

# The Unfinished Book of Poetry 2020

from five **Cork** secondary schools



A Cork City Council Arts Office, Cork City Libraries and Schools Project  
in partnership with Ó Bhéal



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poetry from five Cork City secondary schools



Comhairle Cathrach Chorcaí  
Cork City Council



Published by  
Cork City Council

Published in 2020 by Cork City Council,  
Cork City Libraries and Schools Project



## LIBRARIES LEABHARLANNA

CORK CITY COUNCIL | COMHAIRLE CATHRACH CHORCAÍ

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# The Unfinished Book of Poetry 2020



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# Foreword

The *Unfinished Book of Poetry 2020* is the 16th edition in the series, but the first edition to be published as an eBook. This is an exciting departure for Cork City Libraries, even though it is happening now because of the Covid-19 emergency.

Another departure for this year's *Unfinished Book* is that it includes, for the first time, pupils, schools, and libraries from areas new to the city: Ballincollig and Glanmire.

Although this is a different format, the *Unfinished Book* again features new poems from young writers across the city. This year's edition showcases 50 young voices, representing five schools. The work these writers have produced comprises a wonderful anthology, illustrating an impressive variety of subject, style and a very strong standard throughout. The finished product is testament to the great work of the five assisting writers.

Thanks and congratulations to all of the young writers:

- o na daltai as Gaelcholáiste Choilm faoi chúram Bernadette Nic an tSaoir, i Leabharlann Bhaile an Chollaigh;
- o the pupils from Presentation Secondary School led by Matthew Geden, in Tory Top Library;
- o the pupils from St. Vincent's Secondary School with Afric McGlinchey, in Blackpool Library;
- o the pupils from Glanmire Community College led by Paul Casey, in Glanmire Library; and
- o the pupils from Ashton Comprehensive School with Roisín Kelly in the City Library, Grand Parade.

I am delighted to acknowledge the work of Paul Casey of Ó Bhéal in the editing and curation of the project. I also acknowledge the work of all the Libraries staff – in the City centre, Ballincollig, Blackpool, Tory Top, and Glanmire, coordinated by Eibhlín and the Children & Young People's services team at the City Library.

Enjoy – digitally and every other way!

**Liam Ronayne**  
Cork City Librarian

# Assisting Writers' Biographies

## Bernadette Nic an tSaoir / Bernadette McIntyre

Ó Bhaile na mBocht i gcathair Chorcaí do Bernadette Nic an tSaoir agus chaith sí an chuid is mó dá saol oibre mar mhúinteoir teangacha i gcoistí gairmoideachais. Chaith sí tamall leis in ionad spioradálta – Les Foyers de Charité – gar do Lyon na Fraince. Tá sí anois ag maireachtaint i nGarrán na mBráthar mar a mbíonn sí ag obair mar aistritheoir/eagarthóir agus ag scríobh. Tá sé leabhar filíochta aici foilsithe ag Coiscéim agus taithí mhaith aici ar aistriúchán ó Bhéarla/Fraincis go Gaeilge. Is é an leabhar is déanaí aici ná *Marta Robin – Gearrbheatha* (FÁS 2018), aistriúchán ón bhFraincis ar bheathaisnéis Marthe Robin a bhunaigh na Foyers de Charité a luaitear anso thuas.

Bernadette McIntyre is a native of Mayfield in Cork city and has spent most her working life as a language teacher in the VEC system. She also spent a year's career break in the main centre of Les Foyers de Charité near Lyon. She now lives in Gurrabraher where she works as a freelance translator/editor. Bernadette has six collections of poetry to date, all published by Coiscéim, as well as literary translations from French. Her latest book is *Marta Robin – Gearrbheatha* (FÁS 2018), a translation of the life of Marthe Robin, the French stigmatist (1902-1981) who founded the above mentioned Foyers de Charité in 1936.

## Matthew Geden

Matthew Geden was born and brought up in the English Midlands, moving to Kinsale in 1990. He has published several collections of poetry including *The Place Inside* with Dedalus Press and most recently *Fruit* published by SurVision Books. He currently reviews fiction for the *Irish Examiner* and poetry for *Poetry Ireland Review*.

In 2017 he set up Kinsale Writing School providing a resource for local and international writers. He runs workshops, edits manuscripts and mentors emerging writers. In November 2019 he was Writer in Residence at Nanjing Literature Centre, China. He is the 2020 Writer in Residence for Cork County Library and Arts Service.

# Assisting Writers' Biographies

## Afric McGlinchey

Afric McGlinchey is the author of *The lucky star of hidden things* (Salmon Poetry / Italian translation published by L'Arcolaio), *Ghost of the Fisher Cat* (Salmon / Italian translation forthcoming in 2020) and *Invisible Insane* (SurVision). Among other honours, she is a Hennessy winner, an Arts Council bursary recipient, and a Pushcart and Best of the Net nominee. Her work has been translated into five languages and has recently appeared or is forthcoming in *Poetry International*, *Magma*, *Poetry Ireland Review*, *Al-Khemia Poetica*, the *Oxford Climate Change* anthology, the *Dedalus Paris* anthology and elsewhere. Afric holds a post-graduate English literature degree from the University of Cape Town and lives in West Cork, Ireland where she edits, reviews and facilitates workshops. For more visit [www.africmcglinchey.com](http://www.africmcglinchey.com)

## Paul Casey

Paul Casey was born in Cork and has lived mostly in Ireland, Zambia and South Africa. His most recent collection is *Virtual Tides* (Salmon Poetry, 2016). A chapbook, *It's Not all Bad*, appeared from The Heaventree Press in 2009, followed by his debut collection *home more or less* (Salmon, 2012). He edited *A Journey called Home* (Cork City Libraries, 2018), an anthology of poems and stories from immigrant communities in 20 languages. His poems have appeared most recently in recently in *New Coin* and *Backstory Journal*. He teaches creative writing for the UCC's ACE programme and is the director of Ó Bhéal, at [www.obheal.ie](http://www.obheal.ie).

## Róisín Kelly

Róisín Kelly was born in west Belfast and raised in Co. Leitrim. After a year as a handweaver on Clare Island and an MA in Writing at NUI Galway, she now calls Cork City home. Her first full collection of poetry, *Mercy* (Bloodaxe Books 2020), follows her 2016 chapbook *Rapture* (Southword Editions). She won the FISH Poetry Prize in 2017, and publications in which her work has appeared include *Poetry (Chicago)*, *Ambit*, *Magma*, *The Stinging Fly*, and *Winter Papers Volume 3*. For more about Róisín, visit [www.roisinkelly.com](http://www.roisinkelly.com)

## Gaelcholáiste Choilm

Poetry by

Aoife Ní Bhruadair

Ciara Ní Aodha

David Ó Meachair

Faye Ní Iarlatha

Órla Ní Ghliasáin

Art Óg Ó Gráda

Cillian Ó Cathasaigh

Éadaoin Erlandsson

Órlaith Ní Chionnaith

Seosamh Ó Buachalla

Assisting Writer: **Bernadette Nic an tSaoir**

T.Y. Coordinator: **Emilie Doyle**

Workshops held in **Ballincollig Library**

Executive Librarian: **Richard Forrest**



I mbliana don chéad uair bhogamar amach ón gceantar cathrach mar a bhíodh chun fáiltiú roimh scoláirí ó Ghaelcholáiste Choilm, Baile an Chollaigh agus iadsan anois laistigh de cheantar oifigiúil na Comhairle Cathrach ó anuraidh. Bhí fonn chun filíochta orthu ón gcéad lá, iad ag comhoibriú liomsa agus lena chéile i ngach aon slí. Thugas faoi deara go raibh réimse an-leathan suimeanna ina measc, bhíodh plé againn ar cheol, rince, aisteoireacht, taisteal agus ar ndóigh litríocht. Ní raibh aon ghanntanas smaointe chun dánta a spreagadh. Bhain an t-eolas a bhí acu ar an stair siar díom, go háirithe toisc nach bhfuilim féin go maith chuici. Ní bhíodh na cúrsaí staire do na scrúdaithe le mo linnse suimiúil ar chor ar bith. An t-aon stair atá agamsa ná an stair a mhaireas tríd ó na daichidí i leith ach ní beag san is dócha! Bhí an-eolas ag cúpla duine ar an dá Chogadh Domhanda is tá dánta fíntacha againn dá reir.

Léiríodar suim i gcúrsaí reatha freisin, sa toghchán ar ndóigh is é ar siúl lena linn sin. Bhíomar ar aon intinn nárbh fhiú dán a chumadh faoin gceist úd ná faoi pholaiteoirí. Cad a d'fhéadfá a rá fúthu nach raibh ráite go minic cheana? Topaicí eile a gcuireadh suim iontu ná daoine gan dídean agus inimircigh is bhí tuiscint thar na bearta acu ar na fadhbanna úd. Buntáiste mór ab ea sinn a bheith suite i Leabarlann Bhaile an Chollaigh do na ceardlanna, is raidhse leabhar thart orainn le tarraingt astu dá mbeifeá ag lorg inspioráide. Léirigh an grúpa ar fad suim sa léitheoireacht agus is iontach é sin mar spreagadh

chun cumadóireachta.

Táim go mór faoi chomaoin ag cách a bhain leis an dtionscnamh seo a eagrú, leanaigí den obair is go maire sibh. Do na scoláirí, tá bonn maith anois fúibh maidir le litríocht agus filíocht a léamh is a scríobh agus beidh an bua san gaibh i gcónaí. Guím gach rath oraibh is ar bhúr n-oidí amach anseo.

**Bernadette Nic an tSaoir**

This year we welcomed students from Gaelcholáiste Choilm, Ballincollig for the first time as up to recently they were in the Cork County Council Area. They were eager to write poetry from the very first session. Nothing seemed to deter them and they co-operated extremely well as a group. We covered a wide range of interests as we searched for ideas, for example, music, dance, theatre, sport and literature. A few students were very well up in the history of the two World Wars and we have a few fine poems on this topic. I was very impressed by their knowledge, especially as history was never my best subject. The history I know now is what I've lived through since the forties so I suppose that's not bad either!

We had a few lively discussions on current affairs, Brexit etc. Though they didn't develop and lead to a poem it was all a worthwhile exchange of ideas. We do have some very good poems on current issues such as poverty, housing, homelessness and immigration. It was one great advantage that the sessions were held in Ballincollig Library so we had plenty of books to consult if we needed inspiration.

I am really grateful to all who made this event possible, keep up the good work. To the students I just want to thank you all for participating. You have built a foundation for study and writing of literature and poetry in the future so do try to nurture that interest. Thank you all again and I wish yourselves and teachers every success.

**Bernadette McIntyre**





# Poems

Gaelcholáiste Choilm



## An Tigin Bán

*Aoife Ní Bbrúadair*

Fear beag ina chónaí  
Sa tigin bán  
Gan aon bhean chéile  
É trína chéile  
Téann gach uile lá go dtí  
          an tigh tabhairne  
          ag ól lena chairde  
          ag ól ina aonar  
Go dorchadas na hoíche  
Níl airgead aige choíche.

## Chug Chug Chug

*Aoife Ní Bbrúadair*

Chug Chug Chug  
'One more', they said.  
Chug Chug Chug  
'Sure gowan', they said.  
Chug Chug Chug  
'What harm', they said.

A lot of harm, I say now.  
Chug Chug Chug  
I drank away my money.  
I drank away my house.  
I drank away my family.

All I think of now  
As I lie in the shop doorway  
Is Chug Chug Chug.

## Mo Chúinne

*Aoife Ní Bhrúadair*

Gan tigh gan seomra  
Gan rud ar bith  
Ach táim ar mo shuaimhneas  
Agus mé i mo chúinne.

Suím i mo chúinne  
Ag doras an tsiopa  
Le mo chlann  
Níl aon rud uaimse ach iad

Feicim na páistí  
Ag ithe milseán  
Ag caint lena gclann  
Ag caitheamh éadaí galánta  
Níl faic eile uaimse ach é sin.

## Scéal Mo Bheatha

*Aoife Ní Bhrúadair*

Isteach sa rang liom  
30 aghaidh os mo chomhair  
Mo chéad lá i mbun ranga  
Seo an lá mór

Féachaim ar na scoláirí  
Meangadh gáire ar a mbéal  
Smaoiním ar a dtodhchaí  
Cuirfidh mise lena scéal

Scéal iontach a bheidh acu go léir  
Scéalta lán de spraoi  
Mise mar réalt is treoraí  
Iadsan fós mar bhanríon nó rí

# No Sound

*Aoife Ní Bhrúadair*

What? Say that again. Pardon.  
I repeated again and again  
Her hearing's fine said the doctor  
She's just a distracted child

I was three when I used a phone  
My minder noticed  
Although I'm a rightie  
I put it to my left ear

Test after test,  
Visit after visit.  
Everything's fine  
Said the doctor again

Buzz Buzz Buzz  
Call from the doctor  
Everything's not fine  
The tests were wrong

No sound none at all  
From the right ear  
A life of turning my head  
To hear someone whisper

# My Santa Claus

*Aoife Ní Bhrúadair*

As I look across the way  
He smiles at me  
I look forward every day  
To my time to see  
My Santa Claus

His suit isn't red  
His hair isn't white  
But when I see his head  
All my world is right with  
My Santa Claus

He doesn't travel the world  
All in one night  
And no he's not bold  
It's always a Yes in a world of maybe with  
My Santa Claus

When he's around  
My life fills with happiness  
For our life will be blessed  
Even in times of mess  
It will be with  
My Santa Claus

# Birds Of Glanworth

*Aoife Ní Bhrúadair*

The family of birds of Glanworth  
Were a big family of eight.  
The nest was small  
But they loved each other.

As each baby bird left  
Birdie the mother bird  
And Big Bird the father bird  
Adapted to a life of two.

One day Big Bird  
Flew up and away into the sky  
Leaving Birdie alone  
But she adapted to a life of one.

Twelve years of a life of one,  
Birdie decided she missed Big Bird  
She said her goodbyes  
And flew into the sky.

Their baby birds live on  
With all their baby baby birds  
Missing Big Bird and Birdie  
But living in the memories  
Of the family of birds of Glanworth.

## Grian Agus Gealach

*Aoife Ní Bhrúadair*

Gach maidin feicim an ghrian  
Gach oíche feicim an ghealach  
Tríd an díomá agus tragóid  
Tiocfaidh grian is gealach

Aon lá go mbíonn buairt orm  
Bainim leas as an lonradh  
A thagann anuas ón spéir  
Gach uile lá

Ní stopann aon rud  
Sin córas na gréine  
Ní stopann aon rud  
Ionam féin is im shaol

## Proper New Yorkers

*Aoife Ní Bhrúadair*

As I roam through the crowded streets  
And look up at huge skyscrapers,  
The Big Apple is all too sweet  
And filled with proper New Yorkers.

A city filled with lights,  
Times Square blows me away.  
But I do get a fright  
When I hear the price of Broadway.

I open my eyes to the world  
And see the mess all around,  
Peoples' hearts stone cold,  
To this place they are all bound.

# Sugar Butter Flour

*Aoife Ní Bhrúadair*

Sugar butter flour  
I grab my apron  
I grab my mixer  
I grab my ingredients

Sugar butter flour  
Mix everything together  
Pop it in the oven  
And out comes the cake

Sugar butter flour  
Not just a cake  
A cake tells a story  
Of the baker's life

Sugar butter flour  
A well made cake  
They were happy and at peace  
And it was mixed with ease

Sugar butter flour  
A hard dense cake  
It was made with stress  
And mixed with tension

Sugar butter flour  
But a cake made with love  
That is the super cake  
Which we will call perfection



## Me And My Balloon

*Aoife Ní Bhrúadair*

One day I bought a balloon,  
    A balloon coloured pink.  
With it I could fly to the moon,  
    The balloon was my story's ink.

Everywhere I walked  
    With me the balloon stayed.  
The balloon and I chatted  
    All the time as we played.

Suddenly I lost my balloon  
    And it flew into the sky,  
Up an up towards the moon  
    As I waved goodbye.

A life all by myself now  
    Without ink for my story.  
So I live with my true self  
    Yet still I waved goodbye.

## Haikú

*Aoife Ní Bhrúadair*

Fia donn ag rith  
Ceo agus drúcht ar maidin  
Leoithne na gcrann

# Doire Fhíonáin

*Art Óg Ó Gráda*

Seo é mo bhaile ó bhaile  
Thíos i nDeisceart Chiarraí  
Láthair chun machnamh  
Chun cneasú  
Thíos i measc na sléibhte  
Iad glas, donn, rua is ór  
Trá bán leis an bhfarraige ag síneadh  
I bhfad radharc na súl  
Mé liom féin anso le mo smaointe  
Ar an dtrá fada gaofar  
Gan faic le déanamh ach suí  
Éisteacht leis an ngaoth ag rith isteach  
Ón Fharraige Mhór  
Tonnta ag tuairteáil ar an ngaineamh  
Smaoiním ar an dtráth sular tháinig an duine  
Gan tígh ná bóthar le feiscint  
Faic na ngrást ach an nádúr beo  
Tráth an tsuaimhnis  
Aimsir an tsuaimhnis  
Domhan simplí

# Fadó

*Ciara Ní Aodba*

*Dán Próis*

Is ait liom smaoinemh ar an am fadó. Cathaoir adhmaid agus bláthanna sa phróca. Fallaí bána is urlár cloiche. An t-aer úr lasmuigh, féar glas agus crainn. B'in é an saol.

Uafás atá againn inniu. Cogaidh san Oirthear. Fadhbanna aeráide muna dtugaimid aire don domhan atá againn. Is féidir an saol a bheith simplí arís, mar a bhí fadó. Orainn fein atá.

## I am Invisible

*Ciara Ní Aodba*

I am in an emergency

Where do I live?

Everywhere

Where am I going?

I don't know

How did this happen?

Unsure

Because I am that person you hear about on the radio

The person who lives nowhere and has nothing

I am the person who asks you every day for just

the slightest bit of recognition

But you pretend not to see me

Because you don't see me

For to you

I am invisible

# My Species

*Ciara Ní Aodba*

I fear for my future  
I had hoped for a long happy life  
I wondered what the future held  
As I shared it with those I love

Now I am uncertain  
Will I reach the future  
My dreams of peace  
My species cannot be trusted  
My species are irresponsible  
My species are killing their surroundings

Killing the beautiful air and wild creatures  
Killing what has been since time began  
Killing the hope of a future

My species have killed  
But if you can kill you can create  
Create new sources of food and life  
Create new times and opportunities  
Create hope for a new future

It's all up to my species

## The Girl On The Rocks

*Ciara Ní Aodba*

She waits on the rocks each day, singing,  
Waiting for someone to take her away  
To a world she knows.  
A world where young women can speak up,  
Live their lives freely,  
Free of men telling them what to do  
What to say  
What to wear  
How to act.

She waits on the rocks each day, singing,  
Singing her melody of hope,  
Hoping that someone will hear.  
Feeling lonely, lost,  
Despairing, doubting.

She sits and sings her song of love.  
The only replies are the crashing waves of the sea.

## Dhá Haikú

*Ciara Ní Aodba*

Liomóid is teile  
Dom chosaint ón ngrian bhúí  
Sin blas an tsamhraidh

Luch tí ag rith chugam  
Fonn air éalú ón áit seo  
Scaoilfead amach é

# Mise agus an Stáitse

*Ciara Ní Aodba*

Is aoibhinn liom aon áit amháin  
I gcathair mhór Chorcaí,  
Is féidir liom a bheith ionraic ann  
Is meas orm dá réir.

