

Black Bough Poetry

YOLK



Issue 3
Autumn 2019

Issue 3: *Yolk*

Editorial team



Rae Howells
Guest Reader



Matthew M. C. Smith
Editor



Mark Antony Owen
Guest Reader



Richard Waring
Guest Reader

www.blackboughpoetry.com Twitter: [@blackboughpoems](https://twitter.com/blackboughpoems) Fb: [BlackBoughpoetry](https://www.facebook.com/BlackBoughpoetry)



yolk

how carefully he cradles it - cupped in a palm
small sun captured in a jam-jar, or net,
a magnifying glass held to his painterly eye

searching for the membrane – a surface tension

whole and perfect, he picks up the quivering
with delicate fingers - takes a pin, pierces it,
shock of raw yellowness: spilt sunlight.

Eliot North

Dedication

Issue 3 is dedicated to Colin Dardis and Geraldine O’Kane, two poets from Northern Ireland, whose micropoem project @PoetryNI *Panning for Poems* inspired the creation of *Black Bough*. We are delighted to feature new work by Colin and Geraldine in this edition. Interviews with both poets will be featured on our website soon.



Colin Dardis



Geraldine O’Kane

Black Bough Issue 3: Editorial introduction

The Guest Readers and I would like to thank all of the poets and photographers who submitted for *Black Bough: Issue 3, ‘Yolk’*. We had so many poems and photos, we had to close the submission period in four days and had a very difficult job of selecting work. This edition features a wide variety of poems with certain themes emerging - the changing of season from summer to autumn, poems about the environment and pieces with repeated references to birth.

I’m hugely grateful for the meticulous work of the Guest Readers/ sub-editors, Rae Howells, Mark Antony Owen and Richard Waring. Their expertise in poetry and editing has made this a very special edition and they’ve given their time freely to assist poets in the editorial process. They are awesome. Huge thanks to Christina Chin, K Weber, Ankh Spice and Anne Casey for their captivating images.

We’re so pleased to dedicate this edition to Colin Dardis and Geraldine O’Kane - micropoetry, broadside heroes.

We’re also very grateful to the poetry community that support this project and all its writers. This community is on Twitter so please follow @blackboughpoems

Matthew M. C. Smith

Editor

October, 2019.

Obsessive

I'm really not
- but I get this stillness
inside of me, knowing
wherever I am
or what chaos has ignited
that within my cupboard at home
every cup we own has their handles
turned inward.

Nestled between

gauze of moon
and
blur of sunburst

Micro Obsequious Man

When I see your
Cacao eyes, encased
in pallid skin,
my giddy stomach free-falls.

Until inevitably you open
that mouth
smooth-tongued sycophant.

Geraldine O'Kane

Senryū:

She sees anagrams
in people's names – ex-boyfriends
turn into monsters.

The pavements are gone -
instead the mulch and crunch of
leaves serenading.

Temperature falls -
days fall, skin falls, muscles fall,
skeleton dances.

Colin Dardis



Ann Long



Ann Long

Nucleus

I squeezed out flesh
soft bone
afraid of air
compelled
to keep going
grope around
in murky darkness
grasp your finger
hang on
for dear life
rather than slink back
into nothingness

Donna Dallas

Evolution 1. Blind to All Before Birth

The light broke while her waters fell, tears flowing
from a hold that couldn't be held; religion didn't welcome
wants before wedlock, tell a bucket it's broken
and it will not be able to bear its burden. Ties snapped
and time slipped in, between us, to drown out connection.
I was born and you; left to bury the burden in your belly
and I wonder if you still caress the scars from the cord
that was cut and the kid you couldn't continue to cradle?
The light broke and I was born, blind to all that bore me.

Damien B. Donnelly



Chrysalis

I've spun my own womb.
I'm all newly-painted eyes:
see how I emerge.

-- * --

Oyster

You thumb me open.
I'm naked but for nacre,
giving you my pearl.

-- * --

worm casts

sand facsimiles
a perfect knot of s-shapes
briefly lumbricine

Sarah Doyle

Central Point

there were times, the ink from my pen
set your silks to quivering; you tracked
my words, helped me embalm them;

one night though, you tapped your limbs
across my throat - after that
silence broke;

clare e. potter



Spider

too many nimble
legs knitting silk and nightmares
spinning gentle deaths

Elizabeth Ditty

Old masters

In clandestine corners, Cimmerian crowned, tiny craftsmen toil unfound,
weaving their artful tapestries - invisible threads frame intricate frieze -

plying their art under deepest seal, secretly spinning, ever concealed
but for an instant once each morning - a gilded taper briefly adorning

sublimest filigree for briefest time, iridescence spilling from finest lines -
then slipping aside, the rays lay plain returning the oeuvre to its illusory domain

Anne Casey

Bloom

Every petal on their skin a mouth
for the light, digesting the sun
to make it sweet, make it edible.

Alchemy at work in the slender bones
slipping from dresses, print by print;
lawns showered by the tattering silks,

the scatter of magnolia feathers.
The trial of the bloom begins.
Reward us for the rains, for the heat.

Mark Antony Owen



In a Sentimental Mood

I will not pluck a repetition of these notes
from your rising and falling

chest, slick from a sultry summer
fever. There's the kick

drum and timpani. Languid brass sets in
your sheet creases. Brine. Clavicle-click. Bell.

O tap each knuckle on fine, extended
hand. My heart is your skin. Panting
and sizzling as we start back over.

Kari A. Flickinger

Q

I draw a thick, aggressive line through male.
To lose everyone means to become a myth.
The floor is two mirrors, lacquered in burning fat.
The next 10 years will be a toxic fetish.

A

Each world is digital, gold with desire –
Filled with sleek men, muscles like pink eggs.
Two bros facing each other reflect unending bronze.
We aim to optimise your body bolt-ons.

