



**TERRY
KELLY
POETRY
PRIZE**

2018 ANTHOLOGY



Learning and Participation

Arts, Culture and Education from The Customs House

First published in the UK in 2018 by
Learning and Participation
The Customs House
Mill Dam
South Shields
Tyne and Wear
NE33 1ES
www.customshouse.co.uk
[@CustomsHouseLP](https://twitter.com/CustomsHouseLP)

Individual poems © the individual authors 2018
Anthology © The Customs House 2018

Printed in South Shields by CVN Print, May 2018

Terry Kelly Poetry Prize
2018 Anthology

The Terry Kelly Poetry Prize runs annually as part of The Takeover, a youth arts festival at The Customs House. This anthology contains 2018's shortlisted poems. The poets included have impressed us with their creativity. There are clearly many talented young poets across the North East.

The Terry Kelly Poetry Prize is possible thanks to the support of many individuals not least The Kelly family. Thanks to our head judge Tom Kelly author and playwright; awards host and judge Alistair Robinson, Senior Lecturer in Journalism at The University of Sunderland and judge Sheila Wakefield poet, publisher and founding editor of Red Squirrel Press.

We are grateful to The Barbour Foundation for their support to publish this anthology; and our partners at The Shields Gazette, The Word, South Tyneside Council and Arts Council England. Thanks to teachers from Dunn Street Primary and Dame Allan's School who submitted poems on behalf of their pupils as well as parents and carers who encouraged their children to enter. Thanks to The Takeover Team who organise this festival. The Takeover Team is funded by The Scottish Power Foundation.

We hope you enjoy reading these poems.

*Elizabeth Kane Learning Officer
The Learning and Participation Team
The Customs House*

Terry Kelly Foreword

I am delighted the Terry Kelly poetry competition is in its third year and is going from strength-to-strength. Terry did not just care about poetry: he loved it. Breathed it every day. His beloved Bob Dylan *may* have even become a very close second.

He knew of every new poetry collection and publication and not just in the UK but throughout the world. He was one of the first to interview (in *The Next Review*) Michael Dickman one of the incredibly successful American identical poetry twins. And now as I look at my bookshelves I see collections Terry bought me or one's he highly recommended.

Poetry was for Terry the greatest art-form. For him it said everything and better than any play or novel. If this competition captures Terry's passion it has been truly worthwhile.

Thank you The Customs House from all of the Kelly family.

Tom Kelly

Contents

Young Writers Under 11

Snowfall <i>Maryam Islam</i>	10
Suddenly <i>Macey Marcinkin</i>	11
Quietly <i>Kitana McDonald</i>	12
Quickly <i>Mason Holmes</i>	13
My Sisters <i>Alice Jeane Maguire</i>	14
It's Rubbish at the Beach <i>Joseph Gettins</i>	15
Why? <i>Finn Edmonds</i>	16
Swimming <i>Alexandra Iris Prideaux</i>	17
Equality <i>Dan Burlison</i>	18
Kitten Love <i>Poppy May Pattinson</i>	19
Books <i>Robyn Leia Pattinson</i>	20

Young Writers 11 to 16

I Turned 15 This Year

Megan Leung 21

The Ten Miler

Elizabeth Sugden 24

Rebel

Katie Porter 25

Deliora

Keira Brown 26

The Lord of the Dance

Isaac Brown 27

When Love is Lost

Ella Hyde 29

Prometheus

Charlie Dawson 30

Legal Shots

Leo James 32

Photograph of Reminiscence

Helena Grundy 34

The Race	
Annabelle Satow	35
The Cherry Blossom	
Haylie Phillips	36
Season Surprise	
Lauren Williams	37
This Too Will Pass	
Bo Buglass	38

Young Writers 16 to 25

The Dream of the Road	
Daniel Hinds	40
This is High School	
Molly Gordon	45
The Portrait of My Father on That War Field	
Owoh Ugonna Alexander	46
My First Pair	
Lauren Aspery	48
Wagyu Parade	
Greg Rosenvinge	49
Exile	
Barry Carter	50

Femme de la Femme <i>Claire Hanratty</i>	51
Common Scents <i>Rue Collinge</i>	52
I wish I was a robot <i>Melody Sproates</i>	53
Where Will I Land? <i>Jasmine Plumpton</i>	56
On my Voice <i>Erik Plet</i>	57
Cockroaches <i>John Lennox</i>	58
Cirque <i>Rhys Cornell</i>	59
Just Talk <i>Rebekah Fitzgerald</i>	60
Honey is Sweet but Decay is Bitter. <i>Bethany Hayes</i>	63
Greetings Seasons <i>Jane Carrick</i>	64
Under The Bed <i>Michael Calder</i>	66
Family Secrets <i>Kym Deyn</i>	67

