The Long hand of Travel: Murray Bail

Paul Sharrad
University of Wollongong

Abstract

What kind of journalling goes on in a writer's notebook when it comes to recording travel experience? Murray Bail in 'Longhand' and an essay in 'Quadrant', works with 'snapshot impressions' which he claims are both dangerous and interesting to him.

The paper looks at how these jottings are worked into a kind of artifice of their own and also how they translate into his fiction.

One line of thought is that although it does not overtly feature in his novels, Bail's years in India have consistently supplied a backdrop of reference across his work.