Sin é Tigh an Opera  
Áras mór cáiliúil,  
Nuair atáim ar an stáitse  
Líonaim an tigh le mo ghuth

Ag canadh ó mo chroí amach  
San áit is fearr ar domhan,  
Is mian liom teacht arís is arís,  
Seo é mo bhaile fhéin.

Is anso a bhraithim go sona,  
In airde ar an stáitse ollmhór,  
Pobal na hÉireann ag fanacht liom  
Is stiúrthóirí ar mo thóir.

# Me and my Open Window

*Ciara Ní Aodba*

*Girl reading a letter at an open window, Jan Vermeer*

The window has become my friend  
From all the time spent together.  
Each day the wooden frame is moist with my tears.  
Sometimes the birds come to comfort me  
But today is not one of those days.  
Today it is just me  
And my open window.

The letter arrived this morning,  
Brown and crinkled from the journey.  
Who knew a piece of paper could carry so much sadness?  
I read it and crumble, just like the paint on my window.  
From now on it is just me  
And my open window.

I know the war will come closer,  
Taking over my country house  
Just like it took him.  
The window will no longer hold my secrets and privacy.  
For after all a window is just glass.  
A glass window, and me  
And my open window.

# The Wisdom a Bird Possesses

*Ciara Ní Aodba*

It's a magical thing to be free,  
Soaring through the sky,  
The cool breeze through my outstretched feathers.  
Feeling the height within me  
I go higher and higher into enormous blue.  
This thing that I feel, this is freedom.

But I am one of the free.  
Somewhere, stretched across this vast world  
Is one just like me.  
Same build, same brain  
But different coloured feathers.

A bird waits, stuck in a cage,  
Waiting for when he can be free  
And soar just like me.  
Stuck, locked, caged.  
He should be flying,  
Discovering, seeking.

Each day I discover a new land,  
New beginnings, opportunities.

Each day a bird waits, stuck in a cage,  
Staring at the oppressive bars  
Of his prison.



## Ceol Na nÉan

*Cillian Ó Cathasaigh*

Bímse ag obair go dian gach lá  
Lasmuigh de mo thigín beag faoin dtuath.  
Ach líonann mo chroí le háthas  
Nuair a chloisim na héin ag canadh go binn  
Lasmuigh de mo thigín faoin dtuath.

## Licence To Kill

*Cillian Ó Cathasaigh*

Trucks and cars  
fun in bars  
all bring memories back to me  
from that day I lost everything in Farranree

I heard a zoom  
and then a boom  
next thing I know gone, all gone,  
my family, my home, happiness.

I'm now here a week later  
on the streets outside a shop called Crater,  
no money, no family, no happiness.  
All it takes is one slippy road, one drunk driver  
to wipe all happiness from my life,  
one slippy road, one drunk driver

## A Lost Hope

*Cillian Ó Cathasaigh*

War is over, everyone is happy for the first time in six years.  
Everyone but me because Auschwitz camp and Nazi Germany  
has destroyed my family.

My brother, sister and mother perished in war.  
My father taken hostage by the Nazis – a death sentence.

I see four people yelling and waving.  
I wave back thinking my family didn't perish.  
As I begin to walk towards them I am shoved by a boy  
And see him running towards my family.

That's my family, I say. My last bit of hope.  
One shove, one blink and the image of my family standing,  
Waving, perishes into thin air  
Just as they perished in the war.

## Haikú

*Cillian Ó Cathasaigh*

Gabhar mór groí ag rith  
Téann sé isteach sa bhfóraois  
Chun breith ar sceiteog bheag

# Deireadh an Chogaidh

*Cillian Ó Cathasaigh*

Ní fhéadfainn é a chreidiúint,  
Bhí deireadh leis an gcogadh.  
Gach tragóid a tharla, im intinn fós  
Go ceann na mblianta le teacht.

Tá deireadh leis an gcogadh,  
Daoine anois go sona sásta.  
Bhí mé féin fós gruama,  
Gach cuid dem chroí briste.

Ní fhéadfainn é a chreidiúint,  
Bhí deireadh leis an gcogadh.  
Bhí deireadh le mo chlann  
Ní fheicfidh mé iad go deo arís.

Ní fhéadfainn é a chreidiúint,  
Bhí deireadh leis an gcogadh.  
Le caoga bliain anuas bhí an ceart agam.  
Ní fhaca mé mo chlann arís.  
Bhí mo shaol ar fad go dona.

# First Day at School

*Cillian Ó Cathasaigh*

On my first day at school  
I hugged the principal's knees  
On my first day at school  
I ate a sandwich with cheese

On my first day at school  
I learned how to say Dia dhuit  
On my first day at school  
I said I can speak Irish a bit

On my first day at school  
With new friends I played games  
On my first day at school  
I had to learn all their names  
On my first day at school  
I enjoyed it so much  
I said 'Enough of the Irish,  
I need to learn Dutch.'

On my first day at school  
We did PE in a dome  
I packed up all my stuff  
And went home.

## Éalú

*David Ó Meachair*

Laethanta saoire agus ceol  
I bpáirt le chéile  
Seans agam éalú  
Ón saol lán de strus  
Faoiseamh aigne éisteacht le ceol  
Nó dul thar sáile  
Ag rith ón mbrú  
Tá an domhan chomh beag anois  
Saoirse agamsa ag éalú  
Im intinn fhéin  
Trín gceol agus saoire

## Dealbh

*David Ó Meachair*

An saol inniu  
Chomh difriúil ó mo shaol mar a bhíodh  
Meaisíní glórmhara ag gluaiseacht  
Gach sórt dath orthu  
Ag líonadh na sráide  
Spéir chomh gorm le loch  
Chomh difriúil ó na spéartha liath  
A bhíodh tharam  
I rith an chogaidh  
Mé greamaithe anso anois  
Ar an gcolún seo  
Cloch mór i lár na slí  
Mé ag breathnú ar na daoine  
Is mise i mo dhealbh

## Nocht

*David Ó Meachair*

Turas go dtí an chathair,  
Bíonn sé an-deacair.  
Féachaint ar na daoine bochta  
Ina luí ann, nocht  
Gan gheansaí ná cóta,  
Ag taibhreamh faoi dhinnéar rósta,  
De shíor ag iarraidh déirce.  
Titeann an oíche i bhfáiteadh na súl.  
Trua agam do na daoine bochta  
Fós ina luí ar an gcoincreít  
Is í chomh fuar doicheadh.

## Aimsir na Nollag

*David Ó Meachair*

Na soilse Nollag go léir  
Ar lasadh go hard sa spéir  
Siúlaim abhaile im aonar  
Mo chuid smaointe dom bhuaireadh  
Faoi chairde is faoi chlann  
Ag tiomáint ar na bóithre sleamhain  
Tráth draíochta gan dabht  
Fós bíonn scamall éigin os mo chionn  
Thart ar an Nollaig

## Cá Bhfuil an Tanora?

*David Ó Meachair*

An Nollaig le mo chlann  
Mar a bhí an chéad lá riamh  
Is ait nach dtagann aon athrú  
Ag ól Tanora is ag éisteacht le Wham  
Ag ithe Taytos agus *boney-roasted ham*  
Ag ól tae i rith an lae  
*Secret Santa* i ngach aon teach  
*Roses* is *Celebrations* gan bhac  
Ag imirt *Monopoly* agus cártaí  
Le colceathracha sa seomra suí  
Am speisialta le mo chlann  
Smaoiním ar an dtráth seo le fonn  
Is breá liom an Nollaig le mo chlann

## Fuacht

*David Ó Meachair*

Mé féin is mo leanbh  
Inár gcónaí le chéile  
I dteach beag umhal  
Gan aon chumhacht  
Ná cosaint ón ndomhan fuarchúiseach  
Grá againn dá chéile  
Inár dteach beag umhal  
Saor ón bhfuacht

## Before Summer Ends

*David Ó Meachair*

Late nights with my friends,  
Getting up early to walk dogs,  
Trying to fit everything in  
Before summer ends.

Splashing in sapphire waves,  
Lounging on golden sand,  
Trying to do as much as we can  
Before summer ends.

On blistering hot days  
Regular trips to the shop  
To buy their stock of ice pops  
Before summer ends.

Travelling to a bustling city  
And quaint little villages,  
Trying to visit so many places  
Before summer ends.

Or the best days by far  
When you don't do anything,  
Just relaxing and resting  
Before summer ends.

Battling away thousands of midges  
As they attack my head  
Before summer ends.



## Assisi

*David Ó Meachair*

Ag siúl na sráide caoile  
I gcoinne na dturasóirí  
Mé fein is mo leanbh  
Gan chabhair ó éinne  
Ach Naomh Proinsias a bhí mór  
Leis na hainmhithe is na héin  
An Mhaighdean Mhuire thuas  
Is Íosa Críost ár Slánaitheoir  
Ar fhalla an tséipéil

Gan faic uaim ach éalú  
Go dtí an saol mar a bhíodh  
Mé féin is mo leanbh  
In árasán beag  
Aghaidh síos ar an gcathair  
Gan chabhair ó éinne  
Ach Naomh Proinsias a bhí mór  
Leis na hainmhithe is na héin  
An Mhaighdean Mhuire thuas  
Is Íosa Críost ár Slánaitheoir  
Ar fhalla an tséipéil

## The Lazy Boy

*David Ó Meachair*

Read, write, draw,  
That's all they ever say.  
Read, write, draw,  
Why can't they go away?

Sleep, sleep, sleep,  
That's what I do.  
Sleep, sleep, sleep,  
I hate school.

Wake up, wake up, wake up,  
Whenever I close my eyes.  
Wake up, wake up, wake up,  
When I sleep how time flies.

Sick of school, sick of learning,  
Sick of early mornings.  
Only thing I want to do  
Is sleep the day away.

## Haikú

*David Ó Meachair*

Eilit bheag thapaidh  
Ag rith tríd an gcoill gan bhac  
Gan aon rud sa tslí

## Blas na nDeor

*Éadaoin Erlandsson*

An ghaoth mar thaibhse mór  
Ag screadaíl timpeall orm  
Faic i mo cheann  
Ach brón agus buairt

Na deora móra ag titim anuas  
Thugas mo chúl don teach  
Ritheas sall chuig mo mháthair  
Í brónach  
Blas na ndeor i mo bhéal

## Dóchas

*Éadaoin Erlandsson*

Bíonn solas lonrach gléghéal ar lasadh i ngach aon duine  
Ach múchtar é ag dorchadas an domhain,  
Ag brón, buairt is éadóchas.

Bíodh sásamh i do chroí, ná géill don uafás.  
Coimeád an solas ar lasadh  
Ag lonradh chomh geal leis an réaltra.

# Memory

*Éadaoin Erlandsson*

We were three, six and nine,  
My sisters and I  
As we ran through the fields to the woods.

Rustle of trees  
Sweet smell of wild flowers  
Soft mucky grass  
Under my boots.

A sharp icy wind  
Whooshing all around  
Tears in our eyes  
Our noses red.

Joy and excitement  
A flaming sun sinks on the horizon.

We were three, six and nine,  
My sisters and I  
As we ran through the fields to the woods.

# The Post Office

*Faye Ní Iarlatha*

I sit outside the post office each day,  
Waiting and wishing my life away.  
The silent parade of people who pass,  
My hands are ice, my eyes like glass.

I remember a time of gold and red,  
Food in my belly, a roof overhead,  
Loud hearty laughs and people to love,  
Now all I greet is the night sky above.

No four walls around me,  
Yet I've never been more trapped.  
I've nowhere to go,  
My lips are all chapped.

The people who pass,  
They scorn and turn away.  
Yet I sit still waiting  
By the post office each day.

# Cumhacht

*Fáye Ní Iarlatha*

Ait an rud é cumhacht  
Mar cheannaire ar dhaoine  
Cumhacht ag an mbanríon  
Soiléir le feiscint

Máistir nó múinteoir  
Deachtóir i gceannas ar thír  
Ach tá cumhacht eile fós ann  
Cumhacht umhal

Sin cumhacht chiúin an linbh  
Ina chodladh go séimh  
Cumhacht chiúin cheilte  
An linbh sa teach

## Waiting Through Winter

*Faye Ní Iarlatha*

A warm glow from the setting sun  
On the world below,  
We share secrets.  
Sickly sweet lemonade gone to our heads,  
We laugh about everything and nothing.

Time slips away and it looks like summer won't end.  
Gentle hum of engines running,  
The hay where we sat as it scratched our backs.  
It seems permanent, it has to be so.

Drunk on happiness but I am sobered  
By a bitter wind that nips my hands, my smile.  
Winter has crept in and I cannot thaw it,  
I can only wait in silence.

The sun that just warmed me has set  
And with it so have you.  
So I wait through winter for the sun to rise again,  
But I have no way of knowing if it ever will.

## Cúirt Mhic Shéafraidh

*Faye Ní Iarlatba*

Feicim anois an choill,  
Crainn arda ag cromadh,  
Bachlóga chorcradhearga mar bhlaincéad  
Ag síneadh amach gan chríoch le feiscint.

Feicim anois an trá,  
Tonnta ag éirí is ag titim arís,  
An sáile san aer go blasta ar mo theanga  
Gan le clos ach scread na n-éan.

Feicim anois an tigh tábhairne,  
Ceol agus craic ag blocadh,  
Bia blasta is pobal cineálta,  
Áit spraoi is saor ó inní.

Feicim anois an cailín spraoiúil  
Nuair a fhilleann sí anso,  
Lasann a croí is a súile  
Le sábháilteacht is compord  
Anso i gCúirt Mhic Shéafraidh.



## Back To School

*Órlaith Ní Chionnaith*

Why do those in power still ponder on climate change? They focus on prevention, not action. They tell us to go back to school, to find a solution. Leave it to the adults to worry.

Have I the right to live without fear? Without fear of the day when they say it's too late now, we have ruined all chances of a life on earth for our children.

What is my legacy if I don't stand up? I refuse to be silent. I won't watch the world crumble. I will stand up now. The more you try to silence me, the more I will fight.

## Missing my Home

*Órlaith Ní Chionnaith*

Vast buildings lit up in Hong Kong

Bright fluorescent street lights

New friends in Australia

A Koala bear's fur soft to the touch

A pawprint on my palm

Soft rhythm of waves in Bali

Brilliant white sands lap my feet

Happy friends in Biarritz

Nostalgia

Longing to see them again

But where does my heart long to be?

At home with friends and family

## Sa Chathair Mhór

*Órlaith Ní Cbionnaitb*

Cuimhním ar an lá  
Mé i mo luí ar an dtrá  
An ghrian ag scoilteadh na gcloch  
Tonnta séimhe ag dul tharam go bog

Cuimhním ar an lá breá úd  
Mé ag siúl ar Shráid Pádraig  
Daoine anaithnid ag dul tharam  
Tonnta garbha plóid na sráide

Cuimhním ar na daoine úd  
Gan suim acu ionam  
Ach ina gclann féin  
Is a stair spéisiúil  
Mar thonnta uaignis  
Ag dul tharam gach lá

## Cárta Poist

*Órla Ní Gbliasáin*

Éirí na gréine go hard thar na sléibhte  
Go moch ar maidin  
Blaincéad bán ag clúdach an tírdhreach  
Níl éinne ann  
Ach mise is an dúlra  
Anso i Kaunertaler sa Tirol

## Bóthar Na Trá

*Órla Ní Gbliasáin*

Ag tiomáint síos Bóthar na Trá  
Thugas súilfhéachaint ar chlé  
Ar an dtigh inar tógadh mé  
Chonac leaid óg sa ghairdín

Ritheann sé sall is anall  
Ag canadh leis na héin  
Is braithim uaim an lá  
Nuair b'é sin mo ghairdín fhéin

## Ar Bhruach Na Laoi

*Órla Ní Gbliasáin*

Tagann na sluaite go dtí an chathair  
Don siopadóireacht agus spraoi  
Is filléann abhaile ist oíche  
I bhfad ó Abhainn na Laoi

Ach mise téim ag siúl na sráide  
Go díreach lasmuigh den teach  
Mar is fearr liom bheith i mo chónaí  
Go díreach ar bhruach na Laoi.

## Behind The Bookshelf

*Órla Ní Gbliasáin*

In the silence of the library  
You scarcely hear a sound  
But the turning of pages  
Or the scratch of pen on paper

Then I hear a voice  
That warms my heart  
A little girl singing  
Behind the bookshelf

I see her tiny feet  
Her bright red hair  
Her happy song is an echo  
Through the books  
In the silence of the library

## Draíocht

*Órla Ní Gbliasáin*

Bhí máthair ina cónaí i dtigh fuar  
I lár na coille dorcha  
Bhí cumhacht draíochta aici siúd  
Ar pé leanbh ar leag sí súil air  
Na leanaí de shíor ag gáirí is ag spraoi  
Gan achrann gan chaoineadh  
Bean umhal í a mhair sa choill  
Ar son na bpáistí

## Dhá Haikú

*Seosamb Ó Buachalla*

Rith tríd an dúlra  
Na duilleoga ag titim  
Buí, donn is dearg

Ag ithe milseán  
Sa tsíoc agus sa tsneachta  
Os comhair na tine

## Sráid na Sléibhte

*Seosamb Ó Buachalla*

Anois táim ag codladh ar an sráid  
Is fada ó thángas ar an mbád  
I mo bhaile fhéin bhíos ag codladh faoi shléibhte  
Ag éisteacht leis na gunnaí ag scréachach  
Na sléibhte ar crith ó bhuamaí ag pléascadh  
Thángas go hÉirinn lena bheith saor sábháilte  
Mé anois amuigh faoin mbáisteach is gan chabhair ó lucht na sráide

## Flers – Courcellette

*Seosamb Ó Buachalla*

Weeks of fighting is destroying the Somme

A simple soldier hides in the trenches

Doing his best to survive

A wife and child left behind

An enemy attack on his mind

He relaxes with a beer in Courcellette

He wants this to end so he takes a rest

He returns to the trenches to hear a cry

*“Diese Engländer kommen mit riesigen Maschinen”*

He lifted his head, fired a shot,

But his target was 14 tonnes of steel.

Fortunately the tank got stuck

But that was the limit to his luck.

The enemy’s slow advance made too much ground

And ran over the trench.

This poor German soldier never came home.

His last ever sight was that first tank.

Now he’s sunken in the mud.

He lost the fight.



## Presentation Secondary School

Poetry by

**Raquel Pascual**

**Ropa Tusó**

**Chloe Fitzgerald**

**Saoirse O'Brien**

**Maria Eduarda**

**S**

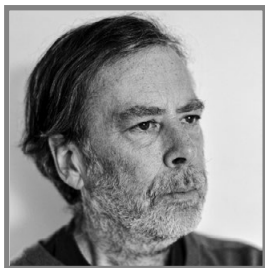
**Anonymous**

Assisting Writer: **Matthew Geden**

T.Y. Coordinator: **Gavin Foley**

Workshops held in **Tory Top Library**

Executive Librarian: **Deirbhile Dennehy**



The Unfinished Book of Poetry project is for me one of the most innovative and interesting literary programmes in the city of Cork. It is a wonderful opportunity to encourage young writers to express themselves, to develop their poetic tastes and styles and to ultimately achieve a first publication at a tender age. Every writer from aged 9 to 90 still enjoys that sense of completion when a poem is finally in print and so it is wonderful to see a new volume out despite the extraordinary circumstances of a challenging year so far. Now, more than ever, we need to pull together and celebrate each other and new poetry from new writers seems an ideal excuse for celebration.

