

CARTYS POETRY JOURNAL – ISSUE VII --- AUTUMN ISSUE – OCTOBER 2011

www.cartyspoetryjournal.com



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Cover Image

“Lane from Rossbawn”

Tomás Ó Cárthaigh

Poetic Quotation:

As to the pure mind all things are pure, so to
the poetic mind all things are poetical.

[Henry Wadsworth Longfellow](#)

Introduction

Again its late, but again its Irish, and again we think that it is worth waiting for.

In this issue we bring you an invitational contribution of women poetesses after an online posting by Amy King lamenting the perceived difficulty in getting published if you are a woman.

In response we sent an invite out on Facebook, Twitter, and one three poetry listserves for women writers in particular, which then rose the submissions from the fairer sex, only for men to submit their as well even though this issue was to be for the ladies!!!!

We bring as well the second part of the submissions from the WritersCafe.org contest we ran for the last issue, we only fitted half of the winners and runners up in, so we think we got the rest in this turn!!!

Local events here in the Tullamore area we also outline, with pictures and articles from the Readings at the Pallet festival, Ken and Triona Humes book launch, and the Culture Night event in Ireland that we attended, as well as the PREDA Fundraiser in Dublin.

Some writers – particularly male!!! – have had their submissions put off for the next issue, due for December but which may be out sooner if we get sufficient submissions in for the next issue – and I got the time to get the issue together!!! So if your not in this one, it should be in the next.

Tomás Ó Cárthaigh
Editor
Cartys Poetry Journal
www.cartyspoetryjournal.com

About the Journal:

We publish new and emerging writers, Irish and non Irish with a particular emphasis on rhyming poetry.

We publish all other sorts as well, but we wish to especially promote rhyming poetry. See our back catalogue for poets we have published, and feel free to submit. Details on our website.

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- Fast Forward
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Austen Roye (USA)
- ten. twenty. thirty.
- as they never do.

Frederick L Light (USA)
- Making an End of Music

Anthony Sullivan
- The Story of a Dance

Jonathan Hicks (NI)
- Before You Go Out
- The Lily Of Shunum
- The First Pleasure
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- Flaw In The Machine

David McDonald
- An Abandoned Soldier
- For Our Veterans
- The Death

Special Feature –

Women Writers of Poetry



Amy King, the American poetess, on the Buffalo Poetry Listserv, lamented the fact that the publishing industry in general seem to favour male poets, and cited publishing stats from various papers in the online debate. In response, I sent an invite out for women poets in particular for this issue, and here I feature the submissions.

The findings from the special call that went out via Twitter, Facebook, and three poetry listserves was that female submissions went up from about one in three to nearly one in two, but the lads not to be outdone, flooded more submissions in!!!

So, as far as I can gather, men are more pushy in submissions, more focused on promoting their work, hence their apparent success in getting published.

Frances Ayers (USA)

I am a middle aged Poet living in NYC. I have been writing poetry for only five years, since the death of my brother. My poems have been published in three facebook anthologies and online. My poem, "As Old As The Sea" came in as third runner up in the voicesnet.com international poetry competition for May 2010. When I am not writing I am a fulltime Caregiver to an elderly uncle. Previously, I worked as a Social Worker with abused and neglected children. I graduated from Fordham University with an MSW. I am of French/Irish descent.

Grief Has No Hold

I will not keep you behind an iron gate
But will unlock my soul to accept the beauty
Of the dawn and ascending road
Invisible as the path may be
I will feel my way through
With head held high and shoulders straight
For there is more light than shadow
Hope is more prevalent than fear
I will remember more songs than weeping
And the joy that comes after a long battle

Reigning In The Shadows

Sometimes doubts and fears arise
As the shadows of life grow longer
Pity and fear, the light does despise
For the light makes souls stronger
We flounder in the shadows path
Lost in our own dark night
For the darkness later shows its wrath
Clear within our sight
But the light soon reigns in the dark
And brings us faith, and hope
The dawning light provides the spark
To erase the shadows and help us cope

As The Night Descends

As the night draws the curtain close
And all the earth lays down its head
The moon and shadows strike a pose
As our little ones are tucked in bed
Ethereal beings take to flight
As heavens' curtain slowly falls
They pass unseen through out the night
To undertake their sacred calls
To guard frail humans in their sleep
Bringing hope to weary souls
From house to house, they quickly leap
To carry out heavens' goals

Of Winter Born

Of winter born, a pale child
Restless like the rolling wave
Surviving, barely, in the wild
She calls to nature, to be saved

Wolves are restless, hearing cries
Of one so little, as new as snow
On a tiny crevice, here she lies
Above a hill, creatures below

No human parents to embrace her
And shield her from the wind and cold
They lay buried underneath her tears
A newborn they no longer hold.

And suddenly her cries are heeded
As wolves encircle her fragile frame
Providing warmth to her as needed
No prey is she, they know her name

The years pass by like lightning
The seasons flee like grains of sand
Embracing nature, she looks frightening
As nature's parents lick her hand

Refresh My Soul

Refresh me with the sound of your voice
Echoing throughout my listless mind
Helping to drown out all other noise
Leaving problems far behind
Help to reawaken my tired soul
And immerse me in refreshing springs
With you beside me now I am whole
Enjoying surprises our life brings

Soul Speak

Tell me of your deepest yearnings
And need to feel you're not alone
Trust me with memories you treasure
Have patience when I take that tone
And wish for me all life's goodness
Few tears that sting like braided rope
Patience and luck in equal measure
And strength anew to help me cope
Hoping to attract that kindred soul
With a longing that knows to wait
My heart opens up to accept the one
Forever more to be my mate

оаза ватре
огањ црвени вулкан Марс
кум свих вулкана

fire oasis
the flame is red volcano Mars
godfather of all volcanoes



еротски занос
таласне вибрације
ватрени вулкан

flaming volcano
erotic passion
vibration of waves

VOLCANO -

Tatjana
Debeljacki



I had the pleasure of reading through the collection of haiku from Serbian writer Tatjana Debeljacki of late, and the collection is available in Serbian and English bilanguage edition which

is a very welcome addition to anyone's literary collection, be it in hardcover or in software.

I publish two of the haiku above, both in English and in their native Serbian, and the beauty of the words carry well to the English language, a difficult feat for any writer to achieve, never mind an English translation of a Serbian poem written in a Japanese format!!!

Reference:

- [Vulkan: Volcano](#)

by Tatjana Debeljacki

ISBN 8690589511 (86-905895-1-1)
Hardcover, Lotos

Máire Morrissey-Cummins (Ireland)

Biography:

I am Irish, I was born and raised in Tramore, Co. Waterford and presently live in Greystones, Co. Wicklow. For many years, I have lived Europe, in Holland mainly. I still move between Ireland and Trier, Germany as my husband works in Europe. I am married 30 years, I have two adult children. One has his own business in Dublin and the other is living and working in Madrid. I am a published Haiku poet with the Irish Haiku Society and Haiku Ireland. I am really enjoying my attempts at standard poetry also as I am very new to writing. I have had a number of my standard poems published in various poetry anthologies, journals and online. After a life working full-time in the Financial Sector, finding poetry has been a real gift and I am just enjoying the journey of being free to truly enjoy life.

Published haiku poet with the IHS and Haiku Ireland, I have been published in Presence magazine by Marin Lucas in edition 44 and in Haikuj, an online haiku site. I also write standard poetry and have some success with publishing. I write a variety of poems, whatever flows to be honest. I have been writing for the past year after a lifetime of working in the Financial Sector in Holland and Germany mainly.

I have an online blog which I update weekly, I have only started it but it is coming along well.

<http://kerkedijk.blogspot.com/>

Cat haiku

evening sunlight
her nose smudges the window
admiring herself

summer pruning
his claw marks still
on the maple trunk

For Brahms (RIP)

her kneading paws
the rhythm of my fingers
on the laptop

lazy sunday
her body purring
into mine

Garden haiku

cutting back rhubarb
cradled in the stems
a blackbirds nest

June gardening
starlings circle a blackbird
with a worm

light breeze
purple lupins point
dancing towards the sea

trees bend and sway
each leaf a different sound
blithe symphony

summer noon
bees gather nectar
in honey sunshine

sea breeze
foxgloves freckled lips quiver
whistling a tune

hedge clippings
in the wheelbarrow
autumn leaves with spring

A Lily Light Afternoon

A shaft of sunshine

streams through magnolia clouds
glides over a sleepy village
streaks shadows on patchwork meadows
and warms textured straw bales
wrapped in harvest light.

Milk laden cows
graze clover fields
as sheep stud the hillside.

Sprinting brambles
prickle wild hedgerows
swollen with purple fleshy fruits.

Song birds bolt
from beech to sycamore
humming sweet melodies
blossoming the breeze
on a lily light afternoon.

Early Morning Wonder

In the stillness of the morning
I open my window.
I wonder is it you
who calls me,
through the trembling leaves
fluid birdsong
or the cool breeze embrace
gently touching my face.

I scan the sky
clouds drift to the east.
I search for your face
a sign, a trace.
An apricot sunrise lifts the dawn
shadows streak the fields
a path of light melts the sea.