Matthew Haig (from collection, *Death Magazine*)

Adolescence

The waves of the girl that rise and swell
The soft, implacable force of a current
The riptide slipping low in the belly
She knows to close it all
behind the bulwark
of a neat smile

Anna Milan



Amie Gray

Apocalypse Now

Carving up marble floors & segmenting stone
cathedrals; gods seek out civilisation by ear-
marking apocalypses. You're alone now.
Metallic crust stiffens fingernails, pupils radiate
a golden tincture, foreheads plucked fused
emerald pendants. Woefully there are no trees
where I live yet I am rooted. Adam & Eve atop
a throne biding time, gazing over chaos.

Neha Maqsood

Blizzard in the Amazon

Puttering into the riverboat's beam
white noise engulfs our keen tender
an urgent squall of mating moths

Faces carpeted with emerging flyers
we cocoon ourselves in hammocks
storms soon drown out the static

Dawn rolls out a sodden massacre
papier-mâché plastering every deck
a failed generation now waits for us
to sweep it clean

Dominic Weston

Red-Tail

The hawk ascends
aloft invisible updrafts.
Will its shadow fall
from the slate sky
onto these scattered remnants
of late summer's harvest? Abiding,
it savors its unsuspecting prey
glean one more plump kernel -

a final meal in the treacherous
stubble of October's cornfield.

Alan Toltzis

The way there

Rain in the distance,
here before, will be again.
The windows have steamed.
Reflection from the slicked road blinds;
sharp turns cutting off the vantage.
But there is crystallization, clarity,
the closer you get
to the dark-layered thicknesses
of the heaviest clouds ahead.

Jeffrey Yamaguchi

Leaden

Playing at what,
picking up this large grey stone
bloodshot with iron, lingerings
of lichen, heavy as a whole day
sober, bracing, lugging it
not many metres and adding it
to a nondescript sort of a heap,
a slump of others just as leaden?

Adam Stokell

Big sky country

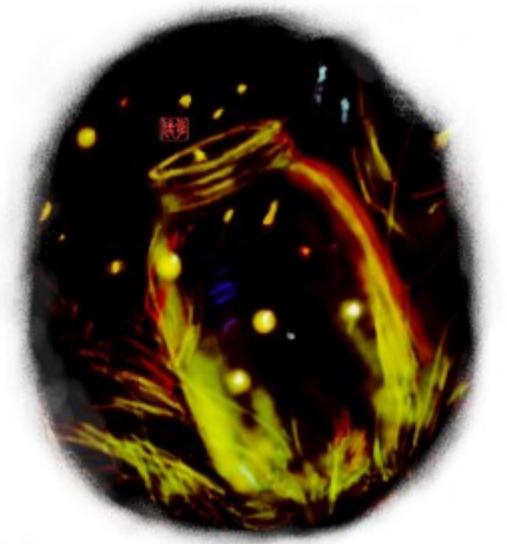
Your fingers scrabbling nervous
like the wrecked-peak green mountain light
Yellow angora nerves making a mess,
making a nest, all from the mouth
Lightning on a plain, on a planet
Brain storming crisp like
Aeronauts swiping raw fingers new in space

Erin Russell

Weightlessness

The shifting
of the metal plate
an unnamed home;
body floats
wishes to see more
cerulean shimmers
stargazing eyes:
diorama of deep blue
an unseen intensity;
ashen dreams beguile.

Megha Sood



Fireflies

Fireflies hunt nightmares,
suck out their dark saps,
roll in the hot bitter treacle,
turn the phosphor husks to
star coats of night charmers.

(note: fireflies glow to warn
predators that they taste bitter)

Ranjabali Chaudhuri

what my body remembered,
floating in the pool under the olive trees

Heat has insisted I surrender.
Green-silver olives temper light.
Breeze nudges, soft and warm and tender.
Heat has insisted I surrender.
All falls away, and I remember
peace in this sweet, slow, floating flight.
Heat has insisted I surrender.
Green-silver olives temper light.

Lucy Crispin

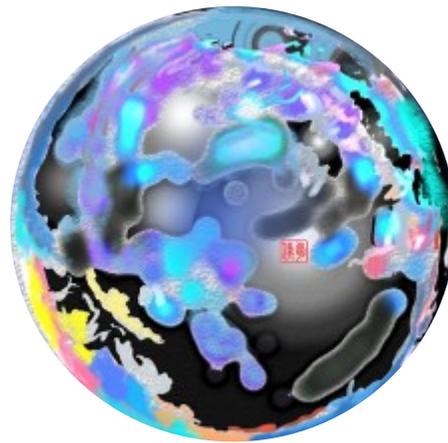
Japanese Garden

Willow weeps green tears.
Water seeps through gravel.
Grass blades sharpen.

A weed-fringed pond.
An arching bridge.
Perched on wood, a crow.

A wise man watches.
Bamboo beats on sun-chilled stone.
A geisha dances,
her tempo slow.

Iris Anne Lewis



Haven

Statue of Basho
at the Kehi Jigo shrine.
First glimpse of Fuji.

Ian Richardson

Near End of Summer

Daylight leaves green June bugs
floating in steel pots

kept near the last porch step for dipping
our sand-bitten feet. Egg yolk sun

sinking low behind the oak tree where a black
rubber tire dangles

on its rope and chains, swaying empty in the breeze.
The dog takes a long drink, licks

her cold wet nose and shakes, that old screen door
still swinging.

Kim Harvey



The Lake

Wet mulch and shadows
Moved beneath a watchful sky.
The brackish water irresistible
(to a curious child).

An eerie silence dried on our bones
(Except for one screaming woman)
She would be going home alone.