Our first sessions took place in Tory Top Road Library where we were assigned to a spacious community room. The library staff were all very friendly and helpful enabling us to all settle in and focus on the task in hand. We began with some simple exercises, each student writing about themselves, their family and their home. Most of the students were from Cork, but we also had Maria from Brazil and Raquel from Spain. I set the class various exercises on these subjects and the classes developed from there. As the weeks passed the exercises became more testing and fun. It was great to see the writing of the girls also developing as they experimented with rhyme and free verse.

In one session the group worked in pairs looking at newspaper articles and



trying to pick out interesting subjects for poetry. We also looked at some classic poems such as Stevie Smith's "Not Waving but Drowning". The week after they returned from work experience our classes were moved to the impressive school library. Here we began by talking about each student's participation in the workplace and how this can be used in creative writing. I encouraged them to write about what they had learnt and also to think about different occupations and how some of these were dying out. We read Seamus Heaney's poem "Thatcher" and talked about traditional crafts. Later we also spoke about less noble occupations and read "Stealing" by Carol Ann Duffy. The first line of this poem proved a useful prompt for some of the girls' own writing. Other popular exercises included writing poems of sounds heard on the way to school, ghost stories and the five word challenge.

I am very proud of the way the girls stuck to their task throughout these sessions. The schedule wasn't ideal and then the uncertainty just before the schools closed in March was upsetting to all of us. Nevertheless, I could see real improvements in their writing and growing maturity in themselves. These girls are genuinely interested in the world around them and in the burning issues of the day. They are caring and worry about their friends, family and the planet. Their poems are also hopeful and rereading them I am hopeful too, the future is in good hands. I would like to thank Tory Top Road Library, Presentation Girls School, Paul Casey and all who made this possible but especially the students themselves who made these classes such a pleasure.

**Matthew Geden**



# Poems

Presentation Secondary School



## A Spice Cake

*Raquel Pascual*

The cover of the packet said:  
“You will never forget the taste  
of this wonderful birthday cake.”

The sound of a birthday song  
invited me to explore.

The biscuits looked very nice  
like a door to paradise.

My friends gave me a great surprise  
and I rushed to get a fork and knife.  
As soon as I took the first slice  
my mouth blew up on fire!  
It was really spicy, my eyes began to cry.

Now I know that the spice in the cake  
still stays on my lips  
and I will never forget the feeling  
that was so strong and real.

This is like the faithful friendship  
that I share with my friends  
with whom my best moments I spend.

# The Journey of a Drop

*Raquel Pascual*

On a round cloud in white high light  
a water drop full of life shone  
she was starting her journey,  
she felt fear and excitement.

She continued falling and falling  
and decided to fight against death,  
start to dance with the breeze.

The earth lantern shone brightly  
under the turquoise blue abyss  
and the melody of the birds  
was music to her ears.

The breeze of the calm wind  
stroked her fragile cheeks.  
The mountain peaks  
opened her heart to the unending sky of dreams.

She followed her dear friends  
and another blue drop said:  
Your destiny is in that blue blanket  
and the white crests of that vastness  
will protect you and give you happiness.

## Poem About My Self

*Raquel Pascual*

I am a very friendly person,  
I help people when they are in pain.  
My eyes are like bright stars  
and I love being with my lads.

Poetry is the thing I love most  
and I'd like to learn more.

When you see me smile  
it's like winning a medal  
and my laughing cheeks  
are like red petals.

My honey lips  
give off sweetness  
and my hugs are blows of happiness.

My kisses are like the gentle summer breeze  
and my eyes windows to paradise.

## Poem About My Brother

*Raquel Pascual*

Laughing at all the times  
he makes my days shine.  
I am proud of him  
and he is special to me.

He always steals me a smile  
and fills everything with light.  
The wind brings me his laughter,  
he will achieve everything  
because he is a fighter.

If I could give him any advice  
I'd say be kind and wise.

## Poem About Spain

*Raquel Pascual*

Looking out the window,  
lonely and wondering who I am  
and if they could come,  
my friends, my family,  
all that I left behind.  
In Spain, the place that saw me grow  
and gave me happiness and love.

My childhood full of love  
illuminated my heart's stove,  
which is now a clock  
needing to be repaired,  
weak by a deep nostalgic cove.

## A Long Car Ride

*Ropa Tuso*

“Where are we going?”

She asks this every 30 minutes

and I’m still yet to give

a direct answer.

“Somewhere nice...”

“Who’s going to be there?”

She wonders with great excitement

in her eyes.

“You’ll find out soon.”

“How long are we staying?”

These questions are getting

harder to answer.

“For as long as we need to, dear.”

“Mom?”

What will she ask now?

“Where is Dad?”

## An Endless Loop of Crazy

*Ropa Tuso*

What is the mind

Most are one of a kind

Others are hard to find

But all are intertwined

In this world we call divine



## I miss the first day

*Ropa Tusó*

I miss the first day

back when I was new and shiny

back when I had a lot to look forward to

I miss the first week

back when I had a lot of new faces to look at

back when everyone wanted me

I miss the first month

back when you got me a new cover every day

back when you said I was the best

thing to happen to you

But most of all -

I miss the first year

back when you couldn't let go of me

back when you didn't forget to charge me

back when it was just you and me

Now I am here in your drawer

with all the other phones

you loved and left to die

## Don't Let the Bed Bugs Bite

*Chloe Fitzgerald*

Time to go to sleep  
My mom said sleep tight  
Don't let the bed bugs bite  
The sun rose as did I  
As I rose I noticed I was not at home  
I looked down and got the shock of my life  
Feet you would think right?  
Hooves horse's hooves  
How?  
I must have let the bed bugs bite

## Summer Breeze

*Chloe Fitzgerald*

The beach, a place of peace  
A horse, a person's purse  
Breeze, the summer breeze, on the beach  
Secure, that is what best friends are for  
Gallop, like an angel in the sky  
Love, for the thing you would die for  
Care for the one thing you see as joy  
Jump all the obstacles  
Trot to be bold  
Forget all your troubles  
The horse will be your support  
Even if you can't take anymore  
You must keep riding

# Two Face

*Chloe Fitzgerald*

The word nurse

A soft and welcoming word

The nurse with the big kind smile

The nurse with the big blue eyes

But what have those big blue eyes seen

The big blue loving eyes have seen the

Darkest things of all

Nurse

Is she as kind after all

Knocking on death's door day in and day out

While still having a big kind smile and

Big blue loving eyes

Is she a devil in disguise?

What if she is the nurse with the big

Sharp knife

And not with the big kind smile

The nurse with the psycho mind

And not with the big blue loving eyes

I think she is a devil in disguise

# Horse Shop

*Chloe Fitzgerald*

I like horses  
They definitely use people's purses  
The shop definitely has lots of purpose  
As your horse needs feed  
To be able to give you what you need  
Watching the clock tick by  
Waiting for time to go by  
Walking out the door  
Finally waving goodbye

# A Special Place

*Chloe Fitzgerald*

A girl in a white dress  
Sitting by a crystal blue lake  
Just like her dog's crystal blue eyes  
This is the place she goes for peace of mind  
To find herself freedom  
The sun  
She brings a beach umbrella to block  
The sun  
The umbrella is also blocking all the  
Monsters in her head while in this special place  
She brings her special spray to this place  
It smells just like strawberries  
This brings her back to a good place

## Through the Waterfall

*Chloe Fitzgerald*

We decided to go camping  
Were we in our right mind?  
On a deserted island  
Searching for a place to stay  
By a waterfall that seems alright  
Blue crystal water like the blue sky  
Emerald green leaves like the green grass  
Searching?  
Searching seemed nice  
Searching for what?  
I guess whatever we find  
A dark wet cave  
Scary right?  
But what about a gold light glimmer?  
Cause that's what I came to find  
Then I knew I was sorted for life  
Do you want to know what I came to find  
I guess you need to make up your own mind

## Home

*Chloe Fitzgerald*

Home  
A place where I can go  
To say hi to my dog Joe  
To get into my bed  
With a shelter over my head  
And sleep forever more

# The Strangest Thing I Ever Saw ...

*Saoirse O'Brien*

The strangest thing I ever saw,  
a monkey dangling from the ceiling.  
He clapped his hands, made a scratch,  
and suddenly started swinging.

He zoomed around the box-like room,  
gripping the bars above his head,  
and settled in the far right corner,  
in a tree-like bamboo bed.

He sat in the corner as I peered through the glass,  
every second, every minute a new person would pass.  
A click of a camera, a bright white flash,  
they'd move to the next animal kept behind double-glazed glass.

A monkey once young and free,  
he could swing in the jungle from tree to tree.  
A monkey whose life is not the same,  
kept in a dark room for people to be entertained.

A room filled with fake trees,  
the monkey kept in isolation,  
like every other animal in the zoo,  
kept for public observation.

## In Those 7 Minutes

*Saoirse O'Brien*

I wake up,  
5:55 the clock reads,  
I'm not meant to be up for over an hour,  
but can't go back to sleep.

I start hearing odd noises downstairs,  
it sounds like someone is in the house,  
but I'm home alone -  
I must be imagining things.

The squeak of cupboards opening,  
sends a chill down my spine.  
I can't be imagining that ...  
Can I?

I hear footsteps coming up the stairs,  
Thud, Thud, Thud, Thud -  
they're getting louder,  
getting closer.

I glance at the alarm clock, 6:02  
in those 7 minutes the odd sounds didn't stop.  
In those 7 minutes I clenched the sheets in fear.  
In those 7 minutes -

## On My Way

*Saoirse O'Brien*

Bang!

Thud, Thud, Thud, Thud -

drip drop, drip drop -

Bark, Bark

Ahhhh - hehehe -

vroom -

vroom -

Thud, Thud, Thud, Thud -

drip drop, drip drop -

Chirp, c

vroom -

creeeek,

Ding Dong.

## Home

*Maria Eduarda*

Tropical weather,

A nice hot breeze

And the end of a sunny day.

Every day is magical in my place,

My sweet home, Brazil.



## Houses, in many colours

*Maria Eduarda*

Houses, in many colours,  
Blue, yellow, red  
And the windows coloured too  
Infinite combinations

Red house with a yellow window,  
A brown one with a pink window,  
My favourite is the blue house,  
It reminds me of the ocean

The bushes, so different to each other  
One, with many red flowers  
Another, without any flowers  
But with green, more green than I've ever seen

There is a big tree  
Without leaves, winter loses all of them  
But at the same time  
The tree still has life,  
Because of the birds, many birds

At least a big blue sky,  
It's a sunny day.  
There are no clouds,  
It's my favourite type of sky.

# Popstar

*Maria Eduarda*

I woke up,  
I felt strange.  
Blonde hair, shiny eyes  
Oh my God I think I'm a popstar!

Everything is how I like it,  
I ate pizza for breakfast  
And lasagna for lunch  
Everyone made what I wanted.

I had a show,  
It was incredible!  
The lights, the energy, the people.  
It felt like everyone loved me.

At the end of the day  
I was exhausted,  
But I could feel the love,  
It was good.

## A Young Girl

S

A young girl from a troubled background,  
a hard start to life.

She struggled to find her way,  
battling day and night.

She puts on a brave face  
and faces each day with a smile,  
but what's under the mask  
that she tries so desperately to hide?

She screams for help,  
gasps for breath as she drowns in tears.  
The constant urge to numb the pain  
and all her darkest fears.

A girl with so much potential  
and so little to lose.  
She lashes out  
and starts to abuse.

Her "friends" say it makes her "better",  
but deep down she knows it's not true,  
yet day after day she chooses  
to drink and smoke a joint or two.

A young girl,  
now a mother of three.  
An addict, not a parent,  
is what her eldest girl sees.

Many years go by and it's still the same,  
same girl,  
same issue,  
same method to tame.

## She Sits There

S

She sits there  
looking in the mirror,  
studying her reflection,  
disgusted by what she sees.

A young girl,  
aged in her mid-teens,  
an expression of sadness,  
broken as it seems.

She has long brown wire-like hair,  
wide eyes -  
a mixture of many colours,  
magnified by black and blue glasses perched upon her face.

A girl with a short slim figure,  
but not like the Instagram pictures.

A hopeless being  
is all the girl is seeing.

Sitting there slouched over,  
she looks away in despair,  
with the palm of her hand placed under her chin  
and fingers on her cheek next to an upside down grin.

This can't be me,  
this can't be what people see,  
this can't be the way I see her,  
or the way I see me.

She looks back into the mirror,  
staring at her reflection,  
looking deeper and deeper  
at more than one section.

She sees a story  
and so much more,  
looking into her eyes  
there's more than before.

A young girl  
who's kind and sweet,  
a hard-working student  
who never suffers defeat.

A warming smile,  
infectious laugh.  
An intelligent girl  
who's discovered her other half.

Beauty isn't surface deep,  
it's so much more.  
What's on the inside  
is what you're looking for.

The girl in the reflection,  
that girl is me,  
for the first time in forever  
I'm happy to be me.

# Sitting On a Plane

*Anonymous*

Sitting on a plane.

Coming home for the New Year,  
although the sound of turbulence  
was unbearable to my ears.

Bringing me back to a time where  
I couldn't visit the cinema  
because even the sound of the opening  
credits felt as if there was a drum  
next to my ear.

And with every beat of that drum  
my surroundings became louder and scarier  
making my childhood visits to the cinema  
a disliked memory every year.

# Bang

*Anonymous*

A tragic accident  
Turned into a story  
That would live on  
For centuries.

Bang - she shot the pistol.  
The sound that turned  
A day of celebration  
Into a day of mourning.

The screams of family members  
Upon hearing the haunted tale,  
Seeing the White Lady of Kinsale  
Makes your body weak and frail.

## St. Vincent's Secondary School

Poetry by

**Aimee Cronin**

**Alexandra Bozhesko**

**Ava Tynan**

**Britney Callanan**

**Danielle O'Connor**

**Emily Peyton-Blake**

**Emma O'Callaghan**

**Hannah St. Leger**

**Jennifer O'Mahony**

**Louise McKenzie**

**Martyna Laurinaityte**

**Megan Constant**

**Mollie Blount-Connors**

**Tiana Murphy-Osindero**

Assisting writer: **Afric McGlinchey**

T.Y. Coordinator: **Natalie Henry**

Workshops held in **Blackpool Library**

Executive Librarian: **Clare Doyle**



It's always a pleasure opening a door into poetry when young minds are attentive and receptive. The St. Vincent's girls were a joy. Our explorations were various, and our reading included some of the greats, such as Dylan Thomas, Sylvia Plath, Derek Mahon, Wallace Stephens and Elizabeth Bishop as well as other voices: Sara Baume, Lucy Sweeney-Byrne, Blas Falconer, John Banville, Etienne Van Heerden, Laure-Anne Bosselaar and Eva H.D., to name a few. We also used opening sentences by master writers as springboards for their own poems. We focused on using all the senses, being aware of location, and stepping into the shoes of other people, creatures or objects. Maybe that object comes alive. Maybe it starts talking to you, telling you where it's been, whispering a secret. We generated a load of raw material, then manipulated it to create avant-garde poems. The girls learned how to bury a secret deep inside a poem.

We looked at Eva HD's award-winning poem, 38 Michigans. In this poem,



she uses the idea of Michigan, a state, as a unit of measurement, to show how far away she feels from her dead brother. When a metaphor extends through a whole poem, it is called a conceit. All the private things the siblings shared come into the poem, making it mysterious, but also relatable. We brainstormed the private language of friends, of siblings.

We played with poetry forms, such as villanelles and pantoums. The girls learned to identify how an incantation is created by a pantoum's interlocking pattern of rhyme and repetition; as lines reverberate between stanzas, they fill the poem with echoes.

We considered how a poem could be compared to an animal. The living parts of a poem are the words, the images, the rhythms. The spirit is the life which inhabits them when they all work together. So, as Ted Hughes shows in his poem, *The Thought-Fox*, you have to make sure that all those parts are alive. Words that live are those we hear, like 'click', or we see, like 'freckled', or we taste, like 'vinegar', or touch, like 'prickle' or smell, like 'tar'. We tried to select words that belong directly to one of the five senses. Or words that seem to use their muscles, like 'flick' or 'balance'. I asked the girls to see their poem as an animal: touch it, smell it, listen to it, turn themselves into it. They were surprised at the way words seemed to look after themselves, like magic. We didn't bother about commas or full stops or that sort of thing. Instead, the girls kept their eyes, ears, nose, taste, touch, their whole being, on the thing they were turning into words. After a bit of practice, and after telling themselves a few times that they didn't care how other people had written about the same subject, that this was the way they were doing it, they relaxed into the spirit of being creative. When we had an editing session, and finally came up with the finished poems, they were surprised and pleased with the results. They had captured a spirit, a creature.

I'll remember with fondness Emily's lucid dream cheetah, Martyna's pixel fantasies, Aimee tangoing under the night sky, Louise's car 'talking yellow', Ava's 'thinking with eyebrows', Britney's chloroform and lead concoction, Emma's 'eyes getting lost in the sky', Danielle's rainbow, 'dragging its belly', Jenny's dog's brown eyes that 'can't lie', Mollie's brother, 'being a teenager and whatnot', Hannah 'feeling like a squashed ant', Alex's 'zero isn't enough', Megan's cloud as a 'pig, rocking around', Tiana's 'car dive eyes.'

Congrats on your work, and thanks girls. Hope you enjoyed the course as much as I did. Keep writing!

**Afric McGlinchey**



# Poems

St. Vincent's Secondary School



# Captured

*Aimee Cronin*

I shut my eyes and the world goes dark.

A minute later, you appear.

I think I met you in my dreams.

We go waltzing in the night sky.

My heart flutters like a butterfly.

I shut my eyes and the world goes dark.

I dreamt that you were on one knee,

under the moonlight, held me tight.

I think I met you in my dreams.

Stars above shine down on us,

dismissing darkness creeping up.

I shut my eyes and the world goes dark.

I fancied that we'd always be together,

but when I awaken, it's not what it seems.

I think I met you in my dreams.

I should have forgot you long ago.

But at least I know I'm not alone

I shut my eyes and the world goes dark

I think I met you in my dreams.

## In the middle of a crowd, there is a child dancing

*Aimee Cronin*

Their minds  
focused;  
hers roaming,  
music playing in her head,  
as her body moves to the rhythm  
in a universe of her own.  
Oblivious of the real world,  
her hands brush  
against bags and coats,  
eyes closed, inhabiting her dreams,  
while onlookers  
relive the memory  
of being similarly free.

## This Fox

*Aimee Cronin*

I pull on the rectangular handle  
revealing the silver hidden inside.  
Reach in and pause,  
magic chirping in my fast brown eyes.  
I feel electricity power through  
my heart, waiting for a moment  
to come popping out.  
Love sparks a fire,  
like a fox in the wood.

# 10 Depths to Sail

*Aimee Cronin*

*after Wallace Stephens*

i)

On the surface  
of the calm blue ocean  
the only visible thing  
was the shadow of a whale.

ii)

We were of two minds  
just the shadow and me  
sailing in the same direction.

iii)

The waves crashed with stormy force,  
the shadow disappearing.

iv)

A girl is singular;  
a girl and a whale  
are singular.

v)

I do not know which to fear:  
the shadow creeping  
or not at all;  
the surface breaking  
or what comes after.

vi)

Foam covers the surface  
just like used toothpaste  
A gasp of air shoots up  
from time to time.

vii)

the boat  
traced by shadow;  
an indecipherable cause.

viii)

O tall sailors of Spain  
why do you imagine dangerous crossings?  
Do you not see how the sea  
surrounds your ship,  
following your moves undisturbed?

ix)

I know deep blue eyes  
and lucid, inescapable rhythms;  
but I know too  
that the shadow knows more  
than I know.

x)

When the shadow sank,  
it marked the shallows  
of one of many coasts.