Song for the Ghost of Spring	
<i>Lyndsey Darcy</i>	70
Hold On	
<i>Natasha Brown</i>	71
Nestflight	
<i>Aidan Tulloch</i>	73
Skyriders	
<i>Rebecca Smith</i>	74

**Work by writers aged
under 11 years**

Snowfall

When the trees have leafless boughs,
precipitation freezes in the clouds.
It floats down drifting here and there,
and in some cases landing on an arctic hare!
The leafless trees are no longer bare,
decorated by snow,
billowing here and there.

Maryam Islam

Suddenly

Suddenly the man jumped into the freezing cold pool,
suddenly outside in the garden it turned really cool,
suddenly the young boy picked up a toy,
suddenly the rich popstar booked into a 5 star Savoy.

Suddenly the cheetah dashed away,
suddenly the little girl went to play,
suddenly the sun went behind the cloud,
suddenly the choir sang aloud.

Macey Marcinkin

Quietly

Quietly the sneaky, cool burglar steals from a house,
quietly the fat cute cat runs after the mouse.
quietly the wind blew and hit the trees,
quietly the rocks got kicked in the sea,
quietly the stupid man came running to me.
Quiet is the snail but quietest of all,
The mouse that's next to the old brick wall.

Kitana McDonald

Quickly

Quickly I ran down the wet pitch,
quickly I took a photo of a witch.
quickly Usain Bolt ran a mile,
quickly the girl danced with style.
quickly the clay dried on the bench,
quickly my dad grabbed a wrench.
quick is the samurai – but quickest of all,
is the cheetah jumping over brick walls.

Mason Holmes

My Sisters

My special friends.
Warm, soft, always there.
By my side when I eat my tea,
read my stories and brush my
teeth at bedtime.

Gently purring next to me as I
watch my favourite programmes on TV.
Their chests moving slowly up and
down as they snooze on my bed.

The tapping of their claws on
the wooden floor when it's dinner time.
And the love I feel when I come home
from school to see them waiting for me.

My silly, funny, furry sisters.
I love my cats.

Alice Jeane Maguire

It's Rubbish at the Beach

I went to the beach

I found:

10 lovely shells;

9 crisp packets blowing in the wind;

8 smooth stones;

7 pieces of plastic;

6 types of seaweed;

5 bottles half buried in the sand;

4 crabs scuttling;

3 drinks cans;

2 pointy starfish;

and 1 piece of plastic from around the cans.

I wish people would clean their rubbish

Joseph Gettins

Why?

Why are the clouds blue,
couldn't they be red?

Why is the grass green,
couldn't it be blue?

What if a dog's tail is called a foot,
and the feet are called a tail.

Why is a daffodil yellow,
why not white?

Colour is everywhere but that's alright.

Finn Edmonds

Swimming

Excited!
Swim, splash,
bubbles,
Slippy slide!
Changing room:
Small;
wet floor.
Dad and I
jumping in -
nervous about going under -
up nose, spit out. Feel wobbly.
I wonder
what's the smell, the noise?
Chlorine,
sounds of happiness,
water, armbands, boys
and girls. Doggy paddle.
Fountain, drain through the cracks.
Tickly showers, stinging eyes,
vending machine snacks.

Alexandra Iris Prideaux

Equality

Everybody should have their say,
it doesn't matter if you're lesbian or gay.
It doesn't matter if you're black or white,
you can't give up without a fight.
It doesn't matter if you're Buddhist, Christian or Hindu,
because these are all the qualities that make up you.
It doesn't matter if you're old or a punk,
you need to dance out your own equality funk,
So don't leave the room with a frown,
don't let the haters get you down.
So hold hands together and don't fall,
Spread the love light round the world for all.

Dan Burlison

Kitten Love

I have a kitten fluffy and cute,
it has a little toy that goes toot toot toot.
It's name is topsy with her cute pink nose,
she gets me wet with the garden hose.
She has black patches on her caramel coat,
the toy that goes toot is really a boat.
Her eyes shine brightly in the mid-summers sun,
whilst under the bed her sleep's just begun.

Poppy May Pattinson

Books

Brilliant front covers with a story inside,
Old and new books can be a guide.
Original books are my favourite you see,
Katie is a heroine I wonder if I could be?
So let's see if this is in today's story.