Lesley Williams

Tercets

For Andrew

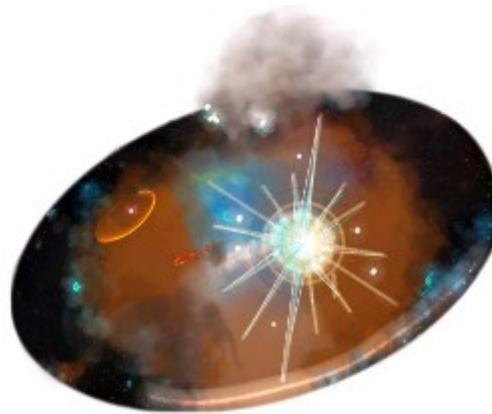
1

Begins the music.
One shadow pirouettes in
the box of the light pane.

2

A pair of geese
from here to the end of the lights.
Who switched on the stars?

Kushal Poddar



Whalers

What about the work of the old whalers?
They forged a way north to Svalbard and knew
true hard-going, so took with them best suits,
enough wooden deals to make a coffin
and a cloth bag full of moss from home to line it.

The hideous compromise of the graft.
Despite all they had left, their need then to stay
and not just be tipped to the sea, still that desire
for a grave graunched in permafrost of a headland;
all exposed now and scoured by a warmer, saltier wind.

Matt Howard

Fallow

We toiled
the summer soughs
planted the seeds
of ourselves
watered and weeded
the earth
between us
and yet
nothing grows

Claire Loader

A heady burnt

fragrance
means autumn's
soft footfalls can be heard.

Sun's blaze warms my back
as I cut dry grass,
autumn breaks out
a rumble overhead.

Paul Brookes

Dereliction

Where flesh
would have
rooted flesh,
planted seed

saplings grow,
furnish rooms,
make a roof of sky.

Mary Wight

Ritual

Oh I dream, and send my wish
inside this light-gleamed sphere
to lift away from all that's dark,
to float on the sun-beamed air. Yes, yes,
the bubble pops, lands on a
branch or thorn or falls to ground.
But what I put inside goes on
to the wish-granting realm beyond,
beyond. And I have other dreams to send:
a string of pearls. One day, I'll follow on.

Kyla Houbolt

Tossers

Out on the beach stallions gallop & whinny
on the tide
tossing white and hoary manes
Rumbling thundering in.
Spitting sand slices into cheeks, tears our gaze.
Fish flung by the waveful.
Spinning fins & scales silver foam and snow flashes
before us. Waves pound the lighthouse walls, ears
drumming in the sting of salt & grit
and a furious autumn tide.

Mari Maxwell

From The Kissing Gate

/4

O trickster of these later spells
Take my wrist and listen at my breath
Give rest to shapes his letters stoop to fill
Caress us into rhythmic feet
That breach the womb.
Dreams will darker roll in treacle-waves
That spread sweet blindness
To obscure our scattered markings
And their names.

Alexandra McCauley

Moving On

I don't have a car. I have feet –
to hoax the rougher hour
of road, to extend the hot coal
to “the mile”. It is belief
that triggers travel and endeavour,
not faith in the supernatural
but a reasoning that a spirit
sways in every kind of motion;
and we are stirred, in rotation,
to life, and to sleep, within it.

Carl Griffin

High Street

A bowling green mapped incongruously upon the scrub,
Weeds subdued to stubble; cigarette ends, glass bottles,
A broken mannequin lies abandoned behind boarded-up shops
Above which the sky hangs long and heavy,
Weltering rain through purple bruises,
The sun closes her eyes through streaks of silver,
Dreams...
The sound of a river
Crying itself to sleep.

Rebecca Lome

Melon

Can you grapple with something that doesn't grab
back but only slips & finally snaps in two thick
halves around the knife falling open to bold green?
Look. This is how it grabs you.

James Garza

First-born

The terror of leaving the confidence of nurses
who know what to do in every circumstance.

Feeling as green and unprotected as a leaf
unfolding in a sudden frost.

The bundle growing heavy as I walk.
What shall I do if he wakes?

I move like someone crossing broken glass,
every muscle stretched,
holding him tight.

Gill McEvoy



A Spice



A Spice

Homesick *Prunus Damascene*

Damsons bubble, ripple the surface,
wind on wine. Finger and thumb rub-shrug
off skins, silk slippy, bloodying aprons.
Jar-safe, royal purple waits for winter.

Once Romans sucked its tart fruit
as it stood windbreak in English orchards.
In our garden the tree trembles white blossom,
dreams of its Damascus home.

Finola Scott

Diamond Dreams

I took a seat at the planet rise of Mars,
sat patiently with the Lady in her chair,
waiting for the wavetop dancing beams to gather,
to watch with weary eyes in wonder,
the reflection of their beauty come to earth,
bold captured stars floating on dark waters,
tossed aside here and crushed there,
steaming past Derna ever onward,
where tracer fire ripped and rockets flared,
beneath shifting diamond dreams of night.

Ruairí de Barra

In the bushes

This jungle bird does not do fireworks.
He sidles along the branch,
ordinary as a poet at a bus-stop, overcoated,
cap raffishly angled, a scarf stolen from a rainbow.
He plays skiffle on the bark until he gets to mate
whereupon he sings about it ceaselessly
like it was the first time it ever happened up a tree.
“Get a life,” say the sloths and bandicoots.
“We’ve all been there, or thereabouts.”

Mark Fiddes

A Birthday

15th April

Take a walk along a grassy avenue,
your ankles brushing dandelion clocks.
Scatter their seeds, send time flying
out to a pale arch of sky.

