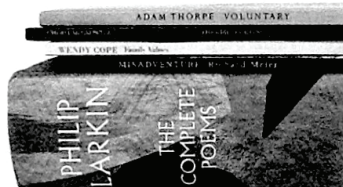


**HOT TYPE**

*New collections  
of poetry*

Adam Thorpe has never been afraid to wear his art on his sleeve. His latest collection, **Voluntary** (Cape, £10), uses some words that send you scurrying to a dictionary and yet its themes – love, loss, transience and memory will strike an immediate chord with readers. The locations – France, Africa, Estonia – change but the mindset – a kind of melancholy ambiguity – does not. Take these lines from “Home Videos”: “And everyone is still alive;/it’s all a lie, death is.” Do all filmed people live on? Or is that a foolish hope because death not only exists – “is” – but rules supreme?

Cheryl Moskowitz’s promising debut collection, **The Girl is Smiling** (Circle Time Press, £7), deals with similar themes but, born in Chicago, American optimism shines through her work – usually. Her prose poems – “A Walk in the



Park”, “Wednesday” and “Fruit” – are the highlights of the book.

Wendy Cope seems to be weary of making people laugh but she still does it so well.

**Family Values** (Faber, £7.99), now out in paperback, is full of death and dying but her elegy to Wimpy bars (“At Stafford Services”), rueful thoughts on reviewing (“The Critic”), and tribute to Radio 4 (“Closedown”) are miniature masterpieces.

**Misadventure** (Picador, £9.99), Richard Meier’s brilliant first collection, displays a fine sense of humour too. The title poem, featuring a man enamoured with a high-pressure patio cleaner who turns it on himself, shoots from the comic to the tragic. “Unlard” is a beautiful word for an ugly process.

**Philip Larkin: The Complete Poems** (Faber, £40), with an illuminating commentary by Archie Burnett, is all you will ever need to fully appreciate one of our greatest poets.

MARK SANDERSON