Robyn Leia Pattinson

**Work by writers aged
11 to 16 Years**

I Turned 15 This Year

I turned 15 this year and amongst other things
I realised that growing up isn't some landmark occasion
marked by a cake and candles and kisses on the lips
but instead

It's when your mum decides to wake you up when you've
fallen asleep on the sofa because you're just too big for her to
carry now.

And you realise that you kind of miss the times where she used
to carry you up the stairs,
whilst you would screw your eyes shut,
desperately attempting to feign sleep
and she'd tuck you in and turn off the light
whispering "I love you" under her breath
forever believing that her words were left to drift into the
silence of the night.

Or when it hits you that in 5 years,
your Instagram feed will be unrecognisable.
Filled with faces that you haven't yet seen
and faces you wish you could see more often.
As well as those whose lives seem to revolve on a completely
different axis to yours now despite the fact that once,
in an obscure moment four years, six months and eleven days
ago
you were counting the constellations that adorned the sky in a
back yard just three streets away from your parents.
"Good friends are like stars,
you don't always see them, but you know they're always
there."

Reads the emblazoned caption beneath.
And you'll try not to dwell on it too much, because you don't
want to be the only one who hasn't moved on and gotten on
with it.

Even though you can't bring yourself to forget the changing room selfies and Saturday afternoon meetups and inside jokes hidden amongst the comments below.

Forever preserved underneath sixty-two rows of perfect photos
line by line; perfect grids of three.

You used to think the moon was forever chasing your car, its pale gibbous haze swimming behind clouds of pale grey. Never quick enough to pass you as you seemingly hurtled down roads past night-time stragglers and twenty-four-hour shops,
The neon lights garish in comparison to the moon's celestial beauty.

But at some point,
you slowed down,
and the moon overtook you whilst you were mindlessly scrolling through the pictures of someone who doesn't even remember who you are.

And now you realise that, no matter how hard you try people won't stop getting older.
Time won't stop going faster.
As each ticking of the clock seems quieter amidst the great cacophony that is sound of your life.

"Life is short and life is long
but not in that order."
Dictionary of Obscure Sorrows

Megan Leung

The Ten Miler

Oh dear mother, you make me smile,
although you made me run ten mile,
through the wet and mud and rain,
body mangled - I'll never run again!

My legs gave way beneath my weight,
but still I ran - it was my fate!
with sweaty hair and mucky shoes,
perpetually needing vaporous poos!

I stomped and waddled for 10 whole mile,
the back of my throat was full of bile,
but still i continued through thick and thin,
hoping one day I'll actually win!

Making me run felt like torture-
but I couldn't back out .. you're such a scorcher
you'd take my phone,"gerroff and run!"
"Wanna dumb brain and a massive bum?"

I finished it! (after what seemed like forever)
I did not enjoy it whatsoever
but after that hell - I felt so victorious!
And boy! Did my dinner taste just glorious.

"Running!", she says, "makes your brain vivacious",
"Your bones very strong, your figure curvaceous,"
So my muscles are trained but my ego despairs,
Marathon next? Wait till my body repairs!

Elizabeth Sugden

Rebel

Once upon a time, there was a King called King Rebel.
One day, the King went outside and nobody said hi.
Nobody asked if he wanted to play,
They all just gave him dirty looks.

He was lonely but when other people came along,
he said hi and asked if they wanted to play.
They treated him like dirt.
He was really angry at them,
so that is when it all happened.

He turned into a rebel.
He got his ear pierced,
His belly button pierced,
His hair black and his nails painted black.

Katie Porter

Deliora

Each night he called his name
Deliora.....Deliora
...He never came.

The moonlight shone down
he waited in the rain
The beast was watching him,
Deliora was his name.

The beast began to shake
the man watched curiously,
the legends were not fake.

Each night he called his name,
Deliora....Deliora
....He never came.

Nobody knows if it's true or fake,
except this man who sealed his fate

Many people believe it's a lie
the people who believe will surely die.

The demon growled and slashed his claws,
he screeches and lets out
angry roars.

The man runs while he gnaws,
running past the local stores.
That was the last time he was seen
the story still lives on
that was the last time he came
nobody knows where he was from.

Keira Brown

The Lord of the Dance.

On a night in November cold and dreary
with the midnight frost nipping at my feet
I wandered home so weak and weary
down a road called Saint John's Street
but under the glare of a streetlight lamp
a figure stood there, stone and rigid
and under the light, with the air so damp
I saw a sight that sent me frigid.