Sue Spiers



Decalomania

Perhaps it was the day
I was drunk on a storm
but I have never felt so intensely drawn to a painting
glimpsed out of the corner of my eye;
aureolin maize flax beige buff citrine
lemon cream and gold gold gold

Julie Hogg



Black wave

Black wave, full of twisting stems and pods.
Driven by angry storm and wild spirits.
Smell the negative ions, dark anions
Listen, it's the breath of the Kraken.
From the depths, a giant foaming cauldron
Forged in iron by angry gods.

I am for the wild green waters
Trust to the blue and white winds
My legs, weed wrapped, ocean gifted.
I could live here, for forever and one day.

David Fry

Brocade

Pathways of pulsating arrows
speed, flare, drift and fall away.
Long thin arches hoop
in a frenzy of trailing dreams,
hanging, defying the law of gravity
a maize of silveriness,
surge boldly onwards
high treason, a bold plot.

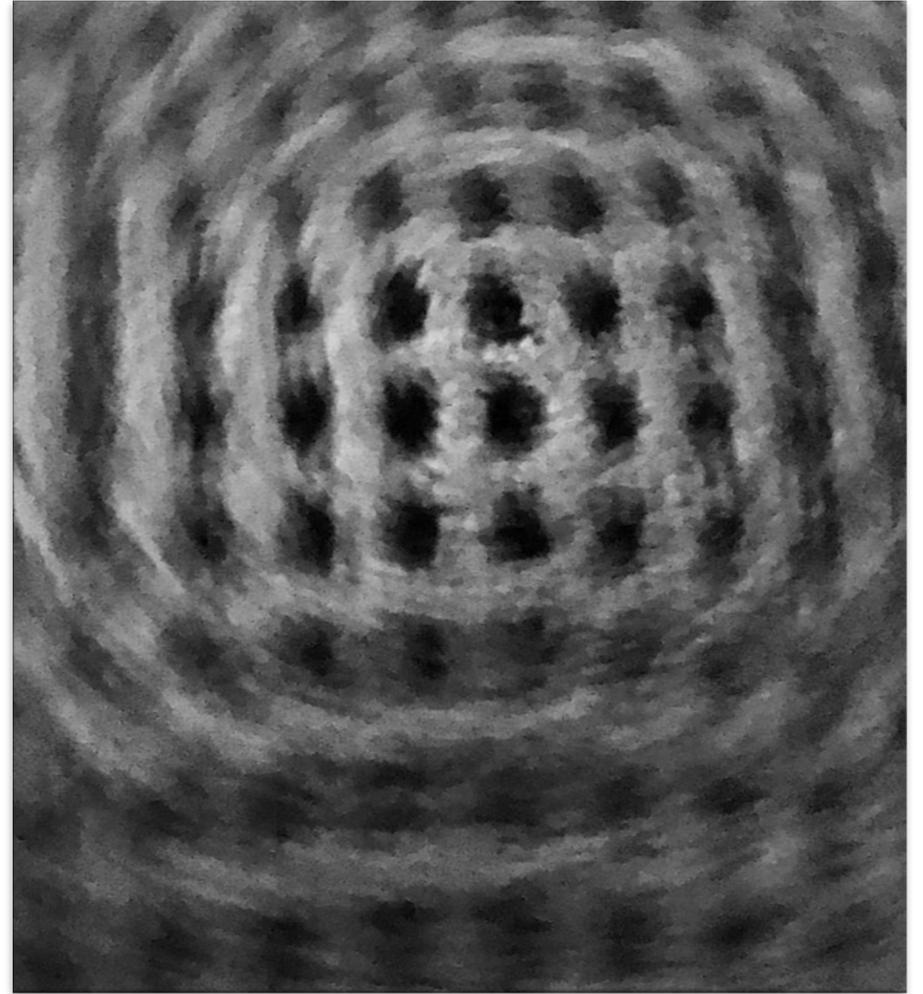
Birthing scissors

Stork scissors in my hands
parting easily, such precision,
pivotal levers that dance across the silk.
Paired for life, conveyers of souls,
exalted sentinels, intimately entwined
bow to life's delicate threads.

Maggie Blewitt



K WEBER



K WEBER

Love through the Wires on a thick dark night with no Stars

When I email you a poem -
it never seems like enough -
- this action of typing words
so insufficient to explain the way a
heart could gut itself for
a stranger, well...
you're not really a stranger -
you've seen my words at dawn... and I've
grown so fond of - your hands
and their keystrokes --- in my mouth.

Elisabeth Horan

The ice sings

Winter clamps the pond shut,
imprisons the water beneath
catching bubbles half way up.

The ice sings to itself in bent
melodies loosened by friction.
Everyone knows winter

will not last forever. But will it
end soon enough for us? The ice
creaks, howls and compacts.

Hilary Otto

Tattoo

She wanted tattoos to fit in the small places.
A daisy in the supra-sternal notch, perhaps
and a ladybird or two for her popliteal spaces.
In the ante-cubital fossa she asked for a dragon-fly
blue, with its wings stretched wide, and at the top
of her natal cleft, a crescent moon, with Venus rising.

Sarah J. Bryson

Turning

Bird feeders sway, empty of seed
and anxious beak. The subtle creaking sings,
swings to rustles of shrub and hedge
and hypnotic rush of river.

Harsh winters strip paint layers from sills,
life from land, as creatures rest
under a luscious silence of snow,
rendering everything still
and until the thaw,
an ungiving, a sun warmed slide away .

Lorraine Carey

Sidhe

The scent of apples
in the air
wakes me.

A dream unlocked by death;
a seedling in the cosmos.

She, on the other hand,
dances like moths
in the trees of Orcus.

The Pink Mosque

From the indulgent whispers of old men,
she makes a name for herself.

The saffron-pickers
are early in her gardens.

The men seek love-notes in her tulips
and leave every flower disrobed.

And the Mughals courted in her quarters,
where the windows are hued like sweetened syrups,
where the sunset is seen to fade her opulence,
and leaves her bashful in the moonless quiet.

