

In Your Young Days

for The Specials

Richard Georges

the vocalist holds the microphone like
a silver chalice to his parted lips;
his voice a booming and unbodied light

blowing through the dancehall. His silhouette slips,
like his notes, a warm blurring vibrato,
the stage swimming in a cardinal light,

Neville's head thrown back, the stage in two tones,
his eyes closed, the lush bass skipping inside
him, his shining skin and the giddy horns

and the skinny man bouncing on the keys
above the writhing crowd the guitar's song
and the dancing streamers — a Grecian frieze.

we are all wondering, wondering now,
what to do now we know this is the end.

a galaxy lies beyond the hot stage
and in the shaking, writhing crowd, each face

a pock-marked moon, a shroud of pale flowers
the band lurching towards its apogee
in the midland citadel, these lost hours,

these children losing their fears of lonely
futures, finding something pure to follow
the quiet fire that awakens us

our slick midnight skin, the body hollow
something aching and hungry — the touch
an urgent kiss in the dark discotheque

turns the whole place into a fantasy —
a limbo, a border, a land of rest,
to witness this moment of alchemy.