With a face so white which pierced through the night
and a body so tall which I saw before me
the creature was thinner than the streetlight itself
so of course, this sight stood to appal me.

But my biggest surprise was yet to arise
when the stick like figure reared its head
because it opened its mouth, ready to speak
and what it said could scare the dead.

"I am the Lord, the Lord of the dance
and all your creatures dance before me
flowers, trees, birds and bees
all these stand to love and adore me
heed my advice, and join in my dance.
As all creatures are bound to join my score
but ignore what I say, and go on your way
you'll find me there at your chamber door".

It extended its hand with a movement so quick
which sent icy chills from my head to my feet
I couldn't shake hands with a creature so sick .
So I picked up and ran to the end of the street
and when I turned round, it couldn't be found
but hear this message I implore .

As when I got home and got into bed
to rest my weak and tired head
I suddenly heard a tapping sound
and saw the Lord there at my door.

"I am the Lord, the Lord of the Dance
and all my creatures dance before me
the butcher, the baker, the candlestick maker
all these stand to love and adore me
you fled from me once on that deserted street
as your frightened footsteps pounded the floor
I gave you my warning, I gave no deceit
so here I am at your chamber door
I am the Lord, the Lord of the Dance,
And from this day forward, you shall weep
If you won't dance for me, you cannot be free
So you'll join the dance while you are asleep".

Since that day, in all of my dreams
I see that villain in flesh before me
he takes my hands, and makes me dance
all he wishes is to control thee
so heed my advice and hide from the streets
if you see the fiend, you've lost all chance
to sleep in peace, for when you look up
you'll see him there, the Lord of the Dance.

Isaac Brown

When Love is Lost

I saw him over there,
acting as if he didn't care,
he said he thought I was a bore,
so I told him that I loved him no more.

Although I am now heartbroken,
at least I can be outspoken,
no longer stuck in the past,
it's time to look to the future at last.

When there's nothing left to say or do,
when the meaning is lost in 'I love you',
that's when the time has come,
to move on, to say 'I'm done'.

Ella Hyde

Prometheus

Heracles, afore Jupiter's gone guilt:
Harpy healing. From humour hearth, ichor spilt....

Moirai-Marrer
Three-Fleer
Parcae-Punishèd

I

"A Solis Ortu Usque ad Occasum"
slander'd our tongues, SPQR bore our blazons blazing;
Of Pyrrhic Victoria heralded,
Forward unto celestials a-razing!

II

Mars' onager and Bellona's trireme!
Uranus' cosmos bronze, O silent tides;
But Forethought of foresight unheralded:
For florid fruit's theft sunder'd Titan-sides.

III

Birth'd from clay, Epicurian God-spite;
Scorn'd Tempus thus far, in Heaven of Herne;
Of Cernunnos Celts, skirmish heralded!
Legion IX gone, in Pictish plains, a-spurn.

IV

Byzantines of men, beyond Spiral one!
O last Varangian charge; O Twin Sun:
setting zeniths heralded.

V

Helios an' Apollo, scuppered by stellar summit:
Miasmic inferno, maelstrom, plummet!
Down road resolute, O too far too thin.
For dwarfen Diocletian door hath been.

VI

To the Seducer's Seduced, O New King
Before, Ages Dark, we by those of sin
then thought Daemons, and Gigantes by foe-kin.

VII

The Betrayèd who broke the Rubicon:
"Alae iacta est"; First & Last soon.

VIII

Thus, the fall of Milky Way's Rome begun:
Humanity... blood too adrift... to love;
Genes – ATCG scattered as Alphas now-pagan:
Chromosomal key... the purely impure

Charlie Dawson

Legal Shots

A suitcase of hate you have kept legal in the USA
and why have you done this?...I couldn't tell you.
Self defence is your only defence
and quite a weak one, I must say.

You're responsible for the law
which drags bullets through the to-be corpses of the young
and old
by making the decision to keep triggered shots legal
are you stupid or madly bold?

An educational centre, turned terror struck war field
you call your nation developed, I'm afraid your mistaken.
so many have fallen never again to rise,
a heartbeat is not returned once it has been taken.

Oh you send your condolences?
With the ink of blood on your letter
for what changes do your condolences make
no change...not ever.

Criminalise all triggers if it is good you want to do.
Every dog has its day and with all the graves that you have
grew
those legal bullets of death if you make no alterations
at the speed of light might some day pass through you.

So be careful how you wish
if life's death is your score
For all that thrives on this earth
make these triggers no more.

A suitcase of hate you have opened in the USA,
how long will this suitcase remain sealed on the streets of the
UK?