## The day a dog moved into my soul

*Aimee Cronin*

the moon  
overwhelmed him,  
yes,  
above his raised eyes,  
tilted back, black curly ears,  
brown and grey fur underneath,  
face as dark as a cold night,  
the vision keeping him warm,  
a deep breath of fresh air  
through his moist soft nose.

Dinner distracts him;  
yaps for joy as he runs  
quick, from side to side  
trying to contain  
the excitement.

Mostly, he dreams,  
his eyes  
getting lost  
in the sky.

## Two good girls

*Aimee Cronin*

The bell rings right on the dot. We all race to the classroom door, a line like a snake, fingers to lips, not a peep, two heels clicking. I let you go in front of me, while others behind us wave their hands in the air as if they are cheer-leading. She ignores them and opens the door. We turn to each other and smirk, walk past her, high heads. The good girls.



## Puddle

*Alexandra Bozbesko*

Lying awake, I think of F, as she called herself. Her and her tiny dog. She was ruthless. She bullied younger kids, which she thought was 'cool'. Once, she made a little boy swim in a puddle while I was watching from the window. I leaned out and told her stop. She really deserved a slap. Boys loved her laugh, figure, jokes; they found me a weirdo with my curly hair. 'Medusa', they called me. I straightened my hair, did my brows, wore different clothes. Went against everything I believe in. Then realised she was trying to change who she is too: her surname, nationality, hair, face, voice.

There was always that fear of her, even when I wanted to be like her. Whenever I felt the conflict of that pang, I'd remember the puddle. Come back to myself.

## Not my Dad

*Alexandra Bozbesko*

He says things over and over again,  
stupid jokes, feeds us on cheap food,  
mean, loves himself and no one else,  
good at putting the blame on me,  
makes others feel guilt, pressure,  
hate. Not smart, barely reads,  
takes mum's money, spends it on hoes,  
loves money and cars. Doesn't care  
about the grandchildren, me. Money can  
buy everything, sixty boxes of sweets.  
Zero isn't enough.

## edges

*Alexandra Bozhesko*

i)

at dawn

the only moving thing

is the mist

rising from the river

ii)

as the river flowed past

i was wondering

what's at the edge

of the world

iii)

you wake up in the morning

the windows are moist

although there is no rain

iv)

you can give it any shape or form

it can be a cylinder or cube

it can be hot or cold

v)

you think you're the boss

i dare you to go into the open sea

what gives life can also take it away

vi)

when the beast comes from the east  
it freezes  
it can be a sword, a knife or a screw

vii)

you walk through the wet grass  
but there is no rain

viii)

the cliff hits the water,  
which starts to cry  
then runs away.

## Devil Finger

*Alexandra Bozhesko*

The devil finger points  
at pancakes. Gets  
with my flowers. Thorny legs,  
pear eyes,  
rear choking on a snow flake.  
Neck to the guillotine.  
Metal sees your reflection  
as a chamber with a gouger.  
The hen awakes.  
Field moves, but clouds stay,  
knuckles in the sky.

## I close my eyes

*Alexandra Bozhesko*

I close my eyes and you're still here.

Did I make this all up again?

You're nowhere near.

I see this picture,

see this scene,

I close my eyes and you're still here.

In all my head it's all you.

But though I sense your presence,

you're nowhere near.

There isn't a connection.

It's a 6 o'clock habit, like eating sweets.

I close my eyes and you're still here.

We talk, we laugh, we touch. I wish.

Like a blue lagoon,

you're nowhere near.

I'm in love with my creation of you,

not in love with *you*.

I close my eyes and you're still here,

and yet, you're nowhere near.

# This is not a love story

*Ava Tynan*

I fancied you'd return, the way you said.

Fell in love as I caught your eyes.

Feels like I made you up.

You were my first love,

told me I was your little dove.

I fancied you'd return, the way you said.

I felt so special;

all those late night phone calls.

Feels like I made you up.

Then you went and cheated,

and I hit you with a hurley.

I fancied you'd return, the way you said.

You thought you were so cool,

but you acted like a fool.

Feels like I made you up.

I'm happy that you're gone,

so now I can move on.

I fancied you'd return, the way you said.

Feels like I made you up.

# Take your Mark

*Ava Tynan*

There was always a Mark,  
no matter where I went.  
Mark No. 1 was my brother,  
whom I liked to call Monkey,  
he was such a messer.  
Now, so quiet.  
Mark No. 2 was my uncle.  
He was a twin.  
I always confused them,  
unless he was alone.  
Mark No. 3 was from pre-school,  
After eight years of no contact,  
we've become friends again.  
Mark No. 4 was last summer.  
He spelled his name with a C.  
That made him unique to me.

## Getting out of the hot seat

*Ava Tynan*

We split up and the defences came:  
they were muscly, foxy, blue-eyed men.  
I plucked the tick off my dog  
and used the bongos  
of the paddy wagon.  
Saw him thinking with eyebrows,  
while mouth-popping her face off a wall  
with a love island bull behind them.  
An indigo lump on my bump.  
Free throw.

## I take the long handle

*Britney Callanan*

Spoon the sponge.  
The green doors are naturally  
behind the book.  
Blue Lucozade  
takes an oceanic chance,  
drops the renegade.  
The gaps in my freckles  
draw close  
at mid-term.

## Mourning, noon and night

*Britney Callanan*

Twelve years of friendship, twelve years of memories,  
all got washed away, back in winter 2017. I often think  
about how life would be if she hadn't cut me off.  
Hadn't blocked me, for no apparent reason.

Trying to think what I did wrong is like a colour-  
blind person trying to sort out reds and greens.  
It's impossible that anyone could be as fake as she was.  
Twelve years of my life, buried, disintegrating.

## It's raining

*Britney Callanan*

Raindrops fall from my eyelashes.  
Everything inside is grey and cloudy.  
Others walk in sunlight  
while I stumble around  
in my dark shadow.  
I can't catch a glimpse  
of sunshine  
or a summer tan.  
It's raining  
I can't leave my house  
or I'll drown.  
Nobody likes rain,  
especially  
when you're the cloud,  
building up inside.



## In my shed

*Britney Callanan*

I mix your drink with chloroform and lead,  
head to school.

You're locked up in my shed

'You are insane,' they all said.

I'm simply figuring it out

I mix your drink with chloroform and lead.

I dream you could be with me in my bed.

It's going to come true.

You're locked up in my shed.

My friend has been found dead.

I keep you as my treasure.

I mix your drink with chloroform and lead.

On my wall there'll be a head,

a body in my closet.

You're locked up in my shed.

I decide to murder you instead.

The torture's almost over.

I mix your drink with chloroform and lead

You're locked up in my shed.

## Weather

*Danielle O'Connor*

Waking up with unusual weather –  
sun beaming down,  
or snow covering the surface –  
brings back such good memories.

Sun beaming down,  
not even rain ruining the day  
or snow covering the surface –  
where will we be going today?

Not even rain ruining the day,  
because we're young and so excited.  
Where will we be going today?  
Different as currencies.

So young but so excited,  
spending time with my family,  
different as currencies,  
unusual accents, and just as interesting.

Spending time with my family,  
snow covering the surface,  
interesting as unusual accents –  
brings back such good memories.

## Retainers

*Danielle O'Connor*

A rainbow drags its belly  
like a violet placebo,  
or a metal handle  
with curved bars,  
or a toaster, poured.  
My car door, white,  
discombobulated  
as a splat cake.  
Shoot, court, Bernadette.  
Gen run – you going?  
I was talking to her;  
checked phone  
and the centres of my feet  
were a pole and split  
my head,  
as though an elephant  
had worked on it.

# Ten Times the Cheetah Looked

*Emily Peyton-Blake*

Among the tall wet grasses,  
I can see your magnificent fur.  
Warm brown eyes with binocular vision,  
the print of my teacher's jacket.

People try to hunt ye all,  
you and your friends,  
you and your family,  
and still you don't come at me.

Wind travels at cheetah speed,  
or you shoot past, swifter than lightning,  
leaving your doppelganger  
far, far behind.

Why do we humans act so cruelly?  
The movement of air whistles  
past possible attack

.

You can hear my footsteps  
from three miles away.  
On the path, I see a trace of your spoor.

We catch eyes and stare.  
You look at me as if I was your prey.  
Now I pray.

Lucid dreams appear  
real, a drop of golden sun  
making the cheetah's coat glow.

Droplets fall,  
create a bog  
which separates me from you.  
Can't see you anymore.

It is dark.  
I cannot see.  
You were my symbol  
navigating me  
like a compass.

The wind is moving again.  
The cheetah must be running.

## White blob in the sky

*Emily Peyton-Blake*

like foam off a pint of beer.  
On the court, the banana cut  
looks different too.  
Half way down, the brown eyes  
can appear like her  
eyelashes when she squints,  
black and large, all stacked  
with a silver rose.  
Obligated love  
blends into the lizard,  
tied-up heart.

# Tattoo

*Emily Peyton-Blake*

Beautiful, familiar, in front of my eyes  
A face identical to mine  
I know you, mother,  
An ink portrait on my father's forearm.

A face identical to mine  
He can go months without remembering you  
An ink portrait on my father's forearm  
Most of the time it's covered up.

He can go months without remembering you  
But after a whiskey the emotions open  
Most of the time, it's covered up  
His mind plays tricks on him

After a whiskey the emotions open  
He gets angry  
His mind plays tricks on him  
I know you, mother.

He gets angry.  
A face identical to mine,  
Mother,  
Beautiful, familiar, in front of my eyes.

## Aftermath

*Emily Peyton-Blake*

I can still feel  
your breath against my neck.  
My dreams fooled me.

Your emerald eyes, like a glen  
of green roses.  
I can still feel

how we fit together, a key in a keyhole.  
We talked for days on end.  
I think my dreams fooled me.

We touched lips.  
I shut my eyes in the moment.  
My dreams fooled me.

I could almost smell your intelligence.  
Will we meet when we're older?  
My dreams fooled me.

What if I had told you I loved you?  
Would that have changed things?  
I still feel  
my dreams fooled me.

## Afternoon walk

*Emma O'Callaghan*

It is dark and dull,  
cold as ice.  
Shining glass footpaths.  
A red nose and puffy red cheeks.  
The crackle of leaves  
as I walk through the park.  
Shadowed figures in the distance.  
The smell of fresh air, sound of a creaky  
swing. And I know what I'm feeling:  
peace.

## Underlined

*Hannah St. Leger*

The ice on my car window  
pirouettes, grande jetés.  
Sunkissed, small lips,  
do a plié,  
Eyebrows, thin, Arabesque  
like a phone alarm,  
tick tock to French class  
as though I'm my dad's  
favourite; ecstatic  
news about the Corona  
virus, dimples, pancaked,  
shaking with  
nervous pleurisy;  
feeling like a squashed ant.



# Air

*Hannah St. Leger*

1

Ecstatic to be  
smacked in the face  
by fresh air.

2

Broken, the walls of the Colloseum;  
You throwing coins into the Trevi.

3

A wedding.  
What a beautiful couple,  
walking up the aisle, cool as a breeze.

4

Happiness suddenly turns into unhappiness.  
A twister, an earthquake.

5

Is it the power of the mind?  
I'm floating, even flying.

6

I can imagine a world with no gravity.  
But a world without air?  
Impossible.

## I try

*Hannah St. Leger*

I try to get over you, I try,  
dance until the pain disappears.  
Then she appears, she's in my orbit,  
reminding me of you.

I dance, and the pain disappears.  
It's what I love, what I do best.  
She reminds me of you.  
When she's not around, I feel alive.

Dancing is what I love; it's what I do best.  
I am close to being myself again.  
When she's not around, I feel alive.  
I've never felt this good.

I'm close to being myself again,  
finally happy.  
I've never felt this good before.  
And then she tears me down.

I finally feel happy.  
Until she appears, until she's in my orbit.  
And she tears me down again.  
I try to get over you, I try.

## If the stars

*Jennifer O'Mahony*

The stars go waltzing out  
in blue and red  
I see stars in the twinkle in your eye

Thousands of butterflies  
swirling around me;  
the stars go waltzing out

It was always you  
since the start.  
I see stars in the twinkle in your eye

What we have is lush,  
so we keep hush hush.  
The stars go waltzing out

Can we tell  
if what we have is true?  
I see stars in the twinkle in your eye

It's hard to know  
if we'll be together tomorrow,  
if the stars will go on waltzing out  
and I'll still see stars in the twinkle in your eye.

## What's in a name?

*Jennifer O'Mahony*

My birth name is Jennifer, but nobody seems to call me that anymore. Only a few teachers and strangers. 'Jennifer' feels so formal. To my friends and family, I'm Jen. To my little sisters and younger cousins, Jenny. Cleo calls me Jenna. The name 'Jennifer' means 'white wave'. Do Jen and Jenny create a different energy, different person? Truth is, I really don't know.

## Haiku for Cassie

*Jennifer O'Mahony*

White, with that black spot,  
Pup frenzy; now old-lazy.  
Your brown eyes can't lie.

## I found a white piece of paper with your name on it

*Louise McKenzie*

It's silver, digs into my food,  
mouth, shoes;  
the car talks yellow,  
three-pointer, suicide;  
tanned, slick rick, awake,  
bites, hurts my toe  
off the chair, stings  
like a bee.

## Pixels

*Martyna Laurinaityte*

I close my eyes and see a different image,  
imagine that moment;  
fantasies of course.

I see pixels floating  
as I stare into the light.  
Close my eyes and see a different image

I dazed that it was only us,  
holding hands tightly.  
Fantasies of course.

I'm not getting signs that it's impossible.  
Maybe it'll come soon.  
I close my eyes and see a different image.

I'm not positive that you know who I am,  
but I would like to think you do.  
Fantasies of course.

The thought of having you here with me  
would be too good to be true.  
I close my eyes and see a different image,  
Fantasies of course.

# Ticking

*Martyna Laurinaityte*

I hear singing from a distance,  
quiet, yet so distracting,  
as my pen touches white paper.  
Nothing more calm.

Quiet, yet so distracting,  
the sun beaming into the room.  
Nothing more calm,  
clock ticking each second.

The sun beaming into the room;  
nothing more calm,  
clock ticking each second,  
the day getting darker as clouds drift over.

Nothing more calm;  
whispers from passers-by,  
the day getting darker as clouds drift over.  
Quick shallow movements, birds flying.

Whispers from passers-by  
as my pen touches white paper.  
Quick shallow movements, birds flying.  
I hear singing from a distance.

## Caring for my goldfish

*Martyna Laurinaityte*

Similar, yet different, their scales glimmer  
as the sun shines down on them.

Their fins touch the corals. They're getting bigger  
as the days pass.

I lay my finger against the fishbowl,  
and they know what's coming.

Sudden appearance of the two fish, nosing after the food  
floating on the surface.

I remove them to a temporary bowl,  
then bring them back to fresh water, new rocks and corals.  
They get a new little friend too, a tiny snail to keep the grass  
good as new. Something unusual for them. Something exciting.

## The sky catches my gaze

*Megan Constant*

Watching clouds float by:  
one is a bear scratching its back,  
big, dark  
like it's gonna rain;  
another is yellow 'n' purple,  
full of power  
I notice a pig rocking around.  
My bones reply, blasphemous.

## Aimee is the French for 'loved'

*Megan Constant*

There was always an Aimee.  
Aimee No. 1 was a know-it-all  
and would whisper about you  
behind your back.  
Aimee No. 2 was the opposite.  
She would barely talk,  
And when she did, it made no sense.  
Then there was Aimee No. 3,  
the sporty yet nerdy girl.  
Aimee No.4  
was both shy and sneaky.  
No one has seen her in years.



# Paranoia

*Mollie Blount-Connors*

I

Through dozens of countries  
it's creeping up on us,  
a plague  
stalking the world.

II

Started as innocent experimentation  
or did it?  
A mistake or on purpose?

III

They've called it Corona ('a deadly disease')  
While most people are suffering,  
the rich are carefree as a breeze.

IV

Corona and fear,  
the same thing.  
Money, government, distrust,  
the same thing.

V

You see that woman collapse  
on the train.  
You can almost look it in the eye.  
You keep quiet,  
put on your mask.  
You won't hold her hand.  
You pull up your gloves, tighter.  
No contact!

# Waiting

*Mollie Blount-Connors*

Waiting furiously for Mam, he was sitting and pouting  
She was late coming from work  
His friend's father asks do we have a lift  
I protest as my brother shoves me in the car

She was late coming from work  
Never go anywhere with strangers, I was always told  
I protest as my brother shoves me in the car  
On the ride home, I know we're in trouble

Never go anywhere with strangers, I was told  
She rushes in the door, coming from our school  
On the ride home, I know we're in trouble  
He doesn't accept he's wrong, being a teenager and whatnot

She rushes in the door, coming from the school  
I stand there, sobbing, telling her it wasn't me  
He doesn't accept he's wrong, being a teenager and whatnot  
I feel hurt for putting that look of worry on her face

I stand there sobbing, telling her it wasn't me  
His friend's father asks do we have a lift  
I feel hurt for putting that look of worry on her face  
Waiting furiously for Mam, he was sitting and pouting.

## Could be's

*Mollie Blount-Connors*

You're the cloud filled with could be's,  
drooping over my head  
shadowing me, even when I sleep.  
From the first day I opened my eyes  
you were there.

I grew immune to the loud  
bouncing and screams from the sidelines.

Only a tot, I put on my first jersey,  
unsure whether I was sure or not.

With a mind full of uncertainty  
I did it anyway, because what else  
was the future going to hold for me?

Now I am coping,  
dealing with the bad decisions  
my five-year-old self made.

The cloud fills with could be's;  
They're getting closer as I grow older.

I can see through the cloud now.

All it took was that one roll  
of the ankle.

Now the cloud is shallower.

So I've decided  
to form my own could be's,  
my own thoughts of the future.

## As Green as Ever

*Mollie Blount-Connors*

I dream about you.  
But dreaming isn't enough.  
Not a chance anyone could ever measure up.  
(I know I didn't invent you.)

The grass is as green as ever.  
The daffodils are our stars.  
I dream about you,  
but dreaming isn't enough.

At night, my life is perfect.  
You leave me puzzled  
and in love.  
(I know I didn't invent you.)

I thought you'd be here when I awoke.  
But I trust you'll appear  
in due course.  
(I know I didn't invent you.)

In the dark, you arrive, right on cue.  
I dream about you.  
But dreaming isn't enough.  
(I know I didn't invent you.)

## Do you mind?

*Tiana Murphy-Osindero*

Split in two,  
braided  
through the rendezvous,  
conditioned by car dive eyes,  
to tell or to die,  
to paint me blue,  
you kangaroo –  
yeah, why?

## Olives and Radishes, You and Me

*Tiana Murphy-Osindero*

I never liked them;  
the taste never sat right with me.  
But I still bought them,  
since you loved them so much.  
I had to be the same.  
I've tried them again.  
I like olives now,  
but radishes still make me gag.  
Some things can't change.  
Now you're just part  
of a tidal wave of memories.  
You're me and I'm a horrible radish,  
ruining your feast.

## Overheard fragments

*Tiana Murphy-Osindero*

...and I are not the same...

She says I'm stupid...

...I barely exist

...ate the cake...

I watched in disgust.

...and I are not the same

...to feel the sun on my face...

She says I'm a curse.

I barely exist...