Z.R. Ghani

How to Grate the Moon

Take this shining truckle into your hands.
Peel back the waxy rind. Let each flake be
perfect, and dazzle the earth as it lands.
Let its curd lie like a yellowbrick road
on the sea. Sing its ancient psalmody.
Grate with care. The fickle bright will dote you,
your heart be snagged by astonishing light.

Endnote

The undertakers gather, in top hat
and tails, careful janitors of the dead.
Pre-arranged smiles hardly stir their lips.
Eyes blank, they stink of lilies and carnations,
usher mourners inside, hoist the coffin up
on well-oiled shoulders. They know just when
to withdraw, shuffle out in polished shoes
that don't quite fit. And when they lift their hats,
courteously bow to the departed,
I turn and see the gleam of shining skulls.

Kathy Miles



Passing On

This boy moves like a younger me;
stooping and sorting, cool quick fingers,
his bucket rattling with every deposit.
Razors and clams, flints for sundown,
carefully eyed beneath a yellow hood.
It's a family tradition, Grandad used to say.
He held my bucket on this same shore –
wasn't wet that day, just windy enough
to blow his smile
onto my face.

Niall M. Oliver

Róisín

I will cover myself
with rose petals like velvet
I will sew them evenly
into a new dress
the fabric will highlight
the redness of my lips
still waiting

Agnieszka Filipek



Pint

The first inch is the rain we escaped - the gasp, the laugh.
The second is a silent sigh, balm to the throat.
The third is golden, slow, breathing out hops.
The fourth is darker, settling in the chest.
The fifth is oceans, clouds, a warm deep dive.
The sixth is your amber eyes, the sound of glass on wood.

Rachel Playforth

Limpets

Clutch of spoked shells
fanned in brined rock-frown
fastened, minded of sand:
yesterday and yesterday
in drawers, on walls.

Laura Wainwright

Balla an Mhúrn

(Mourne Wall)

19.5 miles of piled grey
moss haired and white lichen faced
first lift, through stones and cope
primitive beauty forever strong
marvel at the waller's skill

Richard Waring

The Land's Amnesia

The land has lost its memory
links between pasture and hedgerow
and pulsing hills ploughed out
homogenised like milk
in dairy crates.

The bypass was a lane
was an ancient track
ritual layered upon ritual
henge to roundabout
old blood waters the bedding plants.

Stuart Rawlinson



Instincts and Archetypes

adorn this life
with syllables
and words:

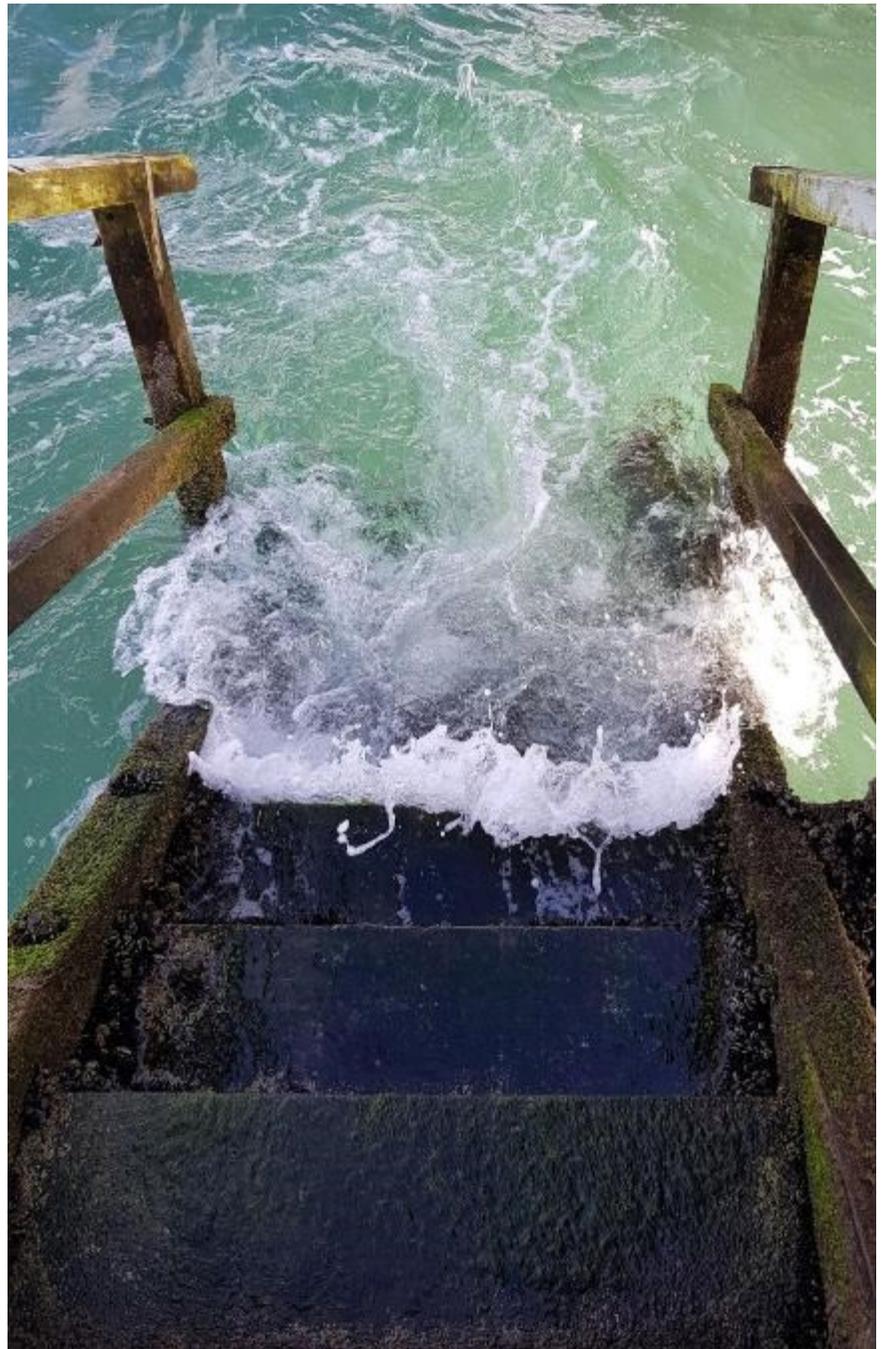
embalmed butterflies
pinned
in a shadow-boxed heart