Leo James

Photograph of Reminiscence

Eyes, with shadows etched beneath
a twinkling glimpse of affection;
light reflects in half moon shape
azure pebbles paced with perfection.

Nose, polished with shimmer
positioned point in center;
slopes down from eyes
and lets air enter.

Mouth, curls into an innocent beam
dimples tattooed into skin;
lips soft as baby
the unmistakable grin.

Body, leans over unbalanced feet
bones visible underneath cloak;
back bends to permanent
perpetual damage from smoke.

Hair, in separate wisps of cotton
spread unevenly around;
patches of shiny head camouflage
a token of past found.

This
Is
Her... Grandma

Helena Grundy

The Race

Standing waiting for the race to begin,
I'm getting quite nervous,
am I going to win?

The gun goes off,
I started to run,
All I want now is this race to be done.

I heard the crowd loud and clear,
am I going to win?
Can I feel a tear?

The line is approaching quick and fast,
I'll give it all I've got.
Thank goodness I didn't come last.

Annabelle Satow

The Cherry Blossom

Tweet: chicks start to hatch,
branches full of nests,
flightless, fluffy, fragile.
Oh, how joyful!

Yay: trees explode with colour,
branches encrusted in gems,
floral, flowering, fragrant.
Oh how exotic!

Crunch: leaves crackle under foot,
branches full of colour,
crunchy, colourful, cold.
Oh, how wonderful!

Snap: trees dead of life, branches bare and frosty,
dreary, dead, dozy.
Oh how lonely!

The spectacle goes on-
Oh, how exciting!

Haylie Phillips

Season Surprise

Gradually the leaves fall off the trees,
as vision of the landscape comes to me.
Smoothly; delicately; comes the winter's breeze,
when Autumn starts to flee.

Frost starts to defeat the land,
when temperatures drop below zero.
Suddenly all green is banned,
and snow becomes our hero.

Daffodils begin to rise,
Its fellow buds start to appear.
Birds' song fills the bluing skies.
Summer is nearly here!

Planes soar through the air,
as sand scrapes beneath your feet.
The sun creates a giant flare,
when you open the door to your Summer's suite.

Lauren Williams

This Too Will Pass

Sitting on the luscious green grass,
not wanting time to pass.
Staring at the moonlit sky,
hoping this moment will never die.

Looking at the shining stars,
everything is still, no movement, no cars.
A peaceful silence all around,
not a thing moving, no noise, no sound.

As I wonder what else could be out there,
I absorb the clean, fresh air.
As I realize the time begins to pass,
I feel sad knowing that this won't last.

A whole night in a world of my own,
with time that has now flown
by in the blink of an eye.
Goodbye green grass and moonlit sky.

I turn around and then know
it is now time for me to go...

Bo Buglass

**Work by writers aged
16 to 25 years**

The Dream of the Road

'Hwæt, ic swefna scyst secgan wylle' The Dream of the Road

I feel the oppression of their boot, the hideous hard of their heel
crunch as they march merciless and unaware.
I feel the mock and warmth and wet of their spit. Their sweat is slick
salvation to my scorched skin on the days of no rain and high sun.

I call them the orchestra overhead.
When they make their music of creaking leather and stamping feet,
the guttural groan of my gravel is their abhorring applause.
The lauded men who walk overhead.

I covet the clear sense of their eyes,
those sovereign spheres, those gauche and greedy gems.

Dreams are all I know of earth, and all I need to know;
I know the ending of the day's road and the host's grim marching.

Man alone dreams alone.

The rifle dreams too. It tells me its secret dream,
as it sways by their sides. Men hear only the rifle's waking cry.
I, I alone hear its sleeping whispers. She fears
for her child long nurtured in a womb of black powder,
expelled from the garden of her belly. She is proud
to have been chosen by her man out of so many. She nestles
into his warm side as she slumbers. She screams
Shakespearean death when she is wakened
by his trained, teasing hands. A rifle crack;

a rite of birth, death, pleasure. Sometimes,
when she wanders farthest in sleep, she recalls
murky memories of her making. Of being torn
from the tree by gleaming metal and the man.
Now she bears the blade –bayonet they call her! –,
Now she is borne by the man. Sotto voce,
all her secrets tumble down to me.

Man alone dreams alone.

The redcoat dreams.
And I hear the dreams of the redcoat. The redcoat
dreams of its dyeing day, when the wash
was put upon it, when it was cleansed
of other cruder colours. She is jealous of her rival,
the rifle, and is a barrier between her
and him.

Man alone dreams alone.