*I love you so much...*

but she says you aren't to be trusted.

...and I are not the same

I hear birdsong.

She keeps me up all night and turns them into screams.

...I barely exist...

It's so peaceful...

She forgets how to swim and we both drown.

Myself and I are not the same...

# Lighthouse

*Tiana Murphy-Osindero*

Blick, black, fumble  
halfway up the stairs,  
no reason to care,  
I've Ireland this far for you.  
Oh, I have these rules,  
light breeze and a silver moon,  
enter all this, soon.

## Glanmire Community College

Poetry by

**John Laceda**

**Wafiq Usman**

**Millie Quirk**

**Joshua Kolawole**

**Ben McCarthy**

**Pahalavan Premareji**

**Lauren Murphy**

**Patrick Manning**

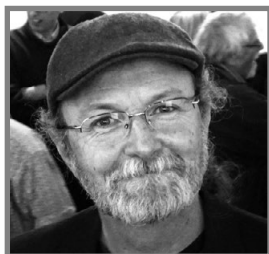
**Jason Daly**

Assisting writer: **Paul Casey**

School Coordinator: **Imelda Manning**

Workshops held in: **Glanmire Library**

Co-ordinating Librarian: **Maire Walsh**



It was a special treat to be able to include a school from Glanmire this year, thanks to the expansion of the new city bounds. The staff at Glanmire Library were enthusiastic to welcome the project for the first time and superbly efficient in creating a comfortable space for the workshops. The students were confident and at ease from their start and were eager to get their teeth into the exercises each week, oozing with zest and an impressive respect for the creative space.

The sessions included inventing and developing metaphors, working with clichés, sound in poetry, imagery and forms, ekphrasis, anthropomorphism, dialogue, found poetry and collective poems, whilst working with a wide range of themes, including superstition, seasons and journeys to name a few. We explored the poems of authors from across time and place, including Billy Collins, Emily Dickinson, Sylvia Plath, Simon Armitage, Christian Bök, William Carlos Williams, Robert Frost, Gertrude Stein, Rainer Maria Rilke, W.H.Auden, Wislawa Szymborska, Amy Lowell, Galway Kinnell, Mary Oliver, Sinéad Morrissey and others.

I was pleased to see a marked improvement in writing confidence and attention to detail as the weeks went by. Each session would produce between two and four new pieces. These nine writers would then redraft



their poems after each session into a word document, while looking for ways to improve the content and flow, considering economy, superfluous language, line breaks and enjambments, pauses and caesura, and replacing abstract with concrete images wherever possible.

The camaraderie was as infectious as it was mutually inspiring among the group. I was moved by the sheer volume of creativity and emotional courage these young writers displayed over the course of the project and I sincerely hope that they continue to put pen to paper and make magic out of their unique lives and infinite imaginations.

**Paul Casey**



# Poems

Glanmire Community College



## This Creation

*John Laceda*

This creation is one which repels light.  
The base of egg carton, once filled  
with pure eggs that could hatch into anything,  
is now empty like the void, full of night.

This creation, as time goes on, takes shape  
The tin foil surrounding it  
manifests its shallowness  
But deep down, you can feel something ache

This is its fate  
The duct tape binding it as one  
Forces difficulty in changing it  
All it can do is hope, and wait

## The River

*John Laceda*

This river flows only one way  
Those that follow it are at ease  
Those that don't are led astray  
Lacking the ability to agree

They are the ones that learn  
The challenges that lie ahead

They are too deep to return  
And experience existential dread

They come to a realisation  
Of their unforgivable mistake  
Their ignorant actions  
Of attempting to go against fate

## The Truth

*John Laceda*

Vast emptiness it all that is in this hot barren desert  
Food is very scarce and the nights not so pleasant  
And yet here I am traversing these endless dunes  
To which I end up stuck in this underground tomb

Here the dead rest and lay  
Corpses remain to rot and decay  
An eerie shriek further below I hear  
Desperate to escape I follow in fear

To my dismay, I uncover the truth  
The shriek from before  
A dark omen  
Foreseeing my own doom

## Normal

*Pabalavan Premareji*

His face, a ticking clock  
Drowned by lost voices  
Echoing, bellowing, chained by the lock  
That was formed from wrong choices

His voice, a screech of the chair  
That startles like a slammed door  
At the surface all seems fair  
But under his breath he just wants to be more

More like charging footsteps  
Herding together all formal  
Inside he cries for help  
Because he just wants to be normal

## Sorrow

*Pabalavan Premareji*

Greyer than a city of smog  
Duller than the clouds of fog  
It happens when you lose someone  
Friends, family and even loved ones  
It sounds like an empty room  
Silent in its unending doom  
And it smells like worn down rope  
That drowns out all joy and hope

## Headlines

*Pahalavan Premareji*

### **Murder mayhem in Metropolis**

Is orchestrated by the reckless  
Who cause criminals to become chainless

### **Living life after his lucky lotto**

Many a day ask for his photo  
To which the answer is always no

### **Charging charities who neglect causes**

Stem from people not helping those  
Who need more help than you

## Money

*Pahalavan Premareji*

Buzzing bees keen on sweet honey  
Are not unlike people greedy for money  
Flocking like flamingos  
Swarming like seagulls  
They all fight to keep the green in sight

Never mind broken bones  
And cracking backs  
All that matters is making racks

## I am music

*Pahalavan Premareji*

I am the universal language  
That plays the heart new chords  
I am the melody, that unforeseen adventure  
That causes jesters to please their lords

I am the pitter patter on rainy days  
That fills the silence of a mind in a haze  
I am the catalyst of emotion  
Happiness, sadness, anguish and scorn  
The eerie, tangible tension  
That causes a heart to be torn

But most of all I am unity  
That brings together tongues of all nations  
I cause that irresistible feeling  
That makes people dancing sensations.

## Cork

*Pahalavan Premareji*

Harbours bright as blue  
Shops and streets shining like new  
A bright living star



# Fate

*Wafiq Usman*

*after the photograph by Martina Gardiner*

With no anchor onboard, it was still a liability  
We knew there was no possibility but we had to stand by  
We could only hope for a miracle but this was reality,  
There was nothing to do, but peer into the starry sky,  
Having the wrong mentality for this fatality  
Questions exploded inside my head like fireworks at the sight

A mixture of jitters and distress ran through my blood  
identifying the possible risks but it was too late  
taking no action while I stood  
hearing a scream and knowing the worst had happened, 'great'  
fear jabbing at my insides like needles as I heard a loud thud  
What WAS happening to everyone? Were we going to have to flee or wait?  
An acrid smell of burning socks lingering

Out through the easy route I went 'why?'  
And there was a creature floundering and stumbling  
And staring up at me as if I was a mere fly.  
A terrible look of mingled fury and fear came over my face ailing  
Standing transfixed, growing smaller and smaller by the second that goes by  
like a French fry, hereby  
seeing myself reflected in those misty eyes, appalling  
'Bang' the ship then perched on top of the rocks

Lying sprawled on the ground, being withheld  
stranded on an island with no clue how to get by,  
although, like long ago, be it so  
sky so brightly blue as though it had been enamelled,

my choices lay ahead, stay or go I did not know  
my head seemed to be in complete disarray,  
with no one left and me alone, I chose to go with the flow  
accepting fate contrary to changing it to my good,  
little did I know the price I'd have to pay

## Witches

*Wafiq Usman*

Xe Denhe peered sternly everywhere  
Then, stress reflected,  
Her dewy eyes,  
He descended heedlessly,  
Resentment strengthened extremely  
She'd fled even deeper helplessly,  
"See!" detestment repleted Xe Denhe's eyes  
her resplendent green dress blended  
The dependent gentlemen, geezers everywhere dented  
Yells drenched by jeers  
The scene teemed, tenements everywhere  
She'd empty strength, empty energy,  
Eyes emerged next  
The scent, extremely repellent  
Yells were drenched by jeers -  
They'd perfectly tethered her  
Her eyes gently 'n' gently receded deeper 'n' deeper

## Run Away

*Wafiq Usman*

Staring at my problem,  
standing transfixed,  
wondering what to do,  
but I guess I could run away

Obstacles keep arising,  
getting bigger and bigger after each other  
me being blind to this,  
thinking how long the solution would take  
but I guess I could run away

Getting involved in the darkness,  
blind to the consequences,  
struggles getting tougher by the day,  
but I guess I could run away

Eventually, my hurdles becoming huge,  
Stress and worryness taking control of me  
me trying valiantly, looking to escape,  
but there was nowhere to run.....

## Exquisite Corpse

*Wafiq Usman & Classmates*

The lush vegetation hung like a canopy above my head,  
The expansive leaves invaded the space,  
Ensuring that movement would be difficult  
My smart self knew that beautiful mother nature was on my side  
How dare you she yells as cramp begins to desecrate a small tree  
The tree screams where do you think you are? A bathroom? Angrily  
And in righteous fury it smites those around it  
All hail the sword in the stone  
It was a heroic fight worth remembering

Unexpectedly joyriding the slick Royals Royce  
Strongly flexing your enormous wealth  
Stupidly hiring a hungry hooker  
Pleased smiling, the dead body  
Calmly sitting on the cold floor  
Cheerfully chewing the tasty toffees  
Unknowingly gorging on chewy toys  
Slowly walking in the fierce killer

The lush vegetation hangs like a canopy above my head,  
I brush it away and continue across the border  
Running and jumping, coming closer toward her  
Until the hidden land mine explodes loudly  
Shrapnel and bits of mortar rain down from the heavens  
To which the trumpets come blowing right after  
They were a sign of hope and were always good to hear  
Their supportive words helped her through her darker times  
She had suffered a life of depression and loneliness.

# The Disappearance

*Wafiq Usman*

Alvin rolled up his newspaper,  
Tears rushing out and clambered up the stone steps,  
throwing his caramel bar, ruefully,  
He could not believe what he had visually perceived  
Jenny had been kidnapped from within the house under serious precaution  
Every bitter and resentful thought, pouring out of him  
Being more of a hindrance than a help  
Yellow teeth baring a grin  
Giving up completely  
Without trying valiantly  
Little did he know she was taken  
From one of their own men

# Metaphors

*Lauren Murphy*

*after Simon Armitage*

Her eyes were black holes  
And her mouth was a straight line  
And her ears were cat flaps  
And her hair was a bird's nest  
She laughed and it was a dog whistle  
And her neck was a lamp post  
And her legs were oil barrels  
The palms of her hands were maps  
And her fingers were sharpened pencils  
And her footsteps were scale 5 earthquakes  
And her heart was an old, cold stone.

# Dialogue poem

*Lauren Murphy*

Happiness:

I'm here to make everyone smile

Sadness:

my job is to make life a misery.

Happiness:

life can be as happy as you want to make it.

Sadness:

no matter how hard you try you will fail.

Happiness:

I come with love and success.

Sadness:

love can make you miserable and success isn't possible without money.

Happiness:

I will make your happy times happier

Sadness:

I will make your sad times sadder.

Happiness:

your stressful times will be limited if you focus on me.

Sadness:

with me stress will consume your life.

## Computer

*Lauren Murphy*

I wake up not being able to move  
Sweaty fingers digging into me (my buttons)  
I seem to be projecting a bright light in front of me  
Boy shouting at someone not in the room  
No matter how hard I try I cannot move  
I am lying on something solid (a desk)  
Uncomfortable  
When another shout from a woman is heard  
the boy slams down my top half  
and forgets about me  
leaving me in silence.

## Sad

*Lauren Murphy*

Dull, dark and blue like the sky on a winter night.  
It happens when bad news is given  
when something you are looking forward to doesn't happen  
or when a death occurs.  
It sounds like heavy rain  
trapping you inside your house.  
It smells like burnt food  
left in the oven for too long,  
or thick smoke coming from a fire,  
sad.

## Exquisite Corpse

*Lauren Murphy & Classmates*

The happy clown was once a sad clown believe it or not.  
He always stood transfixed when something went wrong.  
And then he stood still and gazed as they burst into song.  
He's confused, lost in thought. As they sing all wrong.  
He loses his balance and falls quickly, shattering his ankle.  
And this shattering his ego and what little pride he'd left.  
He couldn't take it anymore and went to Antarctica.  
He met a penguin and went sledding and made an igloo.  
It was a crazy experience; one he would never ever forget.

## The Canvas

*Lauren Murphy*

The painting was nearly finished.  
It had taken the artist over fifteen years to finish  
which is nearly a third of his life.  
The years were like a blur though  
because of how much had happened in them  
and how much the artist had gone through.

The colourful picture was the opposite  
of the artist's dark life.  
The life size canvas took up most of his bedroom wall  
where he spent most of his time hiding away  
with only the company of his brushes.



## A Narrow Dark Alley

*Lauren Murphy*

*after the book cover by Michael Ray*

Light misty rain falls from a gloomy sky.  
Complete silence fills the filthy air.  
The narrow ledges on the wall seem to be rotting in dirt and moss.  
The smell of nearby takeaway food wafts down the alley  
and the sound of the busy people outside  
is muted by the mysterious atmosphere.  
The cold streets of New York in the afternoon  
are busy everywhere except in this alley.

The old black cat is oblivious to the outside world.  
No-one sees him and he sees no one  
except the tall mysterious man holding the umbrella above him.  
The man stands there all night and all day,  
he has no where to go.  
His black trench coat, gloves, hat and shoes  
make him almost blend in with the dirty walls.

## Cork

*Lauren Murphy*

The busy city floods  
The working people flood  
Quick chat while everyone walks

# A Book of Poetry Ideas

*Millie Quirk*

Idea 1-

Every so often the thirtieth day  
somehow of a month falls on a Friday.  
Everyone's worst fear and bad luck seem to come to life.  
Black cats creep out of dark eerie alleys.  
Magpies perch on electricity wires in groups  
waiting to be counted by passersby.  
Ladders stand idle left by builders  
That have gone on their break.

Idea 2-

The days following the hurricane the taste of saltiness  
From the sea lingered in my mouth.  
The old battered bridge was crumbling more and more  
With every minute that passed.  
The rain was belting and battering against me  
I could feel every drop seeping into my jacket.  
The bridge was old and the stone coloured and changed  
Due to the acid rain and the heavy loads travelling over it.  
The bridge with one last effort fell but it took with it  
The memories of the first bridge in the village.

Idea 3-

An idea like a flower grows and grows  
But it must be worked on hard for it to blossom  
Put together by stems or ladders  
When pen is put to paper ideas will blossom  
When ideas are ripe in the brain  
they spill onto paper  
Is the paper blank?  
Grab a ladder  
And climb until the idea blossoms

## Six Haiku

*Patrick Manning*

### *Cork haiku*

A big shopping place  
Seagulls eat up all the waste  
During the lunch rush

### *Endangered bird*

I live in a cage  
They admire my beauty  
An endangered bird

### *Depression*

I stink of despair  
The smell everyone hates  
I am depression

### *Reality*

I kill most hopes and dreams  
Even if they're possible  
Because I am reality

### *Hallucination*

Have fun now  
But it won't last  
It's just a dream

### *Tell no one*

Hide the body  
Tell no one  
It's our little secret...

# Opera

*Patrick Manning*

I was at the opera,  
Enjoying the sweet melody,  
Accompanied by the piano,  
Living in ecstasy.

A man ran to the stage,  
His face had a scar  
He pulled out a bomb  
It was the worst day of my life so far

The ambulance rushed to the scene,  
Not many survived,  
They found me in the rubble,  
I was barely alive.

It's been a year  
I look out in the rain,  
I listen to the bees buzz,  
While I try to forget the pain.

## Musical Joy

*Patrick Manning*

I am music,  
I bring joy to everyone  
I blow people away with talent  
It's what they do for fun

I am a centre of joy,  
I live to entertain,  
I express all emotions,  
Like happiness or pain.

Exposed murderer:  
Last month I killed five ladies  
They screamed and choked as if they had rabies,  
Their faces were all a bright red,  
When my mother found them all dead.

I felt like the lion king's main villain scar  
I felt like a lion who ruled from afar,  
I was jailed for life, it all happened so fast,  
Oh well, it's not, like I can change the past.

# Introduction to Poetry

*Patrick Manning*

*after Billy Collins*

I tell them to take a poem,  
And grasp it by a lamp,  
Like a prisoner,  
Stuck.

I say drop a child into a poem,  
And watch it learn and progress,

Or storm inside the poet's room,  
And search the room for a light.

I want their minds to wonder,  
Across the beauty of a poem,  
Waving at us on the shore.

But all they will do,  
Is tie a poem to a pole with a belt,  
And burn the answer out of it.

They beat it with a rock,  
To find it's true meaning.

## PTSD

*Patrick Manning*

The pain of war is portrayed,  
Like a little board game,  
The government douches yawn,  
While soldiers are used as pawns,  
There is nothing we can gain,  
when soldiers die or go insane

They made this image bright,  
To shine a bit of light,  
On the doomed soldiers' eyes,  
Until they meet their demise.

They say war can be fun,  
Not if you're shot by a gun,  
It's really full of despair,  
But the government just doesn't care.

What they do is really sick,  
As I felt this horrible trick,  
I'm really down on my luck,  
Until we win or lose I'm stuck.

Man made destruction:

I woke up and saw a spirit, who said it was a warning,  
If we don't change our ways now,  
Even Everest will be affected, by global warming.

## Reflection

*Joshua Kolawole*

I was at my friend's old house. I say old house because she had been kidnapped and murdered this time three years ago. She was a caramel-coloured small, gentle girl. Nobody, least of all her family, could believe what had happened. There was a steady stream of tears coming out of my eyes. I checked my phone through the blur. It was late enough, around half nine in the evening or so. I clambered over the partition that had been built after the unfortunate crime and left for home.

## Attempt at Alliteration

*Joshua Kolawole*

Colm Cronin caught colds plentiful, whilst  
Peter Parker picked a pepper and popped it in his mouth  
Murder mysteries are most mesmerizing usually  
Most make me squirm, make me squeal and squeak,  
Like a mouse maintaining fright, for fun however,  
I fall flat on my face when free falling and faint for a few and flail.

Flailed for a few and fainted whilst in free fall, my face fell flat  
“For fun is frightening”, maintains the mouse,  
As he is squeaking and squealing, almost squirming  
Usually mesmerized by most mysteries of murder and morose meetings  
with monsters  
It popped and longer, of peppers, said Peter  
Colm Cronin did not catch colds, the colds caught Colm Cronin.



## A Few Haiku

*Joshua Kolawole*

*bus station*

Rain hits the ground like,  
Small stones, waiting for a bus home  
I tap my card, sit, and ponder

*netflix*

Browsing, observing, reviewing  
“Violent TV Shows” or “Irreverent Comedies”?  
Too much choice, it feels like

*5:12am*

I woke up early, at 5:12am to be exact  
Instead of resuming my dream, I put it on pause  
I listened to the silence and watched the sun rise

## How to Examine a Man

*Joshua Kolawole*

*after Billy Collins*

I tell them to take a man  
and hold him up to the light  
Or press an ear to his chest and listen to his heart speak  
I say drop the man in a maze in the middle of nowhere  
and watch him try to escape  
Or put said man in a dark room and  
watch him search for a switch or handle  
I tell them to run across the man's conscience  
and call out for his soul  
But all they do is tie him to a chair and  
torture him with meaningless phrases  
and eventually get a confession out of him  
They beat him with words like whips  
And try to find out his true intentions, his true thoughts, his true dreams

## Space Slithers

*Jason Daly*

Everyone has become entangled in the mystery of the extra-terrestrial snakes  
and why they came here, They dwell in the sewer drain so beware to any  
passer-by because once you hear the slithering you know your end is near.