I close my eyes
basking in newborn rays
I wonder could it be your glow?
I hear soft whispers
circling the maple tree.
I sense your aura
as baby pink rosebuds bloom.

House martins skim the trees
clipping in and out of nests.
Dewdrops drip from their beaks
to nourish their young.
I wonder can they see you?
I watch in silence
in wonder.

Idyllic Altamont

Altamont is an old family home in Co. Carlow, Ireland. It is abandoned now but the gardens and lake are magnificent and well kept. It is free to enter and has so many gardens within the garden, it is magical. I tried to capture some of it in this poem.

Old stone pillars flank the entrance
draped in ivy, brambles and weeds.
An avenue of beech
curves to an abandoned house
where a peacock's cry
resounds from purple walled gardens
at idyllic Altamont.

Weeping Aspens quiver
dappling sunlit walls.
A faded pink facade lies buried
under a myriad of trees,
vines meander the windows,
moss creeps the steps.

From the doorway,
a thick path spreads through lawns,
lined by pyramids of clipped box,
sweeping beneath arches of Yew.
Trellised roses perfume the view
down to a lily clotted lake.

Swans with their young
forge a path through yellow lilies
dipping long necks into raven waters.
They drift the summer sunshine.
Bird song fills the lake
lacing the trees with lilting melodies.

A woodland of Rhododendron,
gnarled branches of purple and pink
bracelet the lake,
leading down to a dank bog
swamped with giant rhubarb
and grassy reeds swish the breeze.

A diverging path
coils to a cascading waterfall,
crashing into the river Slaney.
Dense dark Ash spiral upwards
to a bright grassy clearing
to intoxicating views
of the Blackstairs mountains.

A feast of surprises,
at each path's twist and turn
with a seat to sit and ponder.
A place of peace and beauty,
freedom to roam in the midst nature,
How I long to return to Altamont.

Letter to my Emigrant Daughter

I used your mug for my tea today
I thought it needed airing.
Your name etched in green
with the Irish flag flying,
a white shamrock growing on the side.
It's a fine mug,
a gift from your Kylemore days,
befitting your name
testament to your Irishness.

As I hold it up, it catches the light.
I see the flash of orange,
but your Dutch life comes to mind
and then a splash of red
taints my thoughts as I acknowledge
your new Spanish life.
With your Irish mug in hand,
you are my cailín na hÉireann
but you barely lived here.

The sun is shining today,
the garden radiant
with a glint of your touch
in the chard, still growing strong.
And the mustard cress,
from one seed, a massive mound.
You, who had no interest in gardening
have left so much of your spirit behind.
The yellow rose has more buds
than it could ever hope to bloom
and the white Lilac is so sweetly scented
especially for you.

I smile to myself,
mo leanbh beag bándearg
and I wish you were here today.
Lunch in the garden has no appeal without
you.

The new teak loungers
lonely on the deck,
they await your return.
The fold-up table, weathered
from our years of use.
It holds memories of your wonderful salads,
displayed and presented lovingly
in the wide ceramic bowl.
I think of the countless pots of tea,
the elderflower cordial
and the jam we made together
as we journeyed
through our Greystones years.

I look at the garden,
there are traces of you everywhere
in all your glory.

Notes:

(i) *Kylemore days* – Kylemore Abbey Boarding School, Galway, Ireland where my daughter studied for five years. The school is famous but has recently been closed. It is still a tourist destination, very popular.

(ii) *my cailín na hÉireann* = Gaelic for my Irish girl

(iii) *mo leanbh beag bándearg* = Gaelic for my little pink girl



St Brendans Church, Birr

Photo: Tomás Ó Cárthaigh

Rachel Sutcliffe

If

If I could cry an ocean then I could swim away
Away from grief and sorrow in search of better days
If I could write a story and live the tale it told
I'd write in joy and laughter and leave suffering untold
If I could dig a tunnel and follow the path I dug
It would lead me someplace special where everything were good
But ifs are only wishes and reality is tough

For Grandma

Today I saw a frail old day,
Walking with a white stick.
She reminded me of another old lady,
Who we all loved to bits.
Grief brought a tear to my eye,
As I remembered where she would sit.
So these words are meant for her,
I hope she thinks them fit.
I pray she's now with the angles,
Surrounded by the candles we've lit.
Our much loved mother and grandma,
Who blessedly this life did quit.

Morning Walk

Sun shines down through tall trees,
Leaving marbled patterns along the street.
Footsteps pound with regular beat,
As foolhardy runners brave the heat.
Engines roar raising clouds of dust,
Top down becomes a must.
Buttercups soak up the golden rays,
Life gets lazy in the hot heady days.

Bio:

As a child she had a great imagination and loved story writing. For a while her creative writing took a back seat as she discovered the joys of foreign language learning and spent 2 years teaching in France and Spain. However she remained an avid reader despite not writing as much herself. Personal circumstances have led her to really concentrate on her writing again. She is an active member of a writing group and has had several of her poems and short stories published in various anthologies and magazines. She has just set up her own blog, which has definitely fuelled her creativity.

<http://projectwords11.wordpress.com/>

Patrice M Wilson (USA)

Patrice M Wilson's poetry has been published by the *Journal of New Jersey Poets*, *Nimrod*, *Barbaric Yawp*, *Hawai'i Review*, *Hawai'i Pacific Review*, *Byline*, and *Common Ground* among others, and is forthcoming in *Eclipse*. She has three chapbooks by Finishing Line Press, *On Neither Side* (2009), *When All Else Falters* (2003) and *A Different Current* (2011). Her ancestors are African-American, Tsalagi (Cherokee), and Irish. She is an assistant professor of English at Hawai'i Pacific University.

Where I Am Going

I am going
down the drain
with all the sloughed-off
waterdrops that have cleansed
me for years, with every last
sud and bubble I have so
carelessly created in so many
showers and baths
till I was squeaky clean
and ready to face the world,
well-groomed, well-dressed,
well-spoken, well-tried.

But now, I am going
down the drain with those slaves
to my cleanliness, find out
what they know, apologize
for not listening earlier,
too busy using them
for my own gain,
for my own good appearance.

Then, once we understand
each other, all the ill-used
bubbles and waterdrops and suds
and I are coming back up the drain
to haunt to world
like historical memory,
like spirits of ancestors
long gone.

Once we are friends
we can do that,
together command
the demanding dirty world
to listen.

The Storm

(After Pierre Auguste Cot's Painting)

Come, Love—
maybe we'll find a cave
or a huge hollow tree
for shelter from wind
and rain—otherwise, where
would we be running to
in this deep forest,
I in my shepherd's skin,
you in your diaphanous dress,
both beneath this crazy
buff-colored cloak
flapping and flailing
above our wary heads—
how could they protect us?

We are young and swift
on our bare feet—
we shan't stumble,
or if we do, we shan't fall hard
on this earth of grass,
where even in the rain
I would caress you
'til you slept,
despite thunder.

And if we awoke drenched and cold,
a bit sick perhaps, we could hold
each other up and limp slowly
to the sheep farm, so far from which we wandered
for our interrupted tryst—
Never mind. We could dry our clothes
before the fire, rest in bed—
or on the rug before the flames
that would keep us warm
until the day shone through again,
so clear and lovely,
who could refuse it?

Pygmalion and Galatea

(Painting by Jean Léon Gérôme)

Solitude speaks perfect
though its own non-words,
marble softening into flesh,
its creator's arms, desire to possess
encompassing before, behind.

But we let go.
What quickens in solitude
walks helpless into undefined space
where we rarely see reflected dimension
closing as soon as it opens,
small point of air that snaps shut
when you poke a finger through—

whether a trap or actual love,
moment on canvas,
life of flesh-endings
on a hard white pedestal
to step off of.

Wind in the Willow

I.
You whisper beautifully, he sighs.
It's because of you, she says.
Of course it is, he says.
Of course it is, she agrees.

And they went on like that,
On and off, all night long,

With me on the other side
Of the screen, pleased

With how suddenly cool
The exchange between

Something unseen in motion
among so many thin green leaves

Sheltering a thick trunk
And two prominent branches

In the midst of a heavy, humid
summer,
Like respite from some deep-seated
grief.

II.
How beautiful our bodies are,
Regardless of flaws, how our heads,

Thought to be masters,
Follow after our hearts

When the real storm comes.
How our legs would walk so far

As to require aid from a passer-by,
When we want to meet someone

We have loved and not seen
For months or years on end,

As if the world were not so big
As all that, as all the sorrows we feel.

Summers are the hardest, when
hurricanes threaten, when

The stroke of heat could create
A backup of heart's blood.

III.

The grave is in Hampton, Virginia,
A tree the culprit in the one-car

crash that crushed his life.
Grass grows round his stone

In the wreath that I can never
Take to him, because I live across

A continent and an ocean.
And because he did not belong

To me, and because my love
And his never met in the night,

Or in the day for that matter,
Neither in summer or winter,

When he used to bake plum puddings
To share with the family—

Another old shoe that blisters
The foot when you are lost and

Walking those miles you think
Will bring you closer.

IV.

But there is that willow tree
Outside the window

Where I sleep in my mother's home
Whenever I see her out East.