Anthony Marovelli

Winter Wakening

A secret hides in every December sky
when the moon sets and shadows
drench the depths of heaven.
But a star will breach that wintered darkness
with her frost-tipped light
to gift her joy upon the waiting earth
and on a baby's cry, smile upon a world
too beautiful now for sleep.

Lynda Tavakoli



A Spice

List of Contributors

Artist

Christina Chin is from Malaysia, paints and has haiku published both in print and online with several reputable anthologies and journals. Her photo-haiku won 1st place in the 8th Setouchi Matsuyama International Haiku Contest of 2019. She is at haikuzyg.blogspot.com/ christinachin99blog.wordpress.com/ Twitter: @Zygby22

Poetry and photography

Anne Casey is the author of two poetry collections published by Salmon Poetry. Anne is an award-winning poet/writer and literary editor with a keen interest in nature photography. She has worked for over 30 years as a journalist, magazine editor, legal author & media communications director.

Photography

Ankh Spice is a poet and photographer from New Zealand, obsessed with the sea. He is a survivor of various asylums, including a University where an English degree once happened despite himself. He writes because he has been unsuccessful hiding his lack of skin – so his poetry keeps breathing, even when it hurts, mostly exhaling in natural images.

K Weber has 4 self-published poetry books available free in PDF & audio formats. These and her full writing and photography credits are available at <http://kweberandherwords.wordpress.com>

Poets

Maggie Blewitt retired from nursing and went travelling in the summers. This left the winter. She was persuaded to join a poetry group, a new experience. Several groups and 10 years later, she's still trying.

Paul Brookes is a shop asst., who lives in Wombwell. His recent chapbooks include *Please Take Change* (Cyberwit.net, 2018) and *Stubborn Sod* (Alien Buddha Press, 2019). Forthcoming is *As Folk Over Yonder* (Afterworld Books, 2019). He edits The Wombwell Rainbow Interviews. Fb: PaulBrookestheWriter Twitter @PaulDragonwolf1 www.thewombwellrainbow.com/

Sarah J. Bryson is a writer of poetry and prose, a nurse and a keen amateur photographer. She is interested in words for well-being, people and nature. There is an increasing overlap and connection between these aspects of her life.

Lorraine Carey's an Irish poet and artist, widely published in *Orbis*, *Prole*, *Abridged*, *The Honest Ulsterman*, *Skylight 47*, *Atrium* and in *Poethead*. A Pushcart Prize nominee, her art has featured in many journals. Her debut collection is *From Doll House Windows* (Revival Press).

Ranjabali Chaudhuri's poems have appeared in the *Dime Show Review*, *Black Bough Poetry* and *Re-Side*. She live in London and tweets from @Ranjabali.

Lucy Crispin has been published recently in *Eildon Tree*, *Allegro*, *The Selkie*, *Channel*, *The Blue Nib* and *Iceberg Tales*. Her micro-pamphlet *wish you were here* is forthcoming from Hedgehog Press.

Donna Dallas studied Creative Writing and Philosophy at NYU's Gallatin School and was lucky enough to study under William Packard, founder and editor of the *New York Quarterly*. She is recently found or

forthcoming in *34th Parallel*, *Sick Lit Magazine*, *Quail Bell Magazine*, *Beautiful Losers*, *Chiron Review*, *Red Fez* and *Bewildering Stories* among many other publications.

Ruairí de Barra is from Co. Mayo and now resides in Co. Cork. He is a sailor, an award-winning military journalist, and a poet. His creative work has featured with *Tinteán*, *A New Ulster*, *Live Encounters*, *The Bangor Literary Journal*, *Black Bough Poetry* and it can all be read www.paperneverrefusedink.com

Colin Dardis is a poet, editor, sound artist and arts coordinator from Northern Ireland. His collections include *The Dogs of Humanity* (Fly on the Wall Press, 2019) and *the x of y* (Eyewear, 2018). His work has been published widely throughout Ireland, the UK and USA.

Elizabeth Ditty haunts twitter and instagram at @ditty1013. Her work can be found in *Memoir Mixtapes*, *L'Éphémère Review*, *Moonchild Magazine*, and *Tiny Essays*.

Damien B. Donnelly, 44, Dublin born, Paris-dweller, writing since childhood, mostly poetry and short stories on the themes of sexuality, adoption, identity and fragility. Interested in falling over and learning how to get back up again, all while making delicious cakes. www.deuxiemepeapoetry.com Twitter: @deuxiemepeau

Sarah Doyle won the WoLF poetry competition and Brexit in Poetry 2019, was runner-up in the Keats-Shelley Poetry Prize 2019, and was highly commended in the Forward Prizes 2018. She is currently researching a PhD in meteorological poetry at Birmingham City University.

Mark Fiddes has published two titles *The Rainbow Factory* and *The Chelsea Flower Show Massacre* (Templar Poetry). His work has recently featured in *Poetry Review*, *Magma*, *The Irish Times* and *The New European*. This year, he came 3rd in the National Poetry Competition.

