmas
- ❖ Blend of the ordinary and the extraordinary





# The Difficulty that is Marriage

- ❖ Theme - love and the complexity of marriage
- ❖ Title hints all is not well even though poem is filled with reflections on love
- ❖ Sonnet - normally associated with love but this one has neither rhyme nor rhythm, hinting again that all is not running smoothly



# Wife Who Smashed Television Gets Jail

- ❖ Theme - Family life falling apart / social commentary
- ❖ Written like a newspaper report; dramatic; black humour
- ❖ Inversion of societal norms: wife is in the pub etc.



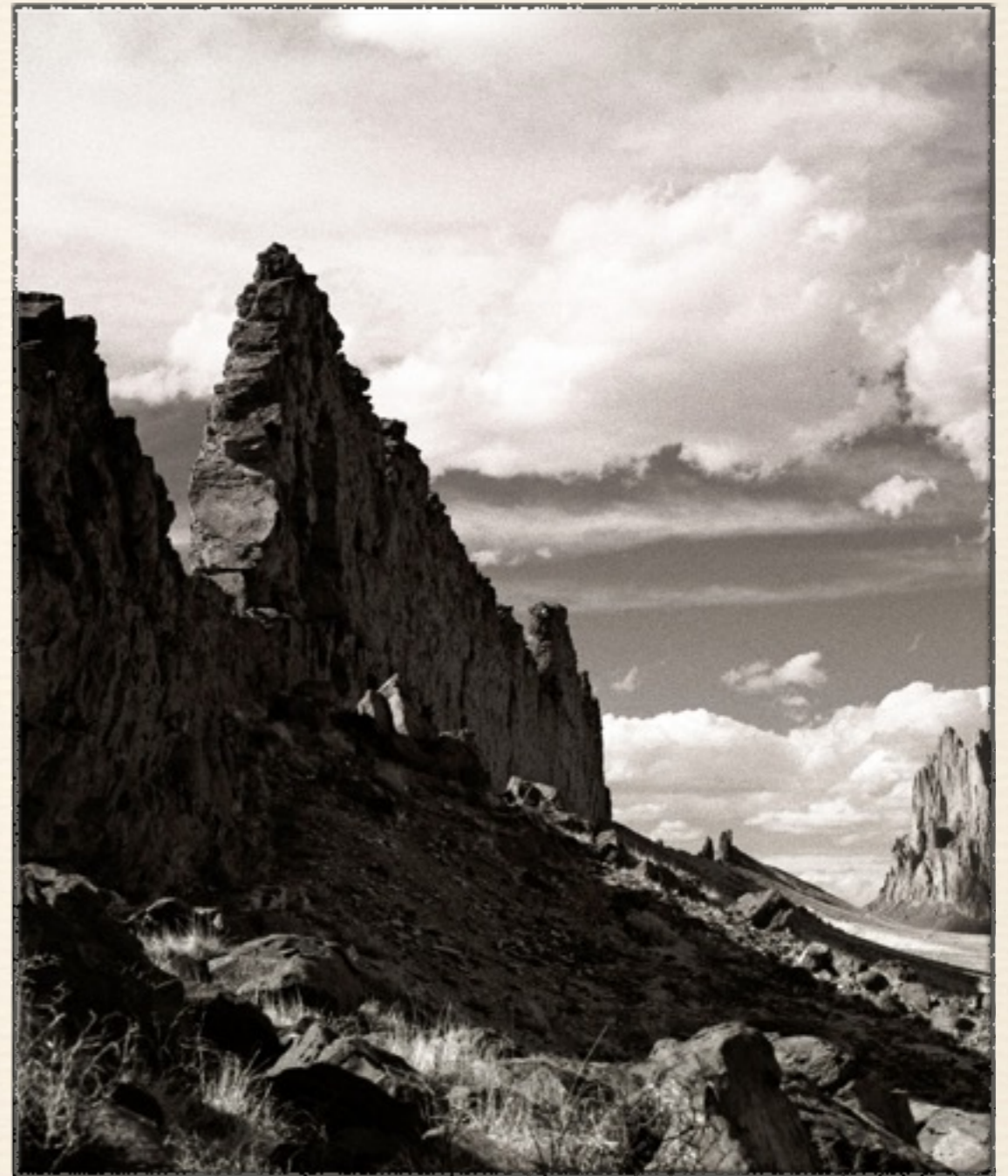
# Parents

- ❖ Love of parents for child
- ❖ Feeling of helplessness, distance
- ❖ Unusual metaphors
- ❖ Image of sea is also used in 'Windfall'



# En Famille

- ❖ Childhood
- ❖ Hints at darkness are unsettling
- ❖ Nostalgic but realistic



# Windfall

- ❖ Longs for home
- ❖ Sorrow at what he has lost
- ❖ Familiar images
- ❖ Outside versus inside
- ❖ Acceptance of his own role in bringing about the end of his marriage
- ❖ Heart-breaking



# Sport

- ❖ Family
- ❖ Mental illness
- ❖ Black humour
- ❖ Sorrow



# Father's Day, 21st June 1992

- ❖ End of a relationship
- ❖ Distance and loss
- ❖ Image of destruction - axe
- ❖ Sadness
- ❖ Black humour