One night after a harsh thundering
And frightening flashes of light,

I heard the voices of a life
I could never have known

Without the colorless wind that blows
Across our lives like a caress,

Or like something unsure that we are
real,
Unsure of the logic of endings.

Elaina Perpelitt (USA)

A Garden's Annual Funeral

The nauseous breath of change blows bravely
into my warring heart, saying gravely

I have a greater calling

outside my parents' house where the garden
dies annually, a sickly warden

of youth, ever stalling.

I pray to a different God today
than yesterday, a funeral away.

This God sends me spinning

into adulthood with a Dev'lish wink.
Not ready, I bend over the kitchen sink

a child, a coward, a beginning,

seeing nothing but distorted distortion;
potential fleshing out of proportion.

But then!
I see a vision perfected.

One day
I'll come back with mask of sagging skin,
stomach settled, and I'll see the garden

Die and be resurrected.

Gamblers of the Highest Stakes

We gamblers of the highest stakes, we play
for keeps. We play for Fortune's luscious lips
gleaming in a most licentious display
as we clamor like dogs under tight whips—
we never had a chance! We bet it all.
Every chamber, every vessel, every drop,
we had to match perfectly to call
the bluff. To win, we thought, we'd hit the top!
To lose never entered our infallible
minds, not with such temptation, the promise
of something so pure, an incurable
passion ever-breathing fire! We miss
the obvious: when you gamble with a heart,
your destruction may be Fortune's work of art.

What a Way to Die

I know it must be hard to swallow
when you've got Destiny's hands around your
throat...
oh, what a way to die, ever so slow.

Poisonous words spike emotions with "NO!"
and as heat fills our incendiary bellies, we
bloat.
It becomes hard to swallow.

I craved water, water, water, to ease the pain
below,
but now there's much too much water to stay
afloat,
so I sink. What a way to die! Ever so slow...

You save yourself, letting go, as I blow
my last breath into a seething sea. I watch as
you gloat,
and it's hard for me to swallow.

But then a sense of relief, like a quiet snow,
surrounds me, and as I fall, I hear the most
beautiful note...
ahhhh, what a way to die, ever so slow.

Finally released from the words that used to
flow,
from lips incensed with rage, from pens that
wrote and wrote
"No, no, no!"... those words so hard to
swallow.
What a release! What a way to die, ever so
slow...

The Feminist Speaks

you boys
were taught to sharpen your sticks
and bring down the beasts.
you were called hunters.
we girls
were taught how to deal with dead beasts
and bear children.
we were called mothers.

you boys
were taught how to sharpen your wit
and conquer the world.
you were called pioneers.
we girls
were taught how to play dumb
and make you feel better.
we were called inferiors.

you men
fought for your country
and died bravely.
you were heroes.
we women
sewed up your wounds
and died quietly.
we were widows.

we women
are told that strength is ugly
and weakness is pretty.
and if we disagree,
we are usually lonely.
you men
are told to protect and defend
and so you build bombs.
and if you disagree,
you are cowardly.

we say
how many women have started wars?
you say,
you filthy feminist.

Bio:

<http://abreakfromconstancy.blogspot.com/>

I am a student of screenwriting at Chapman University, where I also pursue my love of drawing, photography, prose, and poetry.

Elena Botts (USA)

Empty Sound

Look at the fog and how it gathers.
Oh, but I am lost and there is nothing I'd rather
be the case but this,
to be lost amid this great spectral wisp.
It gathers thick and smooth and fast and fine.
It cloaks the world of any sign.
The spiders dance amid their webbed
creations.
Upon these weavings
are infinitesimal droplets sieving.
So fine and fast the spiders dance,
and the fog I am never leaving.
Here I can hear my own heart beating.
How it reverberates in empty sound

Hope

He doesn't notice
But keeps on dancing with fire
A spark moving in the dirt
Rebounds off the ground
Worn threads tearing
Seams coming loose all along
The patterned squares turning
Crimson in the dark
So his mother waits
Leaning against the cracked threshold
Emptiness trickles from her eyes
Like warm dew-drops
Her hand tightens on the door-sill
For a second, then comes to her face
Wrapping around her eyes
Petals coming in tight around a rose
He picks up the ball, eyebrows flickering
Like cat-ears, he notices
her standing there.

"Come on", she says, her hand
Slipping into her pocket,
"Let's go."

Lantern

Funny how the light moves.
It flickers, and I think of friends,
the simmering turmoil of a heart,
a glimpse of black eyes,
a hint of a smile, of bright teeth.

It is when the night pinches
away the light
when my thoughts turn,
my inner lantern
setting the shape of the wilderness.

Far off in the mountains
there is a place
where a tree resides,
its branches touching the sky,
roots feeling at earth.
Here I sit by the reflecting pool
stones spread at my feet,
clouds cast overhead.

A sailor wonders
what he is searching for.
He is truly lost,
a castaway, so he grasps the plank
with splayed fingers
and floats on his back.
His eyes are washed
away by tide, blue settling
around black pupils. Clouds pass by,
streaks of grey wandering
through his irises

White Color

He asks us to run around
in circles again
on the black white-striped black black.
I start forward,
lunge forward,
wrestle my self forward.
I am spinning on the disc again.
My legs shoot down
when it is over
like needles
on an old-fashioned record player.

The bright bright light
is in my face in my face in my eyes.
I feel like I am somewhere else.
I am in a white white room.
I can feel my strength pulsing in my chest
as I stand here in this white white room.

The walls stretch on and on.
They don't have any color.
They don't need any color.
They can't have any color
because they stretch on and on
and the light flicks on and off
and swings from side to side
like the pulsing in my chest.
Then the room disappears.
I am standing on the black white stripe black.
He asks us to run around
so I do.
I am treading water,
my face looking up at the sky
as my neck floats on dead shoulders
in the middle of the black sea.
Then the water drains
from my arms my legs my legs my feet my
shriveled toes.
I am alone
in my white room.
Here I am,
my being plastered to these walls,
my mind wandering the white space
like gulls in grey skies
like men in white suits on rainy days.
The light beats back and forth and forth
and my chest beats.

He asks us to go around again
so I do.

I can feel my soul
here in my chest,
the light that shifts from side to side
in this limitless cavernous space,
the space that is my head,
that is my mind,
that is my soul,
that is me,
that is the world.

I reach the ground,
the black white black ground.
I touch it with dead fingers,
dead fingertips.
I can see the bright bright light sun.
I can see the white white bright sun
shining through the chasms in my face,
shining into my eyes.
There is colour.
There does not need to be any color.
There cannot be any color.

There are so many colors
That stretch on and on
like the pulsing in my chest.

Amy Evans (UK)



Amy Evans' first pamphlet, *Collecting Shells*, was published this Summer by Oystercatcher Press (July, 2011). Her poems appear in the current *Shearsman* magazine's anniversary edition and the forthcoming *Women's Studies Quarterly: VIRAL* special issue. Her artwork and criticism have featured in *Jacket*, *Jacket2* and *Wolf* magazines. She co-edited with Shamoon Zamir *The Unruly Garden: Robert Duncan and Eric Mottram, Letters and Essays* (Peter Lang, 2007) and is finishing a PhD on Robert Duncan and women poets at King's College, London where she is a Visiting Lecturer.

Pointers Home

Sky scraped
and aping shine
while in fact
mainly grey
again

Cat tails meandering
ways back
flinging black if
lucky
& if mine

Such land 'scape,
land fled
as my head; I
can stand
it

Pause; Before Birth

Oh Mother, be
-reft of oestrogen,
where has your
heart gone too?

(I can hear its
pulse, still)

I am not yet borne,
don't leave me.

Coast

noun:

1 the part of the land near the sea; the edge of the land;| [as adj.] the coast road.

2 a run or movement....without power.

We kissed there on that corner
the hump of the road twists where we waved,
your way taking you
towardsthere, where
we kissed another
year& age on the bench by the seafront, waves'
lappingirrelevant, they sloppy & in different in return -
rhythmically un-
bothered by breast or fierce teenage trust, public loos our other border
(not venue):a shared
scarf as abode hooked gently under your spliff. We kissed and

asa very changed sea along the same
front begins to chill on my back tonight, I
know that if I turn
left, this cheek too sides a landscape of kiss: that way on the path,
behind the hedge, then under, yes we
kissed, we found each other out
there. Round the sea wall's another kiss that we
kissed, held hands pulse to pulse with out, in
those days, a thought of blood:clear salt water our fluid, filled its bay –
the Folly's grey brick set back in
the trees capital
ofour sweet
hearting, palatially safe, where

we kissed, expert at a love with no
qualification& young among sea-moist leaves
whowhispered our instincts, agreeing the made town forbid
all us twos too fresh in our touches. We kissed
and kissed and I sit here, unmissed but
warm from the gone loving:
not yet dead and mapping our only
ourkisses, felt like un-
idlingechoes to the touch

(Bus station, Ryde seafront, Isle of Wight)

Ann Neuser Lederer (USA)

My poems and nofiction appear in online journals such as Brevity, MiPo, and Diagram. My work is also included in anthologies such as Best of the Net and The Country Doctor Revisited. My chapbooks The Undifferentiated, and Weaning the Babies are available through Pudding House.