Agnieszka Filipek lives in Galway, Ireland. She writes in both her native tongue Polish and in English. Her work has been published internationally in countries such as Poland, Ireland, India, China, England, Wales, Germany, Bangladesh, Canada and the US. Visit www.agnieszkafilipek.com

Kari A. Flickinger's work has been nominated for Best of the Net and the Rhysling Award. She is an alumna of UC Berkeley. Find her: kariflickinger.com Twitter: @kariflickinger legendcitycollective.wordpress.com

David Fry has had two poems published in *Black Bough Issue 2*. seekingthedarklight.co.uk. Twitter @thnargg

James Garza is a writer and translator whose work has appeared in *Asymptote*, *Lunch Ticket* and *Flash: The International Short-Short Story Magazine*. His translation of Kasuya Eiichi's 'The Structure of the World' was commended in the 2018 Stephen Spender Prize. Twitter: @GarzaWords

Z.R. Ghani is from Enfield, North London and works at the William Morris Gallery, Walthamstow. Her self-published fantasy novel *Mr 101* is available on Amazon.co.uk and Kindle. She's been published in *Magma Poetry: Climate Change Issue*, and will be published later this year in the *Willowherb Review* for her poem 'Winter Crow'. Instagram: @z.r.ghani fb: zrghani

Carl Griffin is from Swansea, South Wales. His first book of poetry, *Throat of Hawthorn*, will be released late this year by Indigo Dreams Publishing. @0CarlGriffin0

Matthew Haigh is a poet from Cardiff. He has no interests since the dawn of the internet made everything readily available and therefore of no value. He was highly commended in the Forward Prizes 2020. His debut collection *Death Magazine* can be found in your local newsagents alongside the copies of *Bella*, *Grazia* and *OK!*

Kim Harvey is a San Francisco Bay area poet and Associate Editor of *Palette Poetry*. Her work has appeared in *The Comstock Review*, *Rattle*, *Radar*, *Barren Magazine*, *Typishly*, *Poets Reading the News*, and elsewhere. Twitter: @kimharveypoet. Insta: @luna_jack www.kimharvey.net

Julie Hogg is published in many literary journals and anthologies; her debut pamphlet *Majuba Road* is available from Vane Women Press. Twitter: @hogg_julie

Elisabeth Horan is a momma poet mentor and an advocate for animals and children. She hopes her poems might make the world a more gentle place. Twitter: @ehoranpoet

Kyla Houbolt writes even though she's old enough to know better. Find all her published work here: https://linktr.ee/luaz_poet. Twitter @luaz_poet

Matt Howard lives in Norwich, where he works for the RSPB. His first full collection, *Gall*, was published by The Rialto in 2018 and was winner of the 2018 East Anglian Book Award for Poetry and shortlisted for the Seamus Heaney Centre First Collection Prize in 2019.

Iris Anne Lewis writes poetry and short stories. Her work has been featured at the Cheltenham Literary Festival and the Bradford on Avon Arts Festival. She has been successful in both competitions and is published in magazines and anthologies. Twitter: @IrisAnneLewis

Claire Loader was born in New Zealand and spent several years in China before moving to County Galway, Ireland. Her work has appeared in various publications, including *Crannóg*, *Dodging The Rain*, *The Bangor Literary Journal* and *Crossways*.

Rebecca Lowe is a freelance writer, poet, and co-organiser of Talisman Spoken Word in Swansea, South Wales. Her poetry has been featured on

BBC Radio 4 and has appeared in anthologies including *Bristol Poetry Can*, *Red Poets*, *Merrimac Mic* (USA) and *Blackbeath Countercultural Review*. She blogs at www.writemindfully.blogspot.com

Neha Maqsood is a Pakistani journalist who has written for *The Tempest*, *Media Diversified*, *Brown Girl Magazine* and *Rife Magazine*. Her poetry has been featured in or is forthcoming in *honey & lime*, *Turnpike Magazine*, *That's What She Said*, *Vampcat Mag* and *Another New Calligraphy Journal*. Twitter: @maqsood_neha.

Anthony Dante Marovelli is a writer, blues guitarist, fly-fisherman, and expat -bartender living in the Washington, D.C. area. He holds a B.A. in English Literature and is seeking publication of his first chapbook, *Homesick Stardust*. Twitter @anthonydante75 www.anthonydante.com

Mari Maxwell is published in *The Irish Times*, *Bosom Pals* (Doire Press), *Crannog*, *A New Ulster*, herstryblog.com, Poetry24.co.uk, *HaikuJ*, *Galway Review*, *Ropes* and *The Cabinet of Heed*. Twitter: @MariMaxwell17 lineatime.wordpress.com/

Alexandra McCauley is a graduate in Cognitive Psychology, which paved the way to years of chronic fatigue. She helped herself and then others until they outgunned her. At 41, she runs a nursing home for older people and wonders who she'll grow up to be. She is the product of a modern age that gave her so much choice. She became many things she didn't want to be - and not yet a mother.

Gill McEvoy lives in Devon, UK. Winner of the 2015 Michael Marks Award for *The First Telling* (Happenstance Press). Hawthornden Fellow. Widely published.

Anna Milan currently lives in Hertfordshire, UK. She is an established copywriter. Her poems have appeared in publications such as *Eye Flash*

Poetry, *Riggwelter*, *morphrog* and *Ink Sweat & Tears*. Twitter: @annamilanwrites

Kathy Miles is a poet and short story writer from West Wales. She has published three full poetry collections, and a pamphlet *Inside the Animal House*, Rack Press, 2018. Her work has appeared in numerous magazines and anthologies and she is a previous winner of the Bridport Prize, the Welsh Poetry Competition and the Wells Literature Festival Competition. Kathy is the co-editor of *The Lampeter Review*.

