



Richard Waring is a guest reader for Black Bough issue 3. He was approached for this role because of the stark, minimalist beauty of his work. Richard has been published in all of the Black Bough issues and has been published in a variety of other presses. He is completing his first chapbook. We caught up with him...

RICHARD WARING

Tell us a little about yourself and where your work is published

I love writing. Always have. I have novel manuscripts in various stages of completion all over the house but poetry is fairly new to me and I love it. I am also a huge nerd - movies, books, comics, games. Name any stereotypical nerd activity and you can guarantee that at some point in my life I have had an interest in it. My kids think I'm cool though so I'm happy with that, although I do think they need to get out a bit more. I was a stay-at-home dad until my both my kids started secondary school and have just dipped my toes back into the working world. My work is published online and in print in Poetry NIs *FourXFour*, *Nine Muses Poetry*, The 2019 Cap Anthology *Find* and of course *Black Bough* a journal and community I am so happy to be part of.

How long have you been writing poetry and how did you start?

I hadn't written poetry since I left secondary school. Its power and beauty was something that I felt was beyond me. Last year, I started to think about a poem I had written for my GCSES. My teacher wouldn't accept it and was sure that I had plagiarised another's work. I started to write a short story about trying to remember the words and something inside me clicked. Once 'The Monkey pt2' was finished, poetry was all I wanted to write.

What poets are your favourites and what was the last collection you read?

Coming from Northern Ireland I have to say Seamus Heaney not just because I think it's a legal requirement for Northern Irish poets to like him but I love how he transforms the everyday into something beautiful or rather

shows the true beauty of the everyday. His 100 Poems collection is with me everywhere and I dip in and out constantly. I'm also a big fan of Geraldine O'Kane and Colin Dardis and love the spoken word poetry of Elizabeth McGeown. Most recently, I reread the *Belfast Confetti* collection by Ciaran Carson and am currently starting *The Dogs of Humanity* by Colin Dardis.

You have recently joined Black Bough Poetry as a guest reader, what drew you to the publication?

I love scrolling through Twitter looking for writing prompts. One day, the submission call for issue one popped up on my feed. When I clicked and saw what they were looking for I had absolutely no idea what I was doing but thought I would give it a go. The editorial feedback and encouragement I received from Matthew Smith after that first email told me that this was something I had to be part of. And as the journal and community has grown it has started to feel like a second home.

Any tips you can give poets wishing to be published by Black Bough?

Try. Put those words you carry in your heart onto paper and shape and polish them as best you can. Submit them. I did and I'm glad I took that chance.

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