My website <https://sites.google.com/site/annneuserlederer/> provides additional information and links. I am a Registered Nurse and am employed in Kentucky. I was born in Ohio but also lived and wrote in Pennsylvania and Michigan. My mother's maiden name was O'Dwyer, and her ancestors were from Tipperary.

The Bath

Pan of warm water, early dawn.
Lemon scented oil.

Two soft cloths on either side.
Eyelids, ears, all the way down.

Blue mist lifts, a sigh of relief.
Steam ascends from the quiet pan.

No more fear. ("Be not afraid.")
Brushed hair, dry head, fluffed pillow.

The bathers depart with a final pat.
In the room, pastel tints, and quiet.

New sun slides higher this wintry morn,
blanket snow hints promises of warmth.

Dog With a Bloody Face

Out in the high field, a white dog prowls.
All day, it races after squirrels, or skunks, like a pup.
At twilight, it bounds through children's windows,
darkening their pre dreams.
Twigs twist into the fur of its coat,
burs cling to its underbelly and footpads.
Its hot breaths through its ragged teeth
are nearly silent, visible as steam.
The white dog's hair is almost gray with grime.
At the word Bath, it would run off.
The white dog grins into the gloom.
Its howls now echo through the metal doors
of the empty, locked garage.
The child in bed, trying to sleep, calls out:
Who has set the white dog free?

Naomi Buck Palagi (USA)

She has been interested in words, sound, meaning, and dialect since growing up with an eclectic set of experiences based in rural Kentucky. She became focused on writing poetry in 2008 as an amazingly flexible vehicle for thought and communication, and since then has had work published in journals such as Spoon River Review, Otoliths, Moria, Wicked Alice, and

Blossombones. Additionally, she has two chapbooks, Silver Roof Tantrum (dancing girl press), and Darkness in the Tent (Dusie Kollektiv 5). She lives in Northwest Indiana with her husband and her two young children.

Triolet: What struck me was

how gentle he was with the dead bird.
and placed it at a street lamp's base,
an echo of its call still heard--
how gentle he was with the dead bird.
No remembrance but this word--
and stillness, in the young man's face.
How gentle he was with the dead bird,
and placed it at a street lamp's base.

**for Jason*

Delta Triste Terza

like herons, nesting in the dead oak trees (lost fishing hook)
like pavement, like bread, like opening a package
to find plain brown paper wrapping a soft used book

like all these it begs the question of our parentage
(swooping red arrow points again to Africa);
the delta pulls our blues out early for our age.

it doesn't matter what you saw, what you saw
was not what mattered then, what mattered then was twine--
pair of donkeys, stick cotton, the gee and haw

and money. those with/ without an inside (blood) line:
language gives us away. sooner or later gives
us away. *what you think bout that old buster pine?*

*or, that man at the pump, was his mother, still lives
in a nursin home on 49, was her
they said Emmett Till whistled at. it gives*

us away. azaleas. cypress, moss, river.
his daddy was sheriff at the time sending
Panthers to jail, Klu Klux to 'Nam, the son was never

liked, he said. quit high school. in the woodshop spending
time with bearded black Walter, or Angus the rot-
weiler, *Angus, you want a nigger lady tendin*

you with pea soup? sit! step through this town with not
one frown, one smile that isn't taken in, all part:
Betty with her smile, her darkness, child, he bought

her the house. it begs the question of our bloody heart.
the delta pulls our blues out early for our age
blue, and cypress, colors, deep colors for words. start.

Sarah Tibbing (USA)

Thirteen, perched

indian-style on a rug
head bowing to nothing

untangling
with spidery hands

the knots in my stomach
a senewy cat's cradle

July

I stepped out
And the tangerine sun
Turned rotten in the sky;
All the golden faces tarnished.

A Thirst

dream fiends lie in peach trees,
drinking stars from tea cups.

Daybreak

The morning light shattered
on the beach—
I tiptoed around
the jagged edges in the sand.

Late April, Early Evening

Against the dusk sky
dissolving pink and blue,
I saw your face.
The beauty filled me,
and I floated up above you—
my sneaker got caught
in a cherry blossom.

About Sarah:

Sarah is studying writing at Studying English Writing at William Paterson University. She lives in Vernon, New Jersey.

Chella Courington

Bio: Nominated for the 2009 Best of the Net Anthology and the 2009 Best New Poets (University of Virginia), Chella Courington teaches literature and writing at Santa Barbara City College. Her recent work appears or is forthcoming in *The Los Angeles Review*, *lo-ball*, *Gargoyle Magazine*, *Opium Magazine*, *Everyday Genius* and *riverbabble*. “Diana loved anything orange” was runner-up in *The Collagist* 2009 flash fiction contest. Her first chapbook was *Southern Girl Gone Wrong*; her second chapbook of prose poetry, *Girls & Women*, was released by Burning River in April; and her third chapbook, *Paper Covers Rock*, will be released by Indigo Ink in September.

“Eurydice”

Written in 1916 during the breakup of H.D.’s marriage to Richard Aldington and her relationship with D.H. Lawrence, “Eurydice” can be read in light of the poet’s personal quest to understand herself as a woman modernist among and apart from the male modernists. By giving voice to Eurydice, the voice disregarded in Ovid’s *Metamorphoses*, H.D. begins to talk through her own place in a poetic patriarchy. Entering the mythic present of Eurydice, the poet-persona examines issues of gender and sexuality that engulf the female poet.

In this seven-part poem, the twice-departed Eurydice addresses Orpheus after he has turned on her, breaking Pluto’s caveat not to look back at her until they reached the upper air. But anxious for another look, Orpheus turned and the palpable Eurydice vanished. Ovid writes: “Dying now a second time, she yet cannot reproach her husband, for how can she blame his impatience to behold her?” (Bulfinch 174). In response to Ovid’s patriarchal idealization and dismissal of Orpheus’ wife, H.D. articulates Eurydice’s complaints, embodying rage and despair that evolve into self-acceptance and personal power.

When the poem begins, Eurydice accuses Orpheus of her second death: “So, you have swept me back,” (1). The use of the conjunction “so” has dramatic effect. First, it suggests a connection with a previous action, in this case Orpheus’ annihilating turn that triggers Eurydice’s accusation. Second, “so” is used frequently as an interjection to indicate awareness of a discovery. Eurydice becomes cognizant that Orpheus is the agent responsible for her going back to the underworld: he “swept [her] back,” clearing out Eurydice. Her second death is not the result of

forces pulling her but the result of Orpheus’ willful act—his transgressive gaze. In addition to opening the poem with “so,” H.D. starts the second and third stanzas with “so for your arrogance.” The anaphora names and reinforces Orpheus’ betrayal and helps build Eurydice’s indictment against him.

This use of repetition to make Eurydice’s case is the poet-persona’s strategy throughout the poem. So the reader and Orpheus do not forget his active role in betraying Eurydice, the poet-persona draws on the phrase “swept back” again in part one when Eurydice says: “I am swept back/ where dead lichens drip/ dead cinders upon moss of ash” (8-10). This second reference shows the ensuing non-life for Eurydice: a passive, symbiotic state where she loses reality and becomes a romantic ideal for Orpheus. At the same time, these lines surprise the reader in their musical beauty. The alliterative *ds* and the repetition of *i* and *s* create euphony that suggests symbiosis can be pleasing and hence seductive. Again in the second part, Eurydice declares herself to be “swept into nothingness” (27). This image of the black underworld as “nothingness” signifies the view of the female as nothing unless illuminated by the male: she is considered the other, the “dark continent,” that which threatens to annihilate the male ego.

One of the poem’s most startling revelations occurs in the list of questions initiated by “why” in the second part. Not quite accepting that Orpheus denies her a second chance at life, Eurydice tries to understand her plight and why he abandons her.

The mounting questions are her way of coming to terms with her life below earth: “why did you glance back?/ why did you hesitate for that

moment?/ why did you bend your face/ caught with the flame of upper earth/ above my face?" (29-33). She asks about the "hesitation," a gesture indicating second thoughts. Eurydice's questioning shows that she intuits, at light's threshold, his doubt about needing her on earth. In fact, the memory or idea of Eurydice inspires his song more than her physical presence as he looks down at her. Her first death was an accident; her second, his fault, leading perhaps to even more pain and sorrow in his song. This symbiotic relationship, prefigured by the lichen, makes Eurydice's passivity, hence death, essential to his art.

The darkness of Eurydice's underworld foreshadows the proliferation of colorful flowers on earth, largely "blue crocuses" though red and gold are mentioned (II-IV).

Why would H.D. choose crocus over other popular flowers in Greece like orchids or daffodils? Crocuses are early spring flowers that come back to the earth after winter as Eurydice would come back after being in the underworld. The female stigma of the purple crocus produces saffron, the most expensive spice and first cultivated in Greece. Thus, H.D.'s imaging of Orpheus as "wild saffron that has bent/ over the sharp edge of earth" (51-2) hints at a beneficial relationship between the female and male, echoing the lichen symbiosis.