Eliot North is a writer, doctor and educator who lives between the North East of the UK and Spain. She writes poetry and prose, has been published widely and is looking to publish her first collection of poetry entitled *Ectopia: a pregnancy diary* in prose and Tanka. Twitter: @eliot_north

Geraldine O’Kane is a poet, writing facilitator and mental health advocate. She is editor of *Panning for Poems*, a micropoetry broadside. Debut collection forthcoming June 2020 from Salmon Poetry.

Niall M. Oliver lives in Ireland with his wife and two boys. His poems have previously featured in *Crossways*, *Burning House Press*, *The Lake Poetry* and *Visual Verse*, as well as a couple of anthologies. Twitter: @NMOliverPoetry.

Hilary Otto has recently had poems published in *Popshot* and *Fixpoetry*. She is based in Barcelona. Twitter: @hilaryotto

Mark Antony Owen is a syllabic poet from East Hampshire, who writes exclusively in nine original forms - sometimes, with variations. His work centres on that world where the rural bleeds into the suburban: a world he calls ‘subrural’. Mark is author of digital-only poetry project *Subruria*.

Rachel Playforth is a librarian, writer and editor based in Sussex. She is a member of the Frogmore Press editorial board, recently co-edited the wild swimming anthology *Watermarks*, and writes about local landscapes, bodies and minds, love and language. Twitter: @archelina

Kushal Poddar - authored seven books including *Herding My Thoughts To The Slaughterhouse-A Prequel*. Kushal is at amazon.com/author/kushalpoddar_thepoet Twitter: @Kushalpoee

clare e. potter directed BBC doc *The Wall and The Mirror*. Has had various poetry residencies and translated poems for National Poet of Wales; she's collaborated w/ jazz musicians, was a Hay Fest Writer at Work and received two bursaries to write two new poetry collections. Twitter: @clare_potter
<https://egjdad.wixsite.com/clareawenydd/biography>

Stuart Rawlinson is a British poet based in Brisbane. His poems have appeared in various publications and his debut collection, *Encyclopaedia of Trees*, was published in 2013. He maintains a literary blog at stuartrawlinson.com

Ian Richardson - in September 2015, Ian was Overall Winner in the Scottish Borders ‘Waverley Lines’ poetry competition. In November 2016, he received the Anstruther Writing Award. His work has appeared in various poetry publications and spoken word podcasts. Twitter: @IanRich10652022

Erin Russell is the winner of the 2019 Goedicke Prize for Poetry and U of T’s Wycliffe College Poetry Award. Her work has appeared in *CutBank*, *Burning House*, *Train*, *Time Out*, and *The Holland Times*, a.o. Originally from Calgary, she lectures at Amsterdam University College. Twitter: @etcall

Finola Scott's poems are widely published including in *The Fenland Reed*, *Lighthouse* and *The Ofi Press*. Stanza Poetry Festival commissioned her work for multimedia installations and postcards. Red Squirrel publish her debut pamphlet this October. Her poems can be read at Facebook: Finola Scott Poems and heard in many places.

Sue Spiers lives in Hampshire and her poems have appeared in *Acumen*, *The Interpreter's House* and *Under the Radar* (among others), on-line at *Black Bough*, *Ink*, *Sweat & Tears* and *The High Window*. Twitter: @spiropoetry.

Megha Sood is an editor at *Whisper and the Roar* and *Ariel chart* etc. Works featured in *Statorec*, *Piker*, *Visitant Lit*, *Quail Bell* and *Dime Show Review*. Works featured/upcoming in 15 anthologies by US, UK, and Canadian presses. Two-time state-level winner of the NAMI Poetry Contest. Twitter: @meghasood16

Adam Stokell's poems have appeared in various journals, including *Cordite*, *Meanjin*, *Plumwood Mountain* and *Lite Lit One*. His first poetry collection, *Peopling The Dirt Patch* (A Published Event, 2018), formed part of The People's Library exhibition at the Long Gallery, Hobart. He lives in Hobart, Tasmania. Twitter: @agstokell

Lynda Tavakoli facilitates adult creative writing classes and poetry workshops for schools in her native Northern Ireland. Her poems have been widely published in the UK, Ireland and the Middle East. She is presently working towards her debut poetry collection.

Alan Toltzis is the author of *49 Aspects of Human Emotion* and *The Last Commandment*. He has published in numerous journals including, *Grey Sparrow*, *The Wax Paper*, *Hummingbird*, and *Panning for Poems*. He is at www.alantoltzis.com. Twitter: @ToltzisAlan.

Laura Wainwright is from Newport, South Wales. Her poetry has been published or is forthcoming in *Black Bough Poetry*, *Burning House Press*, *Wales Haiku Journal*, *Picaron Poetry*, *Animal Heart Press* and *Lucent Dreaming*. Twitter: @wainwrightlj

Richard Waring has lived in Belfast all his life. He loves his city and like many who live there shows that love by constantly complaining about it. His first poem 'To Lie On White On Green' is published in the 2019 CAP anthology *Find*.

Dominic Weston produces wildlife television programmes, runs over the

Mendip hills and writes poetry. His work often relates to family, the natural world, or both, and can be undercut by a slick of darkness. In 2019, his poem 'Ghost of a Flea' won first prize at Hastings Lit Fest.

Mary Wight lives in the Scottish Borders. Her poetry has appeared in a number of magazines and anthologies. Twitter: wight_mary

Lesley Williams - after a long career in Social Services, Lesley took early retirement and has been able to pursue amongst other things her love of the written word. Through courses run by Swansea University she has met a great many talented people. A small group still regularly meets to share ideas, discuss their work and eat nice food.

Jeffrey Yamaguchi creates projects with words, photos, and video as art explorations, as well as through his work in the publishing industry. Twitter: @jeffyamaguchi www.jeffreyyamaguchi.com