The redcoat dreams
of the man's dying day, when he pours out
of his prison and his soul spills sighing out, all over her,
and they are one and indivisible. And no rain
will wash away what has been joined, and no rain
will reveal her or him; so it will be
when he wears her and she wears him.

For her name is his name.

Man alone dreams alone.

I hear the dreams of the rope. It dreams
of the dreadful neck snap of a man hung upon a tree.

Man alone dreams alone.

From the felon's gallows the escaped soul
leaps up! - and is dragged by grasping hands
to the Screaming Below.

And his soul tide washes me wet with slick sin.

For the sin of deserting his body
his barren bones are desolate of dreams.
The guiltless gallows coils cowardly
again into a rope-like shape.

Shamed

Like the silver pieces the silver tongues
of man slander sinful, and coin new curses
to betoken tokens with ugly truths.

Man alone dreams alone.

I hear the dreams of the grass. I know
I should love my neighbour, but I cannot
love that which is not me. We have our war
as the marching men have theirs. As I grow
it wanes. As I wane it grows. It surrounds
and suffocates me, softer than my hard body. I must
expand the empire of myself until
my neighbour is the road and I am the road. Only then
will we have universal love. And I know
that it dreams to cover my corpse in its soft flesh.

Man alone
dreams alone.

Sometimes I see a long black me,
with white war marks daubed on it.
Grown greater than the grass, made
monolithic and monarchical.

Hear a music that is all roaring metal,
wailing wheels and no marching.

Daniel Hinds

This is High School

This is high school.

This is learning to fall between the cracks.

This is everyone staring you down but no-one looking..

This is stepping around the kid having a panic attack in the corridor.

 Stepping around the kid having a break down in the corridor.

 Stepping around the kid crying in the corridor.

This is being the kid in the corridor.

This is making wishes on shooting stars.

 Making wishes on satellites.

 Making wishes on anything.

This is not believing in wishes.

This is trying to make a grade with shadows stamped under our eyes.

This is putting on face.

This is choosing waterproof make-up, so you can pretend you haven't been crying.

This is pulled out hair.

This is tear stains.

This is chewed lips .

 Chewed fingernails.

 Chewed pencils.

This is packing headphones before homework.

This is learning to text without looking.

This is learning to hold your bladder and your tongue.

This is learning that pain can be more than a scraped knee.

This is learning that worry can be about more than misplaced toy.

This is skipping lunch for an assignment.

This is skipping sleep for an assignment.

This is skipping an assignment for an assignment.

This is that making sense.

This is writing a suicide note in the back of a class.

This is your shirt being a concern because of the colour.
This is your shirt not being a concern because it hides the fresh cuts.
This is knowing what the function of mitochondria is.
Knowing the Pythagorean theorem.
Knowing Einstein discovered relativity.
And this is not knowing how you feel because you couldn't find it on any revision guide.

Molly Gordon

The Portrait of my Father on that War Field

This portrait speaks to me with a dying breath.
It speaks of my father's heave on a field bordered with booms
and kelps, ash slit of mural supple as smokes.
His tone is mild, fluid soft and palms with no guns and bows.
I can hear his tears forming rails from his eyes to cheeks like
tender draws of transparent -squirmy liquids.
I can see his pain, it draws his bones to shreds.
They speak of cracks and shattering.
I smell a man is in his bones, he speaks confident in him,
unleash his humming guns.
They spill a thirsty soul on a field with loop parse and guise.

This portrait speaks to me with a dying breath.
It gets the tongue of red tomatoes, his skin is a mixture of
blood roses and shrugged spill of red fetters.
Its pains are strings of peppercorn and blood castle, they smell
of cowardice.
His eyes are gorge and blend with red gin seeds fuming in
turbulent liquor of pepper melon.

This portrait speaks to me with a dying breath.
My father's eyesight is dim with blur light he bumps into my
bones and call me strength.
My father is a Saviour in his wars. I mix his marrows with white
spittoon of strength.

This portrait speaks to me with a living breath.
My father's portrait is shaped into a heroic mix of wiper colour
white and sip colour rip,
He wraps himself into bravery and ends the war of 1918.
His soul is a triumph.
His melody I write are his memories.
This portrait speaks to me with a craven breath.
My father is back home from war. His soul is a tribute to a
united world.

Owoh Ugonna

My First Pair

My first pair were patent red
with pink laces and fluffy lining -
The only thing to remind everyone
that I was a girl and not a boy.
I'd wear them proudly in my pushchair,
not ready to christen the ground just yet,
and kick them off with every tantrum.
Now they sit in a box in the loft
gathering dust among finger paintings,
school photos and glittery pasta,
ten sizes too small.