This male/female union also suggests a transgression of sexual boundaries that informs the poem's subtext. In Greek mythology, the beautiful youth Crocus was impatient for the nymph Smilax and was changed into the flower, a type of emasculation to teach him patience and understanding of the feminine. In Ovid's account of the wedding day of Orpheus and Eurydice, she was wandering through the grass with her Naiads when a serpent bit her to death. As a result of Orpheus's failed attempt to restore Eurydice to earth, he swore off women and turned to boys. Asking Orpheus what he saw in her face, Eurydice says: "What had my face to offer/ but reflex of

the earth/ hyacinth color" (40-2). Why hyacinth? Ovid's Hyacinthus was the doomed beloved of Apollo transformed into a flower. These floral allusions bring to mind that H.D. and D.H. Lawrence wrestled with their own bisexuality—a tension that the poet-persona embodies in her treatment of Eurydice's life on the border between earth and the underworld, between male and female.

By the poem's end Eurydice has reached self acceptance and a recognition of her own inner strength: "At least I have the flowers of myself, / And my thoughts, no god/ can take that;/ I have the fervor of myself for a presence/ and my own spirit for light" (124-8).

The female hero has completed her journey from loss and rage to acceptance and rebirth.

Alicia Ostriker writes: "She [H.D.] is the single one among the Moderns who begins poems with death and ends them with birth" (40). In seven parts recalling the seven days of Biblical creation, the marginalized female poet has re-created her life out of darkness, her art out of obstacle. Recalling Milton's rebellious angel, Eurydice confronts the male hero/poet: "I tell you this:/... hell is no worse than your earth" (95, 101). Though "Eurydice" is an early poem in which H.D. works through persona, her voice already sounds apocalyptic in its revision of Greek mythology.

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PREDA Fundraiser in Open Heart House in Dublin

I had the privilege of giving one poem as a contribution to an arts evening in aid of Fr. Shay Cullens PREDA foundation in the Phillipines.



Fr. Shay Cullens work against the trafficking and the bars featuring under age sex workers is legendary, and he has been nominated a couple of times for the Nobel Peace Prize along with his foundation and is a winner of the Wiemer Peace Prize. But his life is not about accolades, it is about effect, and while there I got a copy of his autobiography which I am now starting to read. While there, I had a good conversation with Shay, and it turns out he is a writer as well, writing both songs and poetry in his spare time. Like all good writers, he was more interested in hearing about others writing than talking of his own, and our conversation wandered between discussing the Phillipines, Paul Polanskys work in Kosovo and we finished up talking about Latif Yahia's new film The Devils Double.

The Event

The event was a two day affair, and I missed the first day which was attended by both Anthony Sullivan and Ken Hume, and I joined the merry party yesterday. There was a jazz band, a lady who sang traditional Irish songs to a good reception, and a young girl and boy who played very heartfelt self written songs. We left as the chanting began - we'd a train to catch!!! - and between all of the beforementioned I read a piece, as did Anthony Sullivan, and towards the end Ken Hume done his bit for the second day of the event.

The theme of the night was "Reflections on Freedom", which I chose to be the title of my piece written especially for the event which I post below, with artists, musicians, dance groups and poets giving their take on the phrase, giving an angle on the work and culture of the Phillipines through that where possible.



A large display of art was there and a few pieces were sold raising funds for the centre, and the intermission allowed artists, vendors and visitors a chance to chat.



The Hard Boys, that pillar will never collapse while Anthony Sullivan and Ken Hume are there to save the day!!!

Shay Cullen himself was a very interesting man, though not in an academic way. He's the kind of chap you'd meet and enjoy a drink with at the bar, who'd be as happy talking about horse racing as the big issues of the day. His passion for his work is very evident, and his obliging nature for those who wanted photographs, etc., was natural to him. A pleasure to meet. Now that's what I really call music,

passionate, and original. Hope someone got it on video! Below is the poem I write and read at the event.



Reflections on Freedom

(written for the event)

Everybody desires freedom
Of culture, faith and their land
And blood is spilled where some have willed
That forced on others be what they've planned
And in that fight for freedom
As by them it is seen
Others freedom to exist is ignored
Crushed by another's dream.

But as Connolly said, that's just for banners
The emblems change, tyranny the same
The fight to be free may as well not be
If its only for freedom in name.
For the freedom for poverty is forgotten
The fight for folk is to merely exist
And flags fluttering may give a sense of pride
But the point of freedom is missed.

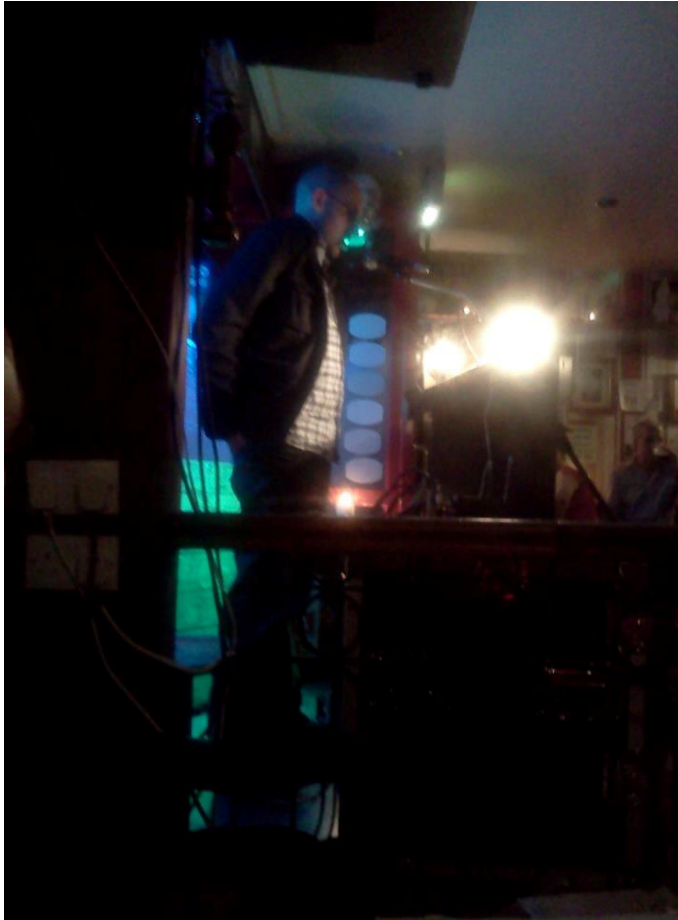
And poverty drives crime which thrives
Among others who see no other way to succeed
Some sell sex on the street to make ends meet
And pimps manage them out of greed.
And these people we forget, have souls hopes and dreams
Shattered by the men they supply
With the sex they crave and pay for
With each one the prostitutes souls die.

And, though lesser known than in Thailand
Some of those selling are very young
Used and abused, dignity refused
The ones below life's' bottom rung.
And they, mere children deserve freedom:
More than any flag, faith or notion can give
Sex for them aught to be something to giggle about innocently with friends
Not a fact of life they daily have to live.

- Tomás Ó Cárthaigh

Readings at the Pallet, Banagher, Co. Offaly

Banaghers annual poetry festival was held as usual this year, and like all things in Ireland it never just a year by year, its always give or take a few weeks!!! It was won jointly this year by Dave Boylan and Mark Ivory.



Top left: Anthony Sullivan reading

Top right, Anthony Sullivan, Tomás ÓCárthaigh and Ken Hume

Bottom right: Bro. Johnstone, who started the festival.

100,000 Poets for Change

What do you get if you place 100,000 poets on a common cause? A lot of pontificating, versification and general verse!!! Its a good thing they were spread all over the world!!!

We do not know how many exactly we had, whether or not it reached the 100000 number or not, though between the poets and those litning and interacting, it quite well could have.

Poets are known for being the conscience of a nation, speaking that which others fear to speak. In Ireland in ages past, the bards satire was much feared by the kings of the island, both High Kings and the local Rí of the Tuath.

And God knows, there is enough going wrong these days to keep poets busy with satire and poems of protest for the next millenium!!!

The idea was one of two Americans, Michael Rothenberg and Terri Carron, and was organised in an anarchic fashion via Facebook and other social networks. All styles of poetry were represented from the Slam / Rap scene to the more sedate but no less angry New Formalist verse of the Tullamore Rhymers Club.

Ireland hosted seven events, the White House Poets of Limerick had a do, the Western Writers Centre held an event, Twisted Pepper in Dublin and ourselves among others.

So, what did Tullamore do?

As usual, we were so not prepared, and in trying to organise our own reading, we got invited to the Culture Night event in Edenderry – on the night before 100TPC event – the World Poetry Day event on the 6th of October, and the all new Last Tuesday Club in Tullamore. So we decided to patronise all three events, and make them part of our contribution to the 100000 Poets for Change event.

Preceding this, we had been in Dublin for the Fr. Shay Cullen PREDA Foundation fundraiser in Open Heart House in Dublin, which we made into a forerunner event, reading specially written verses on the topic and interpretation of “Freedom”.

At Culture Night, Ken Hume, myself and his mother Triona read out poems with a theme of change and reflection, and as Anthony Sullivan could not be there, Ken Hume read out his 911 tribute poem to a good reception.