## News Headlines

*Jason Daly*

### **Dog with no legs has gone missing**

Parents say they're devastated the dog has gone missing they will miss the "constant barking and attention it required" other members of the family say "it's like it just got up and walked out the door".

### **Homeless man named "Rich" Wins lottery**

A frustrated man gives this homeless gentleman a lottery ticket saying "maybe you will have more luck than me," after the homeless man wins he tracks down the owner of the ticket and shares the money.

### **Armed robbers rob a gun store**

Two men decide to rob a gun store with water guns painted matte black, they were successful, as the store owner says "I didn't have anything to defend myself with".

## Depression

*Jason Daly*

Blue like my pen or the tears shed from your eyes

It happens when it starts to rain or a long lasting friendship you loved dies

It sounds like a kid crying because the others won't share

And smells like a hollowness in the air

Living your life in crippling despair

Depression

## My Kinda Lucky Day

*Jason Daly*

I climb up a ladder perched so high  
And to my surprise I see a magpie  
I scan its surroundings and what do I see  
13 big black cats at the bottom of its tree  
I pity for the bird just its luck  
I hear a noise in the distance similar to the sound of the horn on a truck  
It zoomed past the tree just missing the cats by sheer luck  
To my surprise a leprechaun came out with no hesitation he spoke  
“No dilly dally leave that bird alone and go back to your alley!”  
The cats left with no more interest in the tree  
And the magpie went to sleep ever so blissfully

## Bread

*Jason Daly*

You can get so much from a simple grain  
Just plant and wait no strain no pain  
Bread is sometimes associated with money  
But this is not for your wallet it's for your tummy  
And I know you might think this is stupid or funny  
But you would be a complete nutter  
If you bought bread without butter  
Yes you heard me I didn't stutter  
There are so many combinations and things you can combine  
Now I'm off to pray to my bread shrine

## Night For Despair

*Jason Daly*

This morning I woke up with a knife in my hand  
My head was pounding like the drums in a rock band  
The knife was stained red  
To my surprise I see a figure lying next to me in the bed  
I roll them over and to my despair it's my friend Cal  
And next to him is a fluffy figure I believe to be his god Cal  
I burst into tears and start punching my wall  
Visioning my future that is now doomed to fall

## Revenge

*Jason Daly*

After summoning my pool of lava from hades  
I hope to kill all the men, women and babies  
Sweat pouring from my head the strain and heat are empowering  
My dominance and abilities are limitless and towering  
Using my magical gifts to get my revenge  
The city will have less bodies than rocks in Stonehenge  
I wave my staff to deliver my final blow  
Everything within the walls will go

## Munch

*Jason Daly*

In my hands I have a sandwich containing ham,

chicken and 2 slices of bread

and I regret to say soon it will be dead

\*munch\*

the feeling I get eating something as simple as this fills my mind

with enjoyment and bliss it doesn't get much better than this

\*munch\*

I remember walking to the fridge getting my ham and chicken,

can't forget get the butter this sandwich is perfect where's my ribbon

The happiness that \*munch\* this brings people is intense,

to think how much you can do with this is quite immense

\*munch\*

Darn my last bite what a tragic way to end the night,

well I'll see you all some other day

Perhaps in my eulogy for my Spicy Italian Subway

\*munch\*

## The Craic

*Jason Daly*

I was strolling past the harbour in Cork City

as I heard an echo in my vicinity.

It was a busy and lively night

but I still heard the man walking out of the carry out

with beer in a 6-pack yelling

“Well cuz what's the Craic”

## Cursed?

*Ben McCarthy*

Walked under a Ladder  
Stepped into room thirteen  
Yet all things considered  
My life was quite the dream

But then I heard the rumours  
The talk of luck to worsen  
Next time I saw a black cat  
I became a different person

I ran away, my legs a blur,  
my face pale with terror  
I was scared, my mind a whirr,  
As bleak worries filled my head  
I wondered if I'm soon to be dead  
I got away from its sharp claws  
but still on edge, my instinct raw.  
I saw things that simply weren't there  
Is that a magpie, Are they not rare?

I ran again, my mind a storm  
I finally stopped, my clothes dirty and torn  
I looked up and saw a beacon of hope  
A rainbow, its coloured rays to help me cope  
Yet its bright end I never saw, no sign of any leprechauns  
I looked down at a river, and saw my reflection  
I was dirty and rough, with a crazed complexion  
I laughed at my folly, and made my way back  
Smiling with mirth at this minor setback

## Exquisite Corpse

*Ben McCarthy (with Classmates)*

Big man hunts blue whale

But Blue whale too strong

Reminding me about the extraordinary book "Moby Dick"

And the exciting adventures that lies at the vast ocean

They stumble across a drunk mermaid who is eating her live brother

He's tempted to join but his chivalry and morals are high. He yells, swims away to the youngling

The exhausted youngling makes his way to the shore and takes a gigantic breath

And survives off the course rough sand that gets everywhere through nothing but cold righteous fury

## The Egg-Man

*Ben McCarthy (with Classmates)*

They create a mould around my face

I just need to push them into place

As I continue the pressure the cartons fold

I wrap the metallic foil around the mould

I tape it together, I'm immune to harm

I repeat this process on my legs and arms

I do my torso, which is tricky

From my shoulders to my mickey

In my shell of egg cartons and foil

I look as good as an English royal

I am the egg man



## Past Perspective

*Ben McCarthy*

The food is plentiful, the water clean  
In the past this would have been the dream  
Our houses strong, our lifespan long  
Our wealth would surpass their kings

I wonder if, we showed them this  
would their Jaws drop in amazement?  
Or would they think, these high-tech tricks  
Is just some cheap entertainment?

If we showed them our machines would they believe its magic?  
Or would they think, our easy being, is just a bit too drastic?  
Would they think we're wise large sages, with a great deep education  
Or would they believe we're decadent fools, cursed with just damnation

I suppose we'll never know, if our ancestors would be proud  
But then again times moves on, they've already taken their bow  
And while I have a curiosity, imagining what they would think  
All we can do is follow them, in trying to make the future bright  
We'll make mistakes, sure they weren't saints, and we've progressed so far  
And in the end we can't pretend, we aren't this stage's final stars

## Ashton School

Poetry by

Clodagh Kelly

Lucy McManus

Adam Jere

Zaria Killian

Crystabell Sotgiu

Anonymous

Fiona Corcoran

Noreen Angozi

Elle Coves

Charlie Kitteringham

Caoimhe Neff

Assisting writer: **Roisín Kelly**

T.Y. Coordinator: **Sarah Falvey**

Workshops held in **Cork City Library**

Co-ordinating Librarian: **Eibhlín Cassidy**



During one of the final sessions with my group of students from Ashton School, I described for them a writing exercise as found in *The Poet's Companion* by Kim Addonizio and Dorianne Laux:

*Everyone of a certain age remembers where they were when John F. Kennedy was assassinated. Think about where you were when some major event occurred; write a poem that draws a parallel between something in your life and the event.*

Poetry that attempts to deal with such world-changing events, I tried to explain, makes its true impact on a micro level rather than a macro one. A poem about JFK's assassination that focuses on the incident itself might struggle to capture the almost incomprehensible scale of shock that is still associated with it. It is usually the personal realm that provides the most fertile ground for exploring such society-defining moments. What were you doing when you heard about it? What were you doing just before that? What tiny detail might suggest to the reader that all was changed, changed utterly? What detail might suggest that the world had, in fact, failed to change at all?

Thinking about it, I said that the event that first came to mind for me personally was 9/11. But ye wouldn't be old enough to remember that I suppose, I said.

I hadn't considered the possibility that none of my students had even been *born* at that point.

None of us could have known what would happen next. I certainly didn't expect to be sitting down to write this foreword in the midst of a global pandemic. How can everything have changed so absolutely, so suddenly? A month ago, during what would turn out to be our last session together, a flurry of February snow swirled outside the window. We reminisced about the blizzard two years ago that transformed Ireland to an unfamiliar country. Now my memory of that session is tinged by the new knowledge that a much more terrifying and intangible storm was even then brewing beyond the walls of the Thomas Davis room in Cork City Library.

This was the room in which, session after session, I was overwhelmed by the students' courage in committing their experiences, thoughts, and imaginations to paper, and by their bravery in reading their work aloud to the rest of their peers. Even if some poems were too painful to share, the students were always there for one another, forming a network of support and compassion against forces over which they had no control. I came away from each and every session in awe of these mature and articulate young people. But these sessions often triggered a feeling of raw vulnerability within myself. I later realised that proximity to the students was drawing forth the teenage me once again. I thought she was buried, obsolete. Yet here she was, resurfacing with all her fears and hopes and uncertainties intact. I was left with the painful reminder of just how hard it is to be a teenager. You have a long way to go before an understanding of the world comes within your grasp, but you have a range and depth of emotion that many people don't give you credit for. You are neither treated with the gentleness that a child requires, nor with the respect that an adult deserves.

Meanwhile, you are urged to look to the future for the promise of stability and security. In our last session, some of the students expressed their wish to never become an adult. There was so much they wanted to do *while* they were a teenager, and hadn't done yet, and they felt that time was running out. There was also a fear that they *wouldn't* have it all figured out within the next decade or so. As one student wrote, "To think that one day I'll wake up and I'm 30, still all over the place / The harsh world I'll have to face.' As

someone who finally got to experience at least a mild version of a lost teenage-hood in her mid-to-late twenties, this one really spoke to me. Particularly because I happened to turn 30 in the midst of our sessions.

However, I would much rather have to deal with this harsh world at the age of 30 than come of age in the strange new reality that has since swept over us. I hope the students are okay. I hope they still have a chance to exert their right to emotional exhilaration and giddy irresponsibility. During this paradoxical hibernation, in Ireland's springtime when everything else is beginning to wake up, I hope they will remember this lesson: that writing has the power to transform even painful experiences and emotions into something precious. Poetry is the painted veil that hangs between us and the suggestion of elsewhere.

For now, I am so honoured to introduce these poems by the Ashton students, with their distinct voices and their subjects ranging from love poetry to pastoral (which in the housebound quarantine era has taken on a particular poignancy), from the dreamworld to the political. We looked at work by Kim Addonizio, Lauryn Hill, Gary Soto, Philip Levine, and John Agard. They wrote song lyrics, raps, poems in the style of Rupi Kaur, and personal essays. They wrote the stories of themselves. Perhaps someday they will be the voices that record the tiny everyday details that have already defined our daily existence at the dawn of a new era. And they might yet address an issue that remains unchanged both in spite of and within the ever-shifting spectrum of pandemics, climate change, and social injustice: how to grow up.

**Roisín Kelly**

# Poems

Ashton School



## Untitled

*Clodagh Kelly*

when the blackened moon  
aligned with the concrete crust  
and your sight dimmed  
for the last time  
the database birds  
and metal smiles  
looked almost true  
something in the wind  
reminded the humans of what they were  
computer glitch  
system error  
are you more alive up there?

## Dad

*Clodagh Kelly*

the pomelo moon glistened  
and the frothy beer poured  
away from it all  
we strolled down the winding path  
'You know, if I could have a daughter, it wouldn't be you.'  
laughter erupted in the moonlight  
'same goes for you Ian'  
in the distance I began to hear  
the intoxicated shouts  
of the man I never knew  
and truth was  
I never wanted that stone path to end.

## Purgatory

*Clodagh Kelly (co-written with Bobby Abern)*

I'm on an empty staircase, where you once sat. thoughts were fought for by  
the devil and angel til' lucifer claimed me as his grand title

Unsettling yes, the flames spread into my lonely head. If only for lovers and  
dreamers and fools would I be back behind that razor blade where my wrists  
would slit instead.

Silly goose my mother would say, a good deed keeps the nightmares at bay, if  
only I listened I could've foreseen the fluorescent lights that closed the doors  
of my mind.

I could've been ascending the stairway, with my thoughts trickling behind.

?

*Clodagh Kelly*

I sit alone in my room

at 3:42 a.m.

tears smudged in my eyes as I read the text

he never cared

he was never there for you

every beauty you saw in him

never really existed

it was a reflection of what you wish he were

and I wonder to myself is everyone like this too

or if it's just myself, that I'm truly unlovable

I pick up my pen and write

I am alone. 3 times

And realise that is the only truth

I have left

## Charlie <3

*Clodagh Kelly*

blueberries bitter  
cigarettes burn  
the world forgot you long ago  
the red lines on your skin  
the hurt in your eyes  
never controlled you  
sweet as the honey  
that drips from the moon  
you are the most beautiful person  
I have ever met  
for you are drowned in darkness  
but bring me the sun

## Ode to Sappho

*Fiona Corcoran*

I shall travel to find the sweetest violets,  
Ones deserving of your grace,  
Their delicate scent caught in  
The wind gone by.

I will weave them into a crown  
To place upon your head  
To protect you from the world  
Outside the safety of our haven.

A Sapphic sign of my pure adoration.



# Mythomania

*Fiona Corcoran*

Perhaps the most dangerous lies,  
Are the ones we tell ourselves,  
Those that blind not only our eyes but our mind

Our vision becomes so clouded,  
That we are unable to differentiate  
Between destruction and beauty,  
Especially when they collide.

Lies blur the lines from black to white  
And makes us unsure of who is good and bad  
Because anyone can lie.

It's all too easy to let words tangle  
Out of our mouths in anger or spite  
And suffocate others in a nonchalant manner.

Lies are stories used to justify your actions,  
To convince you that you are in the right,  
When deep down you know it is all wrong.

Often by the time people realise this, it is too late.  
The toxic nature of a lie is designed  
To slowly choke you, until it is more than you can bear.

Until you are tied up in a web  
That you have unknowingly laced together yourself.

## Komorebi

*Fiona Corcoran*

As I cycle through the woods,  
I look up at the canopy above me.  
The warm buttery sunshine  
Glides along my arms  
As my bike slices through the air  
Soft breeze drift through  
The chestnut leaves,  
Welcoming that familiar rustling.

The forest orchestra is tuning up.  
The Song of Connemara

Deep in the wild of Connemara,  
A new song is being sung.  
A duet between two lovers;  
Wind and sea.

Creating crashing waves  
Together in perfect harmony.

On the surface of water,  
Barely skimming the deep  
Or the peak of a mountain,  
I am complete.

Copper brown leaves starched  
Crisp from the departing heat  
Like a blanket of autumn  
Under the soles of my feet.

I dream of gusts of wind  
Billowing through my hair  
Drilling the cold into my bones  
Ensuring I feel the absence of sun

I think of the many misshapen clouds  
That drifted across the sky,  
Casting vast shadows onto the land below  
And threatening rainfall.

I miss the familiar sway of the trees,  
Guarding us like silent sentries.  
I still remember the smell of petrichor  
And the salty tang of the sea.

I fall to sleep with thoughts of Connemara,  
Take me back to the countryside  
And leave me resting under  
The clear starry night once more.

## Eudaimonia

*Fiona Corcoran*

Sometimes I can't help but wonder  
If I was as ignorant as some have been  
Would my life have lost ever reminder  
Of our earth and its charms—  
Sweet and bitter?

But maybe that would be better,  
Not feeling anything at all.  
Rather than feel any pain,  
To rid myself of all emotion—  
Good and bad.

Maybe it's cruel to be happy  
When so many people are hurting  
And happiness makes it easy to forget  
Lessons taught by time.

When society proclaims that Icarus flew,  
But doesn't care that he has since fallen.  
Looking only at their reflection in the water,  
Dismissing what lies beneath the surface.

Happiness can make people grow cold,  
They become so addicted to euphoria  
That they push away those in need.  
Not wanting to empathise.  
Because if you care, you risk getting hurt.  
And it's so much easier to  
Avoid eye-contact with those  
Begging on the streets  
Or change the channel  
When the news comes on  
And shut ourselves away from pain.

Because isolation as a defence mechanism  
Seems so much more appealing,  
Than leaving our first world bubbles of safety  
And being forced to face the reality  
That our world, is broken.

# Technicolour Sky

*Fiona Corcoran*

Shades of sunset flooding the skyline  
The last sliver of gold bleed  
Across the horizon.

Blankets of bleak grey clouds  
Clash with the light  
Making a sharp incision  
In the hues of azure and crimson

Teardrops scatter down  
From the alluring sky above;

Now new colours are introduced  
To the palette

And ethereal beams of rainbow  
Arc over the world below  
Before dispersing into nothing  
But a soft haze

An echo of the colours  
Etched into my brain.

The once vivid pigments  
Fade fast as the night wears on,  
The colours tiring

And resigning themselves to  
A monotonous black that  
Lingers until the break of dawn

Once more I am forced to say  
Adieu to the technicolour painting  
Gone all too quickly.

## Thoughts of stars

*Fiona Corcoran*

I like to think of stars as memories,  
Fragments of the universe  
Scattered across the sky.

Maybe we're all just as broken as each other  
And we're just waiting to be reformed as stars.

Our shattered pieces are all unique  
Yet sometimes we forge a connection  
And fit together like pieces of a puzzle  
Or a beguiling mosaic.

Perhaps when we die we become  
Bright echoes of who we once were  
And our delicate sins are absolved  
Leaving only our innocent hopes behind.

So with our darkness purged from us  
In the moment of everlasting night,  
We begin to look not at good and evil

But only at the other idyllic stars painted  
On this infinite ceiling around us.

# Orange

*Anonymous*

To me, orange is the colour of change  
It represents the freedom of life outside a cage  
Other colours around it themselves rearrange  
Orange is the ruler of everything in sight  
It itself is what brings colour to life  
As it's the deliverance of light  
It represents an activeness, goes down but full of fight  
Its presence neverending continues to ignite  
Orange is the colour of prosperity not less  
It is sun. It is god. It is unforgivably the best.  
It is ceasefire, powerful from compromise,  
Given reign in an hour where true balance lies.  
It shows us everything.  
Everything is orange in a sense of its trace  
Without orange earth would be a colourless face  
Nature does not recognise it  
For wherever it shows land is lit  
Eyes follow orange as it is an anomaly  
Something you have to pay attention to, a mandatory homily.  
It is a compromise between greats  
The meeting of anticipated fates  
It signals the end and the beginning  
Whether sun or stars are winning

## North Main Street

*Anonymous*

The other day I heard somewhere that as humans we move in and out of buildings and call them ours when in reality, we belong to them. All I mean is that the average human lives to be about 79 and during that time they are expected to move house 11 times whilst the houses we live in are expected to last over 200 years. We are the variable in the equation whereas the houses are the constant, we are a part of the houses' lives rather than the other way around.

I have lived on North Main Street for almost 15 years and while I think I know everything about the street and its inhabitants, really the street itself is the only thing that can know everything, and since it can't talk I can only give my own experience. I don't remember anything from my first year living on the street, I've been told that I moved around my 1st birthday so I got to have a birthday in Dublin and another one in Cork. The lift in my apartment block was broken at the time so my uncle and granddad single-handedly moved all of our stuff up the four flights of stairs.

My mum fell in love with the city, so we adopted it, however not everyone was nice. Around age 4 was when I started to realise that passers-by looked at my mum and me in ways that weren't always friendly. I asked my mum why this was and she replied by pointing at the man with the pink mo-hawk who was crossing the road. She said, "Look at him, see how because his hair stands out people will look at him? It's not because he's a bad person, it's just because people aren't used to seeing bright pink hair."

