

Built for Purpose

I sit here in my cool grey
stone, and worn red brick,
housing the trickle of paint,
splashes on canvas;
Firing clay, and bold bright stitchery.

Young inspired feet dash up and down
my worn stone steps, echoing my history,
my passages and stairways.

Early morning pale sun
drizzles through my thin-glazed
skylights, poking into dusty corners.

Once the hum of buffing machines
and sharp shrills from capstan lathes
pierced my chambers,
shuddered my timbers.
Oil greased the wooden floorboards,
rags hung from iron nails.

My arch opens like a generous mouth
onto this busy street corner,
welcoming artisans and visitors alike,
as I have done for centuries.
Knodding my frayed cap to little
mesters, buffer girls and labourers alike.
I am Portland Works.

Rita Willow
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