Lauren Aspery

Wagyu Parade

Mary was a gazelle in a tundra of descending skies
raining on North Shields and her newborn baby she
packed no bags and ran baby in arm across the
street the siren wailed and wailed and the sky held ---

*Ihr Herz neben
Ihrem Herz, die Luft --
Wie bahnbrechend.*

It unforgave, locomotive marched
an die Stadt, gar nicht Gnade --
these skies had left their factories, and fell
Um die Gnade zu sein, die Erdschwere
Ganz über ein Phantasma --

on serrated, marbled toes.

And she walked back, baby in arm,
To see her house through the sky
as the blackness faded to dawn --
*Um die Gnade zu sein, namens
'Vorwärts' and 'Städte' --*

All of the street were
once her neighbours.

Greg Rosenvinge

Exile

My son was born without the power of speech,
the secret police beat me while he was still in the womb.

Hassan's bellybutton disappeared
as he grew older and he painted a cave of winds
(a reference to his family I believe) on a butterfly's
wings, when Hassan slept a flower grew where his
bellybutton used to be and the butterfly would rest
on the flower as he slept.

The photographs taken of the bombed village we left
slept then blinked woken by desert storms hammering
the shack. I saw a gun balanced on the flower as Hassan
slept and it began to talk of a butterfly choking on the vapours
of war and surviving.

My thoughts became formless
like the wind. I wrote our names on two sheets of paper
throwing them into the night like two abandoned wings.

Barry Carter

Femme de la Femme

Daisy.

A little flower with white petals that sometimes turn pink.
An orange centre that withstands the constant extraction of
those petals, with the pang and echo of tiny voices shouting
"He loves me; he loves me not"-
often mistaken for a weed.

Daisy.

A girl who winces with insecurity
every time the nearest dandelion clock is
plucked from the soiled earth around her.
She watches with wet, reddened eyes as she is paralysed
(if being limbless can equate to such a feeling)
and unable to stop the careless children blow away Time as if it
were some sort of lark-
seed by seed.

Daisy.

A witness to the exposure of stalks and leaves alike;
a veteran of the unwanted embrace and, indeed,
the wanton thieving of petals and memories and silence and
voice
combined.
She is swaying but explicitly not
bending to the wind.
She stands her ground, and
she has blossomed.

Claire Hanratty

Common Scents

You knit with your fingers,
even though your daughter
bought you bamboo bones
to wend the wool around.
No, *you* twist the thread
onto that fleshy starfish
and boast that you've always
spun a good yarn.
That ragged ribbon
snakes out from your knuckles
and you tell me you love the feeling,
that you've never needed
The middle man anyway.
I joke that you're
making scarves for weasels
and you grunt that
your client is even less
discerning.

When I find the loose corn rows
braided together in brown paper
I can't help but
tangle my fingers in the lines
as you did
to the hum of bad TV shows
and the incessant chatter of the radio.
it smells of you:
Clean soap and cigarettes,
rubbed from your skin,
and I realise you've sent me
an autograph.

Rue Collinge

I wish I was a robot

Sometimes I wish I was a robot
so I wouldn't have to deal with emotion.
But I try to remind myself
being human is an unforgettable notion.

Sure if I were a robot
I could have super metal awesome power!
Then again I couldn't enjoy
a nice warm lovely shower.

If I were a robot
some problems would be solved.
I wouldn't have to worry about
growing anxious, tired or old.

Robots don't have to face everyday problems
that you and I have.
Especially since they don't have to experience
the discomfort of a public lav...

But Robots don't have to think
and Robots don't have to feel.
They are told what to imagine
they are told what to conceal.

Me? I don't have that
I don't know what to say.
So I wish I was a robot
to get me through the day.

Yeah we have coping mechanisms like
'always look on the brightside'.
But robots don't have issues like
dysphoria, anxiety or suicide.

Robots can be programmed
they're already given all the answers.
Robots can't get poorly
they don't watch their family die of cancers.

HOWEVER!

I might just stop right there
as I'm making myself sad.
There is still one thing that robots
never seem to have.

Don't tell anyone I told you
this top secret rumour...
But I once heard that robots
don't have a bloody sense of humour!

All of that technology
has clearly gone to waste.
When you find a machine
without any comedy taste!

Robots are not bothered
about watching Austin Powers.
Nor have they ever seen
John Cleese in Fawlty Towers!