We also done not one but two online TV stations, featuring poetry of local poets and international poets on the topic of change. The latter was a co-operative feature with Roma rights website www.romafilmfund.com who donatied their homepage to us for the duration of the event, featuring poetry of anf from the Roma and Irish Traveller poets from across Ireland, the UK and Europe.

Another initiative was what we called “Poetry Cards” – left for collection in Chocoalte Brown coffee shop and in Balcony Books in the town and also at Culture Night in Edenderry, it consisted of a poem and text on the theme of the poem from each of the writers in the Tullamore Rhymers Club printed as a photograph and left for collection by the general public.

Lastly an online broadcast of my poetry and poems of others I liked was done on USTREAM, and can be seen at the address below: <http://www.ustream.tv/channel/writings-in-rhyme>

A photo gallery is on the following pages...

Culture Night

Edenderry Library



Top: The crowd listen as the county librarian starts the night.
Top right: Triona Hume reads her poems and reflections.
Bottom: Ken Hume reads his and Anthony Sullivans poems.

Culture Night in Edenderry, Poetry Music and the Craic

We had planned to do a reading for the 100000 Poets for Change event in Tullamore, but a family illness on my part, and sheer lack of co-ordination meant it did not come to be. While quering venues, our good friend Ken Hume got invited to Culture Night in Edenderry, an annual culturalevent in Ireland, held for the first time outside of Ireland.

And so we renegades of the Tullamore Rhymers Club decided to infiltrate the event and merge ours with theirs, and so a day early we kicked off 100000 Poets for Change at the Culture Night in the Library in Edenderry in Co. Offaly... as you do!

The evening started off with Irish traditional music from members of Edenderry Ceoltas (Irish music society) that featured a man and a number of young relatives on banjo / ukelele, accordians and a harp, the latter of which was excellent considering the young age of the harpist.

A talk, morelike conversation from Geraldine O' Neill about how she got into writing stories and books kept all agog for a half hour or so, after which we had a break for more wine, skewered cheeses, salmon on crackers and other delicacies I could not recognise but ate regardless. It must have been the wine, but they tasted lovely regardless!!!

After that Ken Hume read out poems about a local character here in Tullamore, and

another two poems, and read Anthony Sullivans 911 piece recently published in the Midland Tribune.

Then his mother Triona read out two of her pieces to great acclaim.

She was followed by a local poetess Fionnula ? who had three evocative non rhyming poems, one on the loss of her sister as a child, and another on street signs of all things, and my favourite one, about the bog.

Being up next, I kept to the theme and read my poem "Walking the Bog", followed it up with "Out of Tune" before finishing up with "Fate and Faiths".

Geraldine O Neill took the stage again and gave tips about writing, afterwhich the usual thanks to all was given by the county librarian and the librarian of Edenderry, and we had a chat and mingled a bit before heading home from a very enjoyable night.

Imbibe

Adrift upon the night, a rare perfume
betrays my lover's secrets: she returns
to me in colors bold, an amber bloom
of light upon her skin, as passion burns
from mine. Partake do I of flavors sweet,
obsessive; unto me her spirit pours
seductively, as if she could secrete
her potions as the fitting metaphors
for my expanding feats of derring-do.
With numbing flows of warmth does she confide
in me about a future rendezvous,
pray not my fevered urges should subside.

Paul Buchheit (USA)

WritersCafe Contest – Section II

The WritersCafe contest we ran for the last issue, we missed some of the winners and runners up due to demands of space, and so we include some of them here.

The contest brings us three young writers, and other writers from Kenya to China, Canada and of course the USA. It is our hope, that seeing their writing in print will help these writers develop their writing careers.

Just One More Step

by Annie Ning (PRC/USA)

<http://www.writerscafe.org/ningx2>

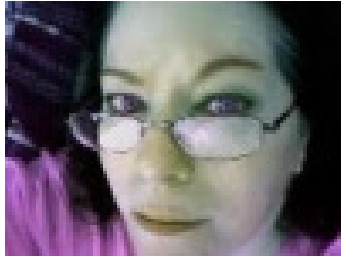
Young USA writer with a future ahead of her. Living in China.

I see you sitting there,
Under your favorite tree.
I hope and hope with all my heart,
That you still remember me.
I left you many years ago
But you weren't supposed to know,
That I was always here for you
I just never said "Hello"
I heard you crying every night,
A sound that broke my heart.
You should've known that I loved you,
That it would've hurt too much to part.
I was the sunshine that danced with you,
The footsteps in the dew.
I was the wind that guided you,
That helped you to break through-
That wall you said you never could,
But you did in the end.
I was always in the shadows,
Always just around the bend.
If you'd just taken one little step away,
From the comfort zone you're too used to
You would've known that I was there,
Always there, for YOU.
Instead you stayed where you thought you belonged,
Filled with endless sorrow,
When all along you could've controlled
The way you saw Tomorrow.

Pilgrimage

A Poem by [LJW](#)

I am in the medical field. Married to a very patient man. Mom to four cool children who'd never do you wrong. Cat lover/Dog liker. I like all things old, the older the better. My computer, phones, cars, and a few TV's are about our only nod to the technological maelstrom that swirls around us all, threatening to suck us all down into a neon light- filled silicon chip- lined version of Hell. Oil lamps rock.



Published in print/cyber-print in:

Heroin Love Songs; Outsider Writers; Alabaster & Mercury; Calyx; Eviscerator Heaven, Issue #4; Phoebe Clockwork Cat; Medusa Netzine; Isotope; Zygote In My Coffee; BadWriter; New England Review; 10K Poets; Anderbo; Vulcan, and of course now in Cartys Poetry Journal.

What distance from here to there
if measured in sweat or skin
A beggar's purse once full
no name or want of kin?

The silent man moves forward
away from all he's known

The hulls of seeds left scattered
atop grey ash and brittle bone

The sum still to be counted
the weight of life in kind
Slips through his withered fingers

as he straightens his old spine

Erect and feeling purpose
he makes a solemn vow
Steps into the vast nowhere
where he resides even now

A man without a nightmare
cannot discern a dream
A beggar with a hollow stoop
is not the fool he seems

Sometimes in the northern night
just before they die
Pilgrims in bejeweled coats
cast gold against the sky

Lady In The Half-Light

A Poem by [Alvin L. Kathembe](#)

I write for the mind...and if I touch your heart
while I'm at it, I'll take it.

<http://poemhunter.com/tma>

I saw Truth, glimpsed her briefly
Amidst a murky haze
Her face shone with animation
And her eyes were all ablaze.
She was lithe, and fair, and fragile
Her lips were firm and full
She was at once so lovely,
So pure, and terrible.

I saw Truth, glimpsed her briefly
Amidst a swirling shroud
Her face shone with illumination
And cast its rays around.
My heart swelled with emotion,
In my eye glistened a tear
I felt at once elation,
Transport, and joy, and fear.

I saw Truth glimpsed her briefly
Amidst a stifling dark
Her face shone with authority
And her eyes bid me hark;
If I'd blinked I would have missed her
Her lips were firm and full
Her eyes dared me to kiss her
Before she melted once more into gloom...

The Sky Tears Asunder

Tim Holt (USA)

My name is Tim Holt, I'm 17 years old and I love to write (obviously)! I am an absolute firm believer in Jesus Christ because He saved my life from the wreck it was! “

The sky tears asunder,
Green paths beneath scarlet trees,
Sunlight glancing through
Fractures in the scarlet patterns.

The sky tears asunder,
Bare feet seeking unknown paths,
Scarlet leaves descending to Earth,
His bare chest its landing.

The sky tears asunder,
Wandering eyes seeking, ever seeking,
A voice on wind, A shadow in mist,
A terrible beauty, A heart indecisive.

The sky tears asunder,
Haunting beauty descends from the soul,
Her graces masked in sin,
In blindness, In passion, In lust.

The sky tears asunder,
Velvet eyes fall upon his prizing,
A wedding dress lost in decay,
A beauty with eyes of lilac darkness.

The sky tears asunder,
Scarred hands join and entwine,
Revealing only in heart,
A desperation hungering in forgiveness.

The sky tears asunder,
Eutopian purpose found in itself,
Uncontained hope arising
Of mouths that do not share.

The sky tears asunder,
Majestic king from Heaven's mystery
Descends to our lovers,
Silence radiating from the scarlet patterns.

The sky tears asunder,
Healing hands laid, Grace undying bestowed,
All knowing eyes, Wisdom entwined,
Terribly wondrous , Gloriously breathtaking.

The sky tears asunder,
Scarlet leaves fly, encasing Love,
Radiant white daring sunlight,
Breathtaking beauty unmatched restored.

The sky tears asunder,
Passionate lips meet, wondrous, unmatched,
What sought now discovered,
What requested now delivered.

The sky tears asunder,
Green paths beneath scarlet trees,
Sunlight glances through
Fractures on the scarlet patterns.

The Beauty In Writing

A Poem by [CobyCoyle](#) (USA)



From the USA, Coby is another young writer, from Michigan she is 16 and writes under the nom-de-plume of Coby Coyle.

When you are writing, you are painting a picture
Making the words in your head more than a whisper
Putting a scene in someone's head
Saying things formerly left unsaid
You are creating a completely new world
Letting your imagination come unfurled
Your mind is in a better place
It's like you're floating in outer space
You have something to pour your heart into
Your writing telling what is really true
It's when you let yourself go
Writing or typing, letting the words flow
Writing something that touches the soul
Where the writing is the one in control
Only a writer could understand
The real meaning of a pen in your hand
Let yourself take your notebook off that shelf
Let the writing save you from yourself

Breathe

A Poem by [emily](#) (Canada)

Faith in her heart cherished without hesitation
Once warmed the beating muscle so pure
As her serene smile lit up the lives of all who saw.

Little girl who endlessly loved so wholly,
Why now do you turn solemnly to the sky
With mourning eyes for the faith once clutched
In an impenetrable nest by thine own small fingers?

You tremble beneath far reaching shadows
Of which whisper your name with an icy breath
To lightly brush your goose-bumped flesh.

Why does fear now dampen those eyes
That once held infallible courage so strong
As clay lays dried over a smile of love
Hardened into steely mask of sorrow?

You look to the clouds with that betrayed eye
Sprouting forth tears unintended for you to weep
Into this life that hath failed to learn
Lessons of countless, secretly told.

Will those sorrows ever depart
Returning love unto your breast?
Oh small child how I weep for you
Mourning innocence with utmost grief.

How I beg that smile to crack the clay
And survive to brighten one more day.

“I am a twenty-one year old Human Services student aspiring to do all that I can to change this world for the better, if only in the eyes of just one person. I am very passionate about performing arts, filmology, human rights and helping people in anyway I possibly can. I love to write; creating new worlds, lives, situations, emotions, its an undescrivable feeling whn you create something you adore.

Tom O Haire

Tom is originally from Glenties in Donegal, and is now living in Dublin. He has been writing for the past few years, and here we publish a selection of his poems.

The Last Days Of Summer

The heat
that day
took the town
by surprise.

Jumpers shedded
strewn on
passenger seats
of cars embedded
in bubbling
tarmac
the length of the town.

The hope of
a breeze
brought people
out of their
sticky kitchens
and onto
kitchen chairs
softened by
makeshift cushions.

Through the haze
heads turn to
greet
unstoppable force
meet
immovable street.

The force rips
rider from ride
and helmet
from rider;
all three become
bullets from
an imperceptible gun.

The latter
shatters
in a
blinding
display of
sunflash
shards.

Outside the butchers
took the brunt
where fuselage found
a softer target;
Our very own
Ground Zero.

IRL

Yet no mayor
nor presidents
were there to praise
the fallen heroes.

The only epitaph;
a spot where the
sun shines not
even on the sunniest
of summer days.

Fast Forward

What was that for?
my father asked through the bear-hug I gave him
from the back seat as we sped away that sunday.

Nothing I replied.
I was only five and a half and only now know
thirty five years too late that it was for everything.

Tidy Town

Shit-stained sheep
huddle up on her street
like discarded canvas
by defeated artists.
Darkness creeps in
and the natives get restless
falling through doors
like men in a western.

The air on the street
is heavy with heartbreak
tinged with regret
and the sweat of a
long day on a high stool.

Between two glens she lies
resting and waiting,
regrouping, contemplating
her next move and all the while

her flowerbeds fill with the
contents of stomachs, her
people flummoxed with
nowhere to go.

It's a while since we won it
three years in a row.

Baggage

We carry what we can.

We leave behind the things
that left their mark.

The awkward case
that dug into the palm.

The weekend bag
unopened in the hall.

The wheels too small
to take the weight of all
the trinkets we collect.

We'll carry on regardless
until we learn to travel light.

Still Life

The best days of our lives
are the ones we can't remember.

The worst the ones we can't forget.
Remember now before they're gone.

It's not too late yet.

This Is It

She waited until we were gone;
then she went.

With her dignity intact
the way she always was.

When the phone rang I knew.

All the way in the car
in my head like a mantra.

This is it.

This is it.

This is it.

The Road

Moving swift along the Binbane hills,
the car tilts and lalts like a song.
With every hump another goosebump
about the future and the past.

The car leaves the road;

And back again as the stomach turns and settles.
Lights of houses in the distance shimmer through watery
eyes
hoping that one of the lights is ours.

Austen Roye (USA)

Born and currently residing in Cleburne, Texas, a small town just south of the Dallas/Ft. Worth area. Twenty-four years old, author of numerous poetry collections, two novels and a series of creative non-fiction collections. Previously published numerous pieces through Chrysalis Press, Vagabondage Press, LummoX Press and The Battered Suitcase, among other independent literary magazines. Held jobs as a projectionist, waiter, copy boy, grocery bagger, bookseller and bank teller. I work, drink and write. Big fan of independent presses, street art, bookshops and DIY work ethics..

ten. twenty. thirty.

they only know exactly
what they don't want,
and when they decide on
something they don't mind
so much it's something like
a bicycle cut in half and set
on fire in the gallery while
everyone drinks mineral
water and watches from
behind the velvet lines.

the abstracts don't sell
since thinking is such hard
work, the performance
artists
choke on glitter, it's horrible,
and the lights are on
somewhere
around here, only we never
see it
and if we ever do, it isn't us
who
sees it, it's our
grandchildren or
their grandchildren, ten
twenty
thirty years after they've
stuck
the shovel into the heap.

and maybe that's that and
maybe that's just the way
the world works, and with
some luck, in ten twenty
thirty years I'll be behind
the velvet lines holding a
glass and hating everything
in the gallery and knowing
everything about art

which is to know that
all art is
not as good as
not as good as
not as good as
what was and
could've been
could've been
could've been...

as they never do.

she took the crucifix
down from above her
bedroom door and
put it away somewhere,
some place where he
couldn't stare down
at her anymore,
it was unnerving,
nobody needs that
kind of pressure.
she took it down
off its hook and
the roof didn't cave
in, the mirror didn't
break, the earth
didn't open up,
there wasn't the
slightest hint of
tremors in the
ground, not a
single black cloud
and no fires in
any direction that
hadn't been set
deliberately.
she took it down
and was told it was
the principle of
the matter, the
importance of

confessing
your true
self
publicly.
she took it down
and was told
all manner of
frivolous
platitudes,
all that sordid,
sentimental
crap about
a grandmother
in tears all alone
in the sanctuary
with her beads
and mourning
black dress and
how could you
do this to her,
she's too old,
you know how
she is, she won't
let it go, she's
calling her
friends, she's
calling the
priest, she's
up all night
by the candle
chanting at
the ceiling
for your
soul.
But she took it
down and they
all noticed,
everyone
noticed,
they noticed
the cross
for the first
time because
it wasn't
there.

Making an End of Music - Frederick L Light (USA)

1
Music has consumed the
Muses and concerned
The masses, who have no
great poetry learned.

2
Let poetry win your thoughts
or music will.
Take Shakespeare for your
soul and Nietzsche kill.

3
Nietzsche the stuporific
dominance
Of Dionysos would in war
enhance.

4
To pulsant imbecility inured,
No minor stupor has your
mind endured.

5
Music, ever more besotted,
is ever more
Besought, not ceasing her
compulsive roar.

6
Apollo is restricted to the
word,
But Dionysos leaves the folk
absurd.

7
Arduous attention to
particulars
Of chancy lucre a guitarist
jars.

8
A clarion blindness is in
music blown,

And nothing seen in noise
by light is shown.

9
Fully conformed to
slothfulness, no fast
Ideas of reason framing,
students are amassed.

10
Though recognizing notes,
no guide you find,
As music is the knowledge
of your mind.

11
Not daunting equitable
quietude
In colleges, the iPod I'd
exclude.

11a
Vibrations of orgastic
vehemence
May unintelligibly remain
intense.

12
With blind cognition
Beethoven accept,
In unproductive happiness
adept.

13
The voidest influence has
made you vain
Who with vibrations get no
brilliant gain.

14
In pallid cognizance no sight
you prize,

As music is the wanness of
your eyes.

15
A pulsing stupefaction has
possessed
Americans, conformably
regressed.

15a
Losers their unpropitiated
faculties
Abuse who Bacchic feelings
would appease.

16
Illiterate delectations are
prolonged
Wherever stadiums are for
music thronged.

17
An acquiescence in
vacuities
Accords the people, all
accepting these.

18
Music, when more
triumphant, ever more
Traduces reason as inferior.

19
Miseducated nationals,
concerned
With music, to the Nazi
party turned.

20
Active minds are not
enamoured of musicians
But act upon their rational
decisions.

THE STORY OF A DANCE - Anthony Sullivan (Ireland)

From whence comes the love of writing? Why would one dare even to begin such a dance with so elusive a partner? A certain form of madness is, no doubt, one very reasonable answer, and one which certainly applies in some degree or another, to most writers of my acquaintance! For me, and for many more like me, I suspect, the love of writing was first born simply of a love for the written word itself. And where else would first exposure to such occur, and to an intensity and with a frequency to create either a life-long love affair or an enmity to the death!? Why in school, of course! And where else in school, but in English class!