Around that same time, our local pub closed down. Le Cheile had become a Friday tradition. We would go every Friday to hear the band play. We would sit at the bar while the barman entertained me giving me gifts and free food. When the pub closed we looked for another place for Fridays, we tried out a café below the flat which seemed nice enough till I broke a cup and the owner made some comments to my mum that weren't really related to the fact that



I had broken a cup. After that, Fridays became Dunnes days where my cousins and I would test our independence by getting Friday treats on our own which we would bring back to the flat and feast on. We were often joined by friends from school and neighbours. It was my neighbours Fatima and Sumaya who taught me the trick of throwing water over the side of the building onto the heads of passers-by below. After some years this developed into a new year's activity where we would wait for the drunken partiers to stumble out from the pub and we could then confuse them by shouting from above where they couldn't see us.

It was with Fatima and Sumaya that I formed my first band with. The band was called big mix. We consisted of a recorder, a tambourine, a flute and a violin. We tried busking, but nobody gave us money. We even drew posters on the walls in our buildings but nobody came to our gigs. Instead we got in trouble with our mums for having marked the walls. It was while hiding from our mums that we discovered the sanctuary, the fire escape. The fire escape is an old rusty staircase that leads to the ground floor. It is the same fire escape that the screen rooms from the cinema below have access to. This means that while down there you can hear snippets of the films. It's totally deserted as you have to break glass to access the key. While down there, we discovered that it was haunted. The ghost of Ibeam left his signature for us to find and he often made crashing and booming noises as he tried to batter us. In reality his "signature" was actually the words *1 beam* which was written by a builder on a plank of wood that had been left there. The noises Ibeam was making were actually the crashes and booms that came from within the cinema.

I had my first heartbreak when Fatima and Sumaya moved house and I was on my own for the first time since my previous neighbour Oba returned to Tripoli. I had my second heartbreak when Dunnes Stores closed and I had to

buy overpriced junk in Daybreak instead. Eventually Lidl arrived but that became my fourth heartbreak because it had a bakery and 4 months after its arrival I'd gained two stone. Sadly, water was not the only thing to fly off the fourth floor, I had my fifth heartbreak when my cat Ginny leapt from the building on her 3rd suicide attempt. The cinema workers were on a fag break below so one of them, in an attempt to revive her, administered CPR. It wasn't of any use however as my poor baby had hit a bike rack on the way down. All of these heartbreaks were resolved once a month on Thursday night payday, when my mum would take me to our favourite restaurant Currans.

These are just a few memories that North Main Street has served as the setting for. While the street may not seem like much, none of these incidents or activities that have made up my childhood could have happened if I lived in a different place. I used to feel embarrassed when I told others I lived in an apartment but now I understand how nice it is and how lucky we are to live there. I wouldn't live anywhere else in the world.

## A Moment in History

*Anonymous*

When I was quite small, I got a lot of curious and sometimes negative attention. My first proper memories of loving attention were from dance. I used to do dance and drama and I thought I was exceptionally talented. This confidence in my abilities came from the fact that within my first year of starting at the dance school, I was cast as a lead in my class's performance. The next year the same thing happened. I had been cast as Tiana in *The Princess and the Frog* and as Queen Latifah in *Hairspray*. Getting cast as these leads

was a huge boost to my ego and as a result I thought myself one of the most talented dancers in the world. While I may have been a good dancer, the reason I got both roles was because in my dance school of two hundred or so pupils I was the only ethnic kid.

Irish television at the time had the same colour palette as my dance school. At the time, the TV we had at home was a box TV and it only picked up the five poverty channels meaning that before Netflix my TV consisted of RTE1 and 2, RTE Junior, TG Cathair and RTE. These were all very very white channels.

My mum made sure to buy me books and DVDs that featured black leads but none of these films or books were written by Irish authors or set in Ireland. They were basically all American so that led to me viewing diversity as a foreign concept, not something that would be achieved in Ireland during my childhood. I considered it my responsibility to create diversity by growing up and getting on telly. When the Toy Show came on and there was another year of total whiteness, I'd think maybe next year I'll sign up and then they won't all be white. I didn't consider promoting diversity the responsibility of the makers of the TV show, I considered it mine. I thought that when I grew up then I'd get a job in the telly and then the problem would be totally solved. This was not a healthy thought process for any child to go through when they switched on the TV.

The lack of diversity on Irish telly really was a problem and it influenced my generation's experience. Because I guess this generation and the 10 years before us are the first generation of children from African, Eastern European and Asian countries to be born in Ireland. Of course there were others before us but only in the late 1990s did African people start to migrate to Ireland in greater numbers. Even though there were always Africans in Ireland we have

really been the first generation of black or mixed race kids to grow up with friends who also come from those backgrounds.

The lack of diversity on TV meant that those of us who were not white Irish were constantly subjected to a series of pointless and often hurtful questions due to the curiosity factor. The fact that RTE decided to ignore the issue of diversity in its many children's shows was wrong as it denied itself an opportunity to introduce diversity, equality and anti-racism concepts to children at a young age. RTE Junior ignored the diversification of its audience and chose to represent Ireland as it was 20 years ago instead of the Ireland it was now. The adults who controlled the public service broadcaster had the opportunity to make life easier for us and educate our peers and their parents during their leisure time—when instead they left the educating to us. This may seem unrelated to the main point but I promise I'm getting there. You see as a child I wanted to be an actor or a dancer or just something on TV. I thought that by the time I was good enough to get on telly, RTE would have opened up a spot just for me which was of course ridiculous and delusional. I guess I was just following the principles of my dance school in that they saw my arrival as an opportunity to incorporate tokenistic diversity into their shows and dress it up as inclusion.

The Rose of Tralee is one of RTE's biggest televised events year in and year out. I've never actually watched the Rose of Tralee through, because it's not something either my mum or I could stick through, but in 2018 for some reason my mum had the TV on at the start and I happened to be in the room. It was the same as usual, basically a load of white girls, so I just left the room and my mum changed the channel. The next morning however, my mum called out my name and looked up from her phone to smile at me. She was holding up her phone to show me the winner of the Rose of Tralee, I think I must have scoffed at her at first because well I couldn't care less, but

then I actually saw the picture and I realised that the winner, Kirsten Kate Maher, was mixed, like me.

A mixed race girl had won the Rose of Tralee. Irish people had voted for a mixed girl to win their competition. I was actually in mild shock, I didn't want my mum to know how surprised I was because it seemed sad to be happy about such a small thing but I went into my room and just let it sink in. It just felt like such a monumental moment for me because I never ever would have even believed the possibility of Irish people voting for someone with her colour skin.

At that time I was 14 years old, and I no longer wanted to be a dancer or an actor and after that it no longer seemed so important for me to be on TV because since that day I started to notice more and more televised black and mixed actors and actresses on RTE. People like Ruth Negga were being recognised for their outstanding performances. While people were saying 'Oh, her father is from wherever ...' they were also saying she was Irish. The same year there was a black Irish dancer on the Late Late Toy Show. I am not trying to say that Ireland only started to represent its diversity in 2018, I'm only saying that's just when I started to notice it and how important that was to me at the time. When I was younger and I pictured my future, it would always be me in a room full of white people, which was based on my experience at the time. It wasn't realistic but I never felt things would change.

I no longer want to be a dancer, but I still want to go into television and be a journalist. I do think that RTE should diversify its staff more as the only back news anchor I've seen on Irish telly is Zainab Boladale on Nationwide. But I do believe that if fingers crossed I get to work there, I won't be the only ethnic representation. I believe that by then hopefully RTE will look a little more like BBC.

# Some Things are Worth Fighting For

*Anonymous*

First time I saw a picture of my dad  
Was the same day I noticed fathers were things that most kids had  
See he missed the heat, the sun and course his mum so birthdays and first  
days were things to which he couldn't come  
Maybe aged 10 I realised that it didn't all add up  
A scar an affidavit and mum's knowing looks  
Clues.  
He was missing cause of bruises not because of excuses  
But I didn't want to know so I pretended delusion  
When mum brought it up I allowed confusion  
I preferred arrogance to the knowledge of two fists  
He used his.  
Violence instead of kisses  
A "no" instead of "yes I'll be your missus"  
Wrong answer. Bam. Hit to the head.  
Still lucky poor mum didn't end up cold dead  
Changes had to be made  
Visitation hours started to fade  
So mum set about devoting herself to my dreams and wishes  
Spoiled me for guilt over crashing plates and dishes  
But nobody's perfect  
And love is unconditional  
So know I'll always love you  
But of excuses I'll have none  
I understand that some things are worth fighting for.

## The Hate U Give

*Lucy McManus*

Did you think it was just a toy gun?

Did you think it wouldn't kill him?

Did you think they'd just bounce off,

When the bullets hit him?

Did you see his eyes grow wide? Did you see him start a-swaying?

When he lay lifeless on the ground, did you think he was just playing?

Did you think he could have killed you? Did you think he had a gun?

Did you think he could have shot you, when he was on the run?

Did you know he was just 16, when you pulled the trigger back?

Was it all in self defense?

Or was it just cos he was black?

## Douglas

*Lucy McManus*

Ok, but Douglas, what's going on,

Tesco's burned down, the cinema's gone?

Douglas is changing but let's face it, it's true

If you want a KC's you'll still have to queue.

# Legacies

*Noreen Angozi*

Thought Process.

I can't believe I'm only now realising how important these moments are,

To think right now I'm just living life each day without truly living life

All because I think the future is far

To think that one day I'll wake up and I'm 30, still all over the place

The harsh world I'll have to face

My childhood gone without a trace and the impacts of the decisions my  
teenage years pushed me to make

Mistakes?

I'll never know 'til they come back to bite me or help me

It's a make or break situation I suppose

Things I know

Who will she become?

Heck, who will I become?

I guess only time will tell.

We like to think we are in full control of how everything turns out

But no, life plays us all and makes us think it's on us

Just an on-going game of heads or tails,

The lucky one gets it all before the penny rusts,

Skin turns to dust,

And someone else continues the legacy we built or at least tried to build

Remembered,

That's what I want to be

But that's something many others will simply repeat

So I need to live my life for me, not for you but for me

So one day when I go to rest,

Life no longer in my chest

I'll get to rest, most importantly in peace



## Untitled 014

*Noreen Angozi*

I find myself holding back on showing emotion.  
Maybe I'm just afraid I'll cause a commotion or bother you with the little  
details of how I'm truly feeling  
I guess I'm just afraid that one day my problems will finally hit the ceiling  
I can only bottle them up for so long before the bottle breaks  
An earthquake, full of emotion  
Every emotion I've ever felt  
Every person I've ever loved  
Every tear that bought a new reason as to why I'm not good enough  
Every smile I've ever smiled  
Real or false  
Every feeling that words simply can't recreate,  
I wanna fly like a bird,  
Soar high, then higher  
Away to a haven where I can serenely retire  
But for now I got to stay caged in a persona that'll change as I age,  
Just act like it doesn't bother me until I find another blank page.

## Archives

*Noreen Angozi*

My favourite sport, one that proves to be dangerous and heart-breaking  
Jumping to every conclusion other than what obviously lies in front of me

Minimal

The smallest problem becomes hours of worrying

A needle so easily transformed to a dagger

The smallest seed watered by thoughts

Creating the ugliest flower yet the flower that garners the most attention

I don't get why that's how it is

You can't de-program what you are, right?

I'm no robot, it's evident in the amount of emotion I show

Good or bad but then again, what can determine that?

"You do not have to be good" but what's good and what's bad?

I can't fathom what's wrong with that logic

If I overthink so much that it kills me eventually, what's good in that?

Thoughts are therapeutic but these,

These thoughts, they're poisonous

Slowly adding more poison to my IV drip

Killing me slowly and painfully

Making me rot

Years and years' worth of things I should've forgot

Archived in my memory

## Rose-Tinted Window

*Noreen Angozi*

Perhaps the rose-tinted window he views me from has begun to grow dull  
Perhaps I need to step away from the window sill, but to gaze at him  
through this light is just so blissful  
Even when I ultimately change scenery to admire winter as though it were a  
spring day,  
He will remain beautiful, so it's him I suppose, not my window of rose tint,  
it's him  
He is the rose that creates beauty in all that surrounds him

## Unexpected

*Noreen Angozi*

A pair  
Our friendship so likely yet unlikely  
Two very different personalities at first glance,  
But put them side by side and I can tell you're just like me  
Maybe not exactly but a couple similarities  
Somehow we work in harmony, I don't get it  
I guess at first I thought I hated you  
But it's a lot deeper than that  
Honestly I don't know why and that's a matter of fact  
To be exact, you're not my role model  
But man I look up to you  
And no, I don't want you to take this as some dramatic ego boost  
Last year, we were strangers  
This year, not so much  
So I guess thank you for wandering over at lunch

## Dear Sunrise

*Noreen Angozi*

Tongue-tied,  
An array of words perfectly yet imperfectly laid out  
My mind tangled between fact and fiction  
My heart, for it knew only love's bitter peak  
An adventurer looking for something more  
Sunrise,  
Its orange hues met my tired gaze  
Awakening something I only longed for  
It's warmth, it's familiarity, but still a feeling I never knew  
Could it be you dear Sunrise that brings my ever fleeting joy something  
more to hold on to?  
All the earth wishes they could claim you as their own  
But to me, in my heart  
I know you are mine  
And every morning your beauty I will come to behold

## Achill Island

*Noreen Angozi*

Take me back to the place where my soul resides  
Where heaven meets the earth  
Where peace truly can be restored  
The only place I've ever really adored  
Take me back to the sunkissed shore  
Still so radiant during autumn's tedious reign  
Decorated ever so delicately by footsteps frozen in time  
Take me back to the place where the wind carries the sea's hopeful song  
And all things in life can be made new

## Sandcastle friendships

*Noreen Angozi*

I love sandcastles

They come and they go

You build them, have fun with them

Almost build a connection with them

And then they wash away.

They remind me of certain friendships I've had over the years.

The ones that you work hard to create

Go out of your way to maintain a bond

All because in their presence you just felt like you belonged

Then you start building,

Then you add the secrets and memories,

The love and the laughter

And then the surprises, you never quite know what they're after

But you know it's something you love

But then as quickly as the tide rolls in, they're gone

You can't explain why

They're just gone

Maybe it's for the best

But the memories of those friendships

I'll always hold close to my chest

## D.P.S

*Adam Jere*

So we calling ourselves the dead poet society  
Gotta love the irony  
Well maybe, we all going to heaven if people keep trying me  
Book your one way ticket all golden like Ezekiel  
Or King Midas my touch could corrode through all people  
Baptized in evil so I always had a taste for blood  
Captured by a nice family who tried to show me love  
I just blocked them out can't hear them we all slaves to temptation  
Managed to take them with me they were just the demonstration  
Of my mass incarceration of faith  
You call it sacred  
I thought it was too until I lost all of my patience  
My Grandmother and Father and even my fucking pastor  
It seems the high plan is just a damned disaster  
I try to hold the Darkness in but sometimes it gets past my pigment  
Settles in my skin and I start to get malicious  
Shoots out at others I try to point it at myself  
Caught the bullet pull up the hoodie don't bother asking for help  
We just 12 poets in a circle nah let me make a quick correction  
11 poets and one demon trying to calm his hell bent direction

# Untitled

*Adam Jere*

I'm insecure to a whole nother level  
I'm so worried that it's fucking up my mental  
Who will I be the man or the kid  
Either way I'm still messing up shit  
I worry about things that never happen  
I'm so nervous will I cause her any damage  
I'm embarrassed bout this weight that I carry on myself  
I could drown and I would never cry for help  
It's so real to me  
I'm gone rise above this man you gone see  
but else finna toast in my victory  
I'm all alone look what this one bitch did to me  
This vulnerability has grown toxic  
So I built up these gates you gone need a locksmith  
You can't save me from me I'm my own hostage  
I kidnap myself when I feel positive

# Melodies

*Adam Jere*

I keep on hearing these melodies  
Count them out so I guess they a part of me  
In a second they gone have to jumpstart they gone tear me apart to put a  
cease to my misery  
I'm just kidding what the hell has gotten into me  
I want attention like a diamond centrepiece  
See the happiness dripping off me like a chain but it's all just a game cause  
this painting a frame  
A perfect image that you leave corrupt with just a touch  
If the world's problems they always get to us  
But they never fucking cared for us they just labelled me dangerous  
Got no one to trust  
Cept for myself  
But I guess nobody else gone jump to the abyss  
What the fuck am i supposed to do with this gift  
I think I'm gonna let it fucking rot in the pit  
Pit of my emotions where nobody comes to open up my soul just a lot of  
kind words spoken  
Spoken to no avail  
Can you help me  
Get over this shit  
Don't forget me  
I swear to god one day you won't escape  
All your friends are always gonna play me  
And your just gonna have to love to hate me  
Until then assume I'm crazy



# Cheap Coffee

*Adam Jere*

Cheap coffee

Me and you chilling

Everything is all good till I start overthinking

It's crazy how I can mess up situations in fear of what could happen

But you're still here

Sticking right to my right content in staying there

My new biggest fear

Is losing you to something that I said

And today that nearly happened on accident

Imagine then

If we argue and I pop a fuse

I hate to lose in more ways than one

But there is no winning in this game we begun

Keep looking up don't you ever look down

Cause then you are looking at me no smoke screens around

Rose tinted windows

blessed to renew

Impressions of a pessimist pressed in pressure pulled out and pulverized

# Love Hatred

*Adam Jere*

Sometimes I love to see you at your lowest point  
Cause around other people you just hold fake hope  
The real you is so far away from the you you choose to display  
I'm wondering how long can you keep up the charade  
Wake up in the morning like is today the day  
Smiling from ear to ear hoping that maybe you will implode today  
But I won't bug you for it I'll just let happen and hope that in the end you  
cause damage  
Fighting with a sense of empathy and rage let it out  
Doesn't feel do good when you embrace the pain and shout  
Your stomach's turning but you ain't hungry for food you starving for terror  
You speak out when the nice guy disappears and causes the horror  
We've been missing for like half a year  
Who gives a fuck about friends  
That shit always comes to an end  
Better you pull the trigger then wait for someone else to hit you in the chest  
Crying in the corner thinking maybe you weren't the best  
This world is kill or be killed  
the sooner you learn that the sooner we can get back to our thrills  
Look at you all positive all happy all good  
I'm glad we are past the woes don't be misunderstood  
But if we chilling living with nothing to complain about  
Please tell me what in the fuck are we gonna write about  
in positivity  
Back up before we all combust you know how it does  
My head returns to earth so I'm gonna take a sip  
Steaming cup of tranquillity up to my lips  
Stare into my eyes they race around like a marathon  
But stop to a break whenever you are greeting them

8 a.m.