R2D2 doesn't care
for greats like Vic and bob.
And he especially doesn't have time
for Russell Brand's big massive gob!

Terminator is off to sleep
when he goes to bed.
He doesn't stay up watching

every episode of Father Ted!

WALL-E has his brain
stuffed into a tiny cartridge.
He certainly hasn't sat through
an entire box-set of Alan Partridge!

Androids do not put on
seven hours of The Office.
And neither would they enjoy
several re-runs of... The Office. (The American one)

I may be feeling rusty
at this very moment in time,
but I should never forget
that this life is, and always will be mine.

So, as it turns out
Being a robots a bit of a faff.
Because then I'd miss what I love the most,
which is, of course, to laugh.

Melody Sproates

Where Will I Land?

The more of the world I see, the smaller it seems.
But I remember a time when beyond
these sallow streets was simply *OUTSIDE OF PLAY*
ZONE.

A pixelated horizon meant for anyone but us.

And what did we care?
We weaved our own chains with daisies,
stained thumbs from nipping stalks where
the next one would slot,
be content wi' yer lot, gran would say.

While the world was asking questions
we found answers in diaphanous trails on cracked footpaths;
deciphered the spray-paint hieroglyphics
of those who came before us; they warned us:
Divvin' ger above yersel.

I poise my pen, chew its end,
refine a line about Icarus.

Jasmine Plumpton

On my Voice

I'm blamed I disregard my youth,
that I've ignored these fleeting joys
by straying from th'accepted truth:
of life enclosed in drinks and noise.
Yet poetry's the pow'r to soothe;
in form it speaks, yet not in voice.

Imperfect oft my verse may prove
by lacking wit and addressees
and craft' by hands both strict and crude.
Yet lately, progress seemed to freeze:
without communion, words can't move,
without addressing, words won't seize.

Verbo'sity's a vain attempt,
for soul my verse had ne'er contained;
I've shunned expression with contempt,
the structure's all I entertained,
from faults I wished to be exempt,
from introspections I've refrained.

Erik Plet

Cockroaches

Universities take advantage of caffeine addiction
from students who will later struggle to find
a pot to relieve themselves in
as the doors of the NHS slam to privatisation
please tell me, what is the use of council taxation?

When the roads are still bumpy
and the grass is uncut
and the schools are all closing
as their budgets are cut

When will the small towns find any luck
will it take a neck and a noose for them to
give a...
care about us?

Like those Jarrow crusaders
let's kick up a fuss
demand we're treat fair
or is that too much?

Let's march to 10 Downing
I wish they were drowning
because too many times
they've broken our trust

John Lennox

Cirque

The mind is wild as it is fickle,
full of lights and blaring music to behave like distractions
and lead the way from delusions of monotony.
A ceremonious shrug rides across the wire.

Lights and music blaring, behaving like distractions,
toying with emotions like monkeys without masters.
A ceremonious shrug rides across the wire
and lights the tents ablaze.

Monkeys are toying with emotions, long without their masters,
as the feathered horses lead their march across the cranium.
The tents are set ablaze
and the music suffers a shift in the orchestra.

The feathered horses march across the cranium
and lead the way from delusions of monotony.
The music shifts the suffering of the orchestra,
for the mind is fickle as it is wild.

Rhys Cornell

Just Talk

Mental health is always hush hush,
what's the big deal? It's hardly physical pain,
swept under the carpet with a little brush,
but you have no energy, it's been drained.

You've been feeling worthless for a while,
all you can answer is a simple "I'm fine",
you're sat struggling to sit and smile,
but one day, don't worry, you'll shine.

Your mother turns a blind eye to your self harm,
when all you can do is sit at the wall and stare,
cry, cry, cry- hide those scars on your arm,
but all you can do is grin and bear.

A knife, a razor, even scissors maybe,
Those are your weapons of choice
Silly it may be,
But this self-punishment helps you find your voice.

You want help,
but don't know how to ask for it,
you scream and yelp,
you're sick of trying, you're ready to quit

It will get better-right?
when it's 2am and you can't breathe,
when every day is just a fight,
why won't this panic attack leave?

How am I supposed to lead a normal life?
Why me? I ask,
depression stops me living my life,
when I struggle to complete the simplest of tasks.

You've never felt more alone,
everything around you just seems cold,
they ask why you moan,
what problems do you have? You're not old.

What's the use in trying?
You'll only end up crying,
so you carry on lying,
to everyone, lying that you're not thinking about dying.

Keep it locked up,
keep it hidden,
keep those appearances up,
because your parents are guilt ridden.