Now schooldays, for reasons that have always puzzled me greatly, seem to have acquired in popular lore a position of undeserved esteem as the ' best days ' of our lives. For me, however, no matter how murky the haze of years I may be looking back at those years through, ' best days ' is not a tag that will ever be applied to them! What they very possibly were, though, was among the most influential days of my life, and for one simple reason, indeed, the very one that made English class my favorite place to be a ways back then ; a poetry book called ' Soundings '.

Opening it's pages was, to me, an experience wholly akin to opening a portal to another world. A world where words made manifest emotions so often without shape otherwise. A world where ordinary and everyday events were somehow magically transformed into the most beautifully expressed sentiments of life. A world where moments that may have flashed past in a mere matter of heartbeats were captured forever within the eternal embrace of a few lines that once again, for all who would read them, would reduce the world to the unseen but universal truth of the fires that first catch flame and begin to rage in mere heartbeats of time.

' Soundings ' contains so many lines of such precious and fragile beauty, from writers whose individual talents would easily lay claim

to the status of Sun in any universe of the written word. Names such as Shakespeare, Wordsworth, Keats, Emily Dickinson and Dylan Thomas have captivated the imaginations of, and illuminated the lives of, dreamers, lovers and lost souls alike for generation upon generation.

But for me, among the first seeds of my love for writing to be sown, were those in soil worked far closer to home, in lines planted by men who transformed words from instruments just of day-to-day contact between one or more, into almost sacred revelations exchanged between self and soul, in views of and reflections on, both the wider world and also on one life alone.

Men like W.B. Yeats when, in ' No Second Troy ', he wrote of " beauty like a tightened bow " , or in ' September 1913 ' , " Was it for this the wild geese spread/ The grey wing upon every tide ". Men like Austin Clarke, who, in ' The Planter's Daughter ', tells us " men that had seen her/ Drank deep and were silent " , for " she was the Sunday/ In every week ". Men like Patrick Kavanagh, who wrote of the " half-talk code of mysteries/ And the wink-and-elbow language of delight ", in ' Iniskeen Road : July Evening '. And like Thomas Kinsella in ' Mirror In February ', writing " ...for they are not made whole/ That reach the age of Christ " , and " I fold my towel with what grace I can/ Not young and not renewable, but man ".

In words such as all of these a magnificent honesty is achieved, courtesy of a courage to not just look, ...but to see. To not just exist, ...but to feel. To not just be present in this world, ...but through your presence, to be a part of this world. That all of this can be done by the power and gentle grace of words still amazes and excites me as much now as when that realisation first began to dawn on me so many years ago, when ' Soundings ' first called the tune, and I first dared enter the dance-floor of page-and-pen.

JONATHAN HICKS (Northern Ireland)

Writer from the northern Irish city of Belfast, Jonathan sent in these poems for your enjoyment. jonee.hicks@hotmail.co.uk

Before You Go Out

put this on. You forget so easily.
These scars you bear were bought with much.
Now leave the hall where the mirrors hang.
Your past life beneath the great deceit lies
whose unknown heart in France died years ago
killed by the shrapnel of blown goodbyes.
History will throw its flowers and wet cement
having their say and soldiering on their way.
So before you go out, remember
to put this on. You forget so easily.

The Lily Of Shunem

Under death's prepared pots the crackling
attack of laughter, under the moon-mad

drool and the sun, grugged with cloud.
It's toilsome to breathe in the troubled air

of my servants. Beyond, the mediterranean
recedes. But a faraway singer's song

drops freely from the branches
whose promise is overflowing

and through this sepulchre's open vent
comes the fragrant scent of revival.

From the village of Shunem, a lily
whose faith, precious as a sin forgiven

revives. But death, dissatisfied death
with it's gluttonous jaw hangs heavy

on this crown she will by courage, duty
or honour be cordial with, lie with, serve.

O Jubilee O sweet felicity, life
dotes on you! my honorary daughter

who keeps her promise. Now your presence
her soft, white poetry of loveliness

is at hand. Look, April, the year's recital.
Spring has sprung and splintered icy winter.
Now

it's I who waits on your arrival.
On that day the cauldrons will be cold.

What Courage

When war was war and men were men
eating red grouse and drinking wine
around the dining table, I drew my pen
as soldiers marched to the front line.

Bursts of laughter to unspoken tales -
man's shocking achievement, dumb with
courage crawled under shells like snails
as fortune failed to favour the myth.

Surely no-one in their right mind kills
and yet they speak of war as glorious
while falling under its beastly nostrils
flaring up on its honourable face.

'Honour' isn't that a two-sided flag
as loyalty is... God! Am I afraid to die?
What courage have I packed into my kitbag
sitting here more afraid of the lie

eating my conscience feeding my country...
The tree of liberty needs manure
and here this loaded pistol before me
waits upon the table... One thing's for sure

war can start and finish in the head
but the world wont give me courage to be.
Do I lack the guts not to fight? They said
it runs through our family tree.

It's not who inflicts but who can endure
if they arm their words with honesty.
There's always a choice but that's no answer
when losing your lover and family.

The call of the cock red grouse in season
is beckoning Go bak, go bak, bak, bak.
We're born not free but into tradition.
The tree gives its handle to the axe.

The New Owner

I
To thwart those end of summer raids
and daylight robbery of his ten apple trees
where those ripe heavenly bodies

the earth and universe provided hung,
a wall went up and a sign went up:
Trespassers Will Be Prosecuted.

No more to load the stretched baskets
of our grey school jerseys
the windfall remained private property.

II
So they are falling, lying, and decaying
with no hand to catch the falling.
What the eye don't see the heart won't want.

But like a world wounding
a phantom limb holds out for the freely given,
the real estate on the gathering ground.

The First Pleasure

I shake above you the blossom branch
and watch to see where the petals will touch.

The first pleasure, the old pleasure comes
out,
the yearned-for pleasure, out of Victoria
on a flower-decked float wearing a smile.
Undraped loveliness in this light
is springing up - a lily, young and white
from the ruins of a war, her silent euphoria
and fire shapely as a Folies Bergere
in her grandmother Eve's evening wear:
the most difficult costume to flout,
the easiest of costumes to revile.

Wrist, neck, hair, cheek, belly, fingertip -
One settles and remains on your lip.

Flaw In The Machine

'Hello?'
I'm sorry, that was an invalid response.
Please press 1

David Mc Donald (UK - Scotland)

An Abandoned Soldier

Lines hewn as if of granite worn by eons past
Each line etched with tales to tell of lives lived
by you
Cheeks hollowed as if by hunger but sallow in
their set
Sucking in each shallow breath as though pain
would follow through

A stern chin set at an angle a bony grimace on
its own
A dimple gouged by a bullet which had
reached right to the bone
Scars torn across the face rent from the hot
shrapnel's path
Eyes with depth you have never seen but
much deeper than life alone

Each scar is a tale within itself which fear
prevents from being told
A youngster barely past his teenage years with
an age belying those he has lived for
This the face of a young soldier whose face
reflects life lived in a six month tour
The face of one who has been abandoned his
face a reflection of the war

Bio:

**Born in 1956 in the Highlands of Scotland
David found School an uninspiring event
and on leaving soon enlisted, Having seen
service in conflicts and now a Retired British
Army Veteran of 18 Years, he uses the life
he has lived to provide him with the
emotional content for the Poetry he writes.
He has also just published his first Fiction
Novel.**

For our Veterans

Why must I share with the scum of the
race?
The ones who pass by the battle scarred
face
Why should my tax pay for their fun?
When we ask for respect these old
soldiers get none

So many of our young have turned into
scum
They never would have stood and faced
down a gun
Yet now they will stand but only in packs
And jest and throw stones at old soldier's
backs

The soldiers have served and paid all their
dues
They now look for some help from you
But if a soldier was to stand and beat on
the young
The old soldier is the one who gets the
back of a judge's tongue

What crazy land will ask its men to serve
in war?
Promise them all they will be cared for
But when they return the country turns its
backs
The soldier too much now, the drain on
our tax

So the streets fill each day with the cream
of our men
Left to their own while the young abuse
them
And still we walk with our heads held high
Just open your eyes and ask yourselves
why.

The Death

Soft thud sick feeling the buckling of my legs
Jacket fresh on this morning to look my best
Flesh torn jagged from shrapnel still hot
I am staining my trousers the last ones I got
I hope the folks think I am alright

Blood seeping from gashes wounds open up
“Don’t worry Dave we have you we won’t lose you”
I can see blood pooling “why is it black”?
Quickly more fluids “just hang in their Dave”
I hope the folks think I am alright

A sharp pain rising from somewhere inside
“We are going to give you more morphine bud”
A scream starting to rumble in the back of my throat
“Shit this looks really bad call a casevac”
I hope the folks think I am alright

I can open my eyes but don’t want to see
“Lie back mate we will get you out”
Something sticky is all round my back
“Talk to him try to calm him down”
I hope the folks think I am alright

So tired now it must be time for me to sleep
“We are losing him I cannot get the bleeding stopped”
I will rest now I think my war is won
“Is there anything I can do for you my son I am a priest”
Tell my folks I am alright