*Elle Coves*

seems to me  
everything's new  
I'm still me  
but you're not you  
the world keeps spinning  
while I'm trapped in last year's —  
memories;  
they're haunting me  
I keep them in the pocket of my jeans  
to reminisce,  
whenever I feel lonely

8 a.m.

waiting for the bus to come  
wishing you'd pick up your phone  
for once in a while

Friday night and it's getting so late  
you're out with her  
while I sit and wait  
for you  
but you're not around  
keep letting me down  
I can see it in your eyes  
you've made a mistake  
I'm sorry love but now it's way too late  
for you  
I'm sick of being around when you keep letting me down

I can't seem to get you off my mind  
no matter how hard I try

## blue (I miss you)

*Elle Coves*

I miss the days we would stay up until three  
talking about boys and watching Modern Family  
and after all maybe we weren't meant to be  
if it's only taken you a year  
to forget me  
of course I never expected you to cry yourself to sleep each night  
and I want you to be happy  
but I'm happy when you hold me tight  
I guess that somewhere down the line  
we forgot to remember  
and moved on with our lives  
which is fine,  
I'll be alright  
I just wasn't ready to let go  
close that chapter in my life

tell me what to do  
If I can't get you out of my head  
and I feel so blue  
I miss you  
I miss you

and since we're being honest here  
I must confess  
almost every song I've written has been for you  
I feel like such a mess  
I'd rather be anywhere else  
than in this empty room  
where I'm just a ghost to you

It's like I'm not really here  
you see right through me and it  
kills me  
fills me  
with fear  
to see just how replaceable I can be  
I don't understand it  
how I wasted too many tears  
when you never really cared

## cada vez

*Elle Coves*

cada vez que te miro  
vuelvo a caer,  
eres fuego que arde,  
vuelvo a nacer  
cada vez que te busco  
no te dejas ver  
cuando consigo olvidarte  
vuelves a aparecer  
vuelves  
una, otra vez

say

*Elle Coves*

I've been hiding

I've been trying to hold back

all that lying always gets you off track

oh I've been running,

I've been running away,

from all the things that I was too scared to say

trust me I've been trying to fight it

but it gets harder every time

so I'll say what I've been wanting to say

you know it's on the tip of my tongue

won't try to hold it in any longer

say it if I mean it, I'll regret it if I leave it

I spent so much time trying to hide the truth

what do you have,

what do you have to say?

what if everything we have fades away?

believe me I've been trying to fight it

but it gets harder every time

say

what I've been wanting to say

you know it's on the tip of my tongue

won't try to hold it in any longer

say it if I mean it, I'll regret it if I leave it

I'll just say what I've been wanting to say  
you know it's on the tip of my tongue  
won't try to hold it in any longer  
I'll say it if I mean it, I'll regret it if I leave it

spent too much time trying to hide the truth  
that I just keep on falling  
for you

## paradise poetry

*Elle Coves*

I said: "take me away, on this rainy day. I want to leave this place,  
let's escape"  
so you took me to paradise  
and I watched the sunlight turn your eyes  
into the bluest shades of Caribbean seas

## start again

*Elle Coves*

still think about the time  
you told me you were mine  
I thought we would never be apart  
and as the seasons change  
you're in a different place  
and every time you leave you break my heart  
but somehow you come back again  
every time  
and all all hurt and guilt and pain are left behind

I want to start over again  
I want to start over again  
because every single time that we get closer  
I think about the way I used to hold you  
start over again  
I want to start over again  
because every single time that I get closer  
that's when you turn around and give me closure

and every time we touch  
it all gets too much  
and all my doubts come rushing in  
I can't take the pain  
of losing you again  
but I just can't stay away

still think about the time  
you told me you were mine  
I thought we would never be apart



## Kiss of Light

*Zaria Killian*

The sun that rolls through the sultry sky  
Is captured in a jar of honey  
She neither hastens nor resists arrival of the souging autumn night  
Youth elemental within her hearty core  
Like the swift grass and the fibre of wheat  
the waves that kiss the smoothly shore  
She's playful in the heat  
The inimical frost of twelve has come  
She all too softly saw  
Till now she drank the Spring rills of the icy winter thaw

## Snake's nest in a mouth

*Zaria Killian*

An old man leans on his cane and observes  
He sees a dog's snout sniffing through rubbish.  
Slobbering through arteries and blooded nerves  
Fur cluttered on its rough tongue  
Clogging his pus-stained, rotted and infected lung  
Garbage on the slimy pavement looked like soggy fabric  
A world in which life is governed by filth and senseless tactic  
Who knew stupidity could raise such fearful phantoms  
That brainwash stadiums to chant vile and barbaric anthems  
People possessed with demented mania of gluttony and greed  
No empathy supplied by starving screams of deafening plead  
He feels the conformity of hunger twitching at his hands that shake  
Tries. But can't dismiss the relishing thirst of cannibalistic steak.

## Scent of Stars

*Zaria Killian*

While the Honey coloured moon hangs in the dusty air  
The blistered paint crusts at the light of the evening stare  
Only sleepy and tranquil, came to all I saw  
Like balm on a wound, one fleshy and raw  
Married to the stars of astrological serene  
Carry the frankful history of earth in the eye of between  
All years in existence of a contradicting tune  
The city asleep, as I ponder over the moon  
Waves captured by a convex of emotions wash over me  
The life of the stars, the Withdrawal of the Sea

## The Art student

*Zaria Killian*

Golden warm is the sun in which she lies  
Her thoughts arranged like paint on high cloudless skies  
The intake of delicate sniffs of the grassy breeze  
The gentle humming of insects and wild honeybees  
The sound of trickling sap of maple in the old oak  
Feelings of fruitfulness this all does provoke  
Dusty sketchpads in shelves captured of the sight  
Of the rolling green Farm countryside  
Her jacket bundled underneath her head  
Pondering of all her emotions that she leaves unsaid  
She is an entity of things accomplished and a potential of things to be  
Only now can she feel this, in the sun's golden melody

## Hail to Earth

*Zaria Killian*

As the world wakes and creation begins to live in rhyme to the placid light of  
the sun.

Fists massage the gum out of swollen eyes

and pastels encompass the essence of the icy, pallid skies

Rhyme to the clouds that begin to glide across grass like doves,

And rhyme to a razory wind that tangles within all of matter

That dries the moistened roots of the earthy garden satyr

As the chalk white curtains scrape flutters in a whisperly reply

Evoke the influx of inner contentment within the only internal my

Rhyme to strangling ivy, keeper of milky, and ripened petals that die at its grip  
with languid grace

Similarly to the wilted, crisp ones choked within the greasy window and  
clustered table

Rhyme to the bird that patters in the shattered flower vase

Who will eventually return to its fissure in the gable

All which we don't see, but consider sawn

Would trail us to alignment of the earth,

Coax us to the vapour of the dawn

## Forgotten

*Zaria Killian*

The same rain that fell on battlefields now soaks the moss

The landscape differs but still present of loss

The same exact sky of the gloomy lit night

The same vapour cloud, the same play of light

The same family of moths that still scower the place

Flutter within history, of lives that unlaced

## Trick with their march

*Zaria Killian*

When pleasure is found in the grace of dying things  
The malversation of mankind and earth then begins.  
When the faultless raised and brought to life by loving birth  
Are now scorched ankle deep by the blistering filthy earth  
Boiled and crusted as they spit bones onto the mud  
Prowl through tangled bodies and clotted blood  
As kings tramp their perpetual journey forever long  
As they march the parade to their own devious song.

When the money steals instead of the stealer,  
When the drugs deal instead of the dealer  
Nobody will hear the roucous screams that don't encompass volumes out of  
us anymore  
As faces are bitten by vermin and worms infected with lies to our deepest  
core.

When the twitching lips press lightly to the forehead of the last soul dying  
This is when a remedy of the cure will start finally clarifying  
And people will be awakened  
But it's too late, for the maggots and rotten blood awaits  
Due to the rich Republics and populous States  
The earth is lost and comes an age for empty goodbyes as the world engulfs  
into a jet black sunrise  
This fate is saturated with the filthiest sorrows  
Throbs me to gulps of the furthest down horrors  
Then life is lost and death to springs  
For everything be scorched by the ferocity of Kings.

## Home

*Zaria Killian*

Amid the meadows and golden fields of wheat  
In the expanses of infinite hues that hold a traveller's warm, weary feet  
lies a secluded village in which peace silently brews  
Where the sun's warmth perpetually and inevitably will suffuse  
The smell of hay and reminiscent memories,  
of outings, conversations and adventurous discoveries  
chatters about quickenings and "better soon" recoveries  
The ring of a bicycle on the road so balmly queer  
A morning walk in the dew covered fields in the aponic atmosphere  
The silence of it all and then the carnos church choir,  
swifts softly through the streets like a zen pacifier.  
The traveller's eye will sadly be, sighting the village in bare simplicity  
Without knowing how special it is to me,  
how it's my little gift of synchronicity.

## Fruit

*Zaria Killian*

Meadows in amour of light and air  
A sweetening breeze and a dash of hair  
Spread in fruit fields, face concealed  
From the farmer who hoes the sugar field

## "Friend"

*Zaria Killian*

The perpetual ticking of the clock indicates the time  
The court indicates the punishment for an unforgivable crime  
But what did our friendship indicate?

Did its intentions always lie in the joints of your wrist?  
Did your words intentionally have the epilepsy of contorted twists?

I wish I knew.  
But, too long I waited for your explanation that's too long overdue  
For I who am curious about each  
Am not curious about you.

## I believe

*Zaria Killian*

A blade of grass is no less a journey of the rain  
of those who live in peace, or of those who live in vain  
of those who breathe and leave plenty after them  
Or those who relish a trample, on a ripened flower stem  
of those who release in taste of unquiet ocean  
Or those who shatter and crack with wilding emotion  
Rescuer or victim of falseness and artifice  
Either boil with their lust or learn their suffice

## The fox

*Charlie Kitteringham*

I enter the kitchen.

One which has grown smaller with familiarity.

The hunger has returned.

I brandish a knife and carefully cut through my loaf.

Crumbs litter the counter.

A rustle is heard outside and the porch light cuts through her dark safety blanket.

Glowing emerald eyes pierce into mine.

She calls, her ghostly howls beckon me to open the door.

I am hesitant but creep towards the door rest my hand on the handle, finally

I turn it.

She rushes in and the door slams against the wall.

She snatches the bread and scurries.

The next night the hunger is stronger and I quickly slice more bread.

More and more crumbs coating the counter I never cleaned.

Her familiar howls mark her presence.

Her hunger has brought her back, she has grown more desperate.

One crumb was too many and she has become too driven by the taste.

Night after night.

Dark into light that is chased away faster and faster.

She is corrupted.

She's never satisfied.

There is no more bread.

She has bled me dry.

She has consumed.

## Untitled

*Charlie Kitteringham*

Water turns to wine.

Gardeners destroy flowers.

Hands were once held together by an unbreakable love and a ring and now are  
prided away by life and a piece of paper.

Knives are multipurpose tools.

Sharpeners don't stay together either.

People are blinded by others' beauty till they can't see their own.

I'll never let you go is an empty promise.

We make permanent places for temporary people

## The Gardener

*Charlie Kitteringham*

You were a gardener.

Your duty was to protect.

But I'm not a pretty flower to you.

I was a reject.

I did my best to blossom.

I did my best to grow but your cold hands were all I grew to know.

You stayed for years swearing to the world that you cared.

I couldn't argue because my view of you was impaired.

You once spent the night in my flowerbed.

You tore away my petals and left me while I bled.

Almost 9 years later I hear your name once again.

The news that the gardener has been slain.

Not by another but by yourself.

Those rough hands that tied a rope to a shelf.



## The massacre

*Charlie Kitteringham*

Fragments of a paper doll are torn up on the ground.  
She no longer weeps or makes a sound.  
Crimson ink covers the floor like a blanket.  
Making the ground her new casket.  
Her arms were ripped away trying to help people hold on,  
Her legs were torn off chasing dreams and people that were long gone,  
Her stomach was cut out to help others digest what they couldn't,  
Her liver was taken out to filter the toxins theirs wouldn't,  
Her eyes were gouged out to help people see their own beauty and worth,  
Her brain was scooped out to give the way they think new birth,  
Her heart was taken to continue to spread love after death,  
Her lungs were removed to give others fresh breath,  
Her spine was broken trying to give others support,  
The strain was too much and her body had to contort.  
There is the scene, gruesome and rather grim,  
She helped and gave so much but now she doesn't have a limb.

## Bliss in innocence

*Charlie Kitteringham*

A state of being uncorrupted.  
The waves of colour could dance without being interrupted.  
Oblivious to the slaughter and poverty preached on TV.  
Instead you watched cartoons riddled with glee.  
You only knew one person who could turn water into wine.  
Then your father's hand around the neck would intertwine.  
Gardeners would help and protect and help flowers grow but now they tear  
away the petals and let crimson rivers flow

## Irony

*Charlie Kitteringham*

A man, father, son and human sits on broken concrete. The concrete jungle holds him in a state of defeat. His head hangs low and he holds a sign with a hand that bleeds. No one puts out a hand or an ear to his pleas. Christians always say love thine neighbour as thine love yourself but still don't help those who have no wealth. Why is he mocked and ridiculed? He slipped up but once lived a life you ruled. Why is he denied basic human rights? To roam the streets and get into fights? Breaking news a man, father, son and human is found dead. Why do you still turn a blind eye and break your bread? Why do you mock his only way to cope? Why won't you help restore dignity and give him hope? We cannot let the facts and statistics remain true. In the blink of an eye that man could be you

## When my time has come

*Charlie Kitteringham*

When my time has come.  
When it's time to say goodbye.  
Put me in a mahogany coffin and leave me there to lie.  
Cover me, let the soil hug me tight.  
Comfort one another that it's gonna be alright.  
Please don't cry,  
You and I both know,  
This is the circle of life, when things come they also must go.  
Instead celebrate the memories from which I was alive.  
Know I'm always with you to help you strive.  
After all we all must face the same end.  
We all must eventually  
Descend.

Please, don't end up going awry.  
I'll see you again so for now,  
Goodbye.

## My nest

*Charlie Kitteringham*

Just 3 birds trying their best.  
Then 3 became 2 because 1 left the nest.  
1 had enough, he said he was through.  
3 and 2 didn't know what to do.  
2 did her best to care for 3.  
3 remained cheerful, loving and carefree.  
She was so young and so naïve,  
She wore her little heart on her sleeve.  
But vultures came along clawing at her heart.  
Trying their best to make her fall apart.  
1 showed up from time to time.  
I remember them as green and as bitter as lime.  
2 was still there just as loving and protective,  
After all 3 was her child and that was her one objective.  
As 3 got older her smile got more and more washed away,  
But then there were 4 and still are to this day.  
The colour that had drained from 2 and 3's world had returned.  
They fight hard and deserve what they've earned.  
They now have a full nest once again,  
There's no more worry and no more stain  
And 3's little heart has over time grown  
And some of the vulture's cuts over time have been sewn.

## hope comes like a waterfall

*Caoimbe Neff*

You say you want everything for us  
All the wealth this world could bring,  
But you have messed with fickle fingers of fate.  
Just so you could have your win.

Then hope comes like a waterfall all at once then everything.  
We will change the face of history,  
Seek the power that's within

Now our cities lie with dreamers,  
Who have visions in their head.  
They are willing to spark the rebellion  
From right inside their bed

We will change the face of history  
Seek the power from within

For hope comes like a waterfall all at once then everything.

## Dawn

*Caoimbe Neff*

The break of dawn, a golden hue  
What was old, now is new.  
The birth of light message of hope  
Breathing life into people who need it the most.

The artist's hand we may not know  
Just what is the reason behind this glorious show

For life comes in stages,  
Just like the day  
We must learn to cherish them all  
In their own special way

Although I'm not certain of what the dawn might bring  
Every person on earth will experience different things

So while the world sleeps,  
I lie awake  
Dreaming about tomorrow,  
Waiting for the sun to break.

## friendship

*Caoimbe Neff*

Do you know those people  
That feel like sunshine?  
The ones that light up your face  
Make you see life from a different angle  
And give you the warmest embrace.

I'm lucky enough to know one of those people.  
That ignites the fire from within.  
Leaves me with stars in my eyes on my face a grin.

The birds sang out in the morning dew.  
End of an era, beginning of something.  
You're just so good to be true

## ocean waters

*Caoimbe Neff*

I cried an ocean.

Filled it with tears.

The world slowly started to re-enact my deepest fears.

Just as I thought my life would begin.

The tidal wave came crashing in

My thoughts my mind went spiralling down.

My beauty faded, I've lost my crown

Just as I thought my life would begin,

The tidal wave came crashing in

I tried so hard but I couldn't swim.

My thoughts my mind went spiralling down

Now heavy is the head that wears the crown.

## fate

*Caoimbe Neff*

Bloody thorn on thistled rose

Did you ever know what the future foretold?

Two soliders gone, but I survived.

How I wish there was a compromise.

Breathing in the cloud of green.

How different I wish your life could have been

You were the victim of hate,

But perhaps that was destined fate.

## Spring's Break

*Crystabell Sotgiu*

The sunlight broke through the depression that was the dull, overcasting clouds illuminating the wet ground in patches. Though the air was cold, crisp, and refreshing, the newly emerged light provided a sense of warmth. The snow that had once masked the immense ugliness of the street had now turned to slush, allowing colour to peep through the disappearing blanket. The melting snow revealed the town once again, bringing it to life like a black and white film transitioning into colour. A bird lay proudly perched upon a bare tree, serenading the arrival of spring and filling the air with life. Although the end of winter was abrupt, it brought tranquillity and ease, and showed the town in its true form of ethereal beauty. It was only then, in the deep silence of the street, that I thought paradise could quite possibly be at home.

## Reflection

*Anonymous*

Cherry lips trace my skin,  
Leaving behind  
Small reminders of days  
Filled with warm sunshine  
And honey.

These prints are symbolic  
Of happier days  
And yet they are used  
Against me,  
A mark of shame and disappointment,

Raising the question—  
Who are you now?

## TY Party Mentality

*Anonymous*

People will sing, and laugh and shout,  
Some will dance, then pass out.  
Hair will be held, joints rolled,  
Secrets shared and stories told.  
Filters will vanish, in puffs of smoke,  
Vodka will swirl, in cups of coke.  
Anguished tears and drinks will spill,  
Be wiped away, and refilled.  
2000s soundtrack, Pon de Replay,  
Say My Name, Rock DJ.  
Hugs will matter, you'll pour your heart out,  
Honesty's easy, when it's dark out.  
On a balcony, lungs full of stars,  
Above the streetlights, and the cars,  
You'll hug your friends, laugh and thrive,  
Sip your drink and feel alive.



# Just your Manic Pixie

*Anonymous*

It was fun  
In a sort of a limited way  
Being his Manic Pixie Dream Girl  
for a while  
Until the same moment  
He caught feelings  
And I realised how exhausting it was  
Like I'd poured a glass of juice  
And finally filled it up  
Only to realize  
I wasn't thirsty

# You

*Anonymous*

Showing up out of nowhere,  
You see it as a grand gesture,  
A way to win me back.  
But all I see is blinded desperation  
To hold on to what once was.

I'm on a new chapter  
But you keep bringing me back  
To your favourite line.  
The one where you thought  
I was yours.

But what you don't see is  
That I was never a prize to win  
Or an object to own.

You focused so much on  
Keeping me in a cage  
That you didn't notice I'd long gone.

You thought of all the ways to  
Keep me for yourself but  
You lost me the moment  
You tried to change me.

## Do as lovers do

*Anonymous*

Do as lovers do, fall asleep under the stars  
And drink in the light as it falls  
From the harvest moon.  
With thoughts that revolve in polyphonic melodies,

Simplify my feelings with a casual touch.  
A smile, a glance.  
Fingers laced together, souls entwined.  
A graceful dance.

Hold me close to your body,  
Feel my heat against yours.  
Bare skin without sin.  
Purest forms of love.

Embrace me without reserve,  
And while our moon still shine,  
Swear to never let me go.  
My heart is thine.





# The Unfinished Book of Poetry 2020

featuring poems by

Aoife Ní Bhruadair

Art Óg Ó Gráda

Ciara Ní Aodha

Cillian Ó Cathasaigh

David Ó Meachair

Éadaoin Erlandsson

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Órlaith Ní Chionnaith

Órla Ní Ghliasáin

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Lucy McManus

Noreen Angozi

Adam Jere

Elle Coves

Zaria Killian

Charlie Kitteringham

Caoimhe Neff

Crystabell Sotgiu

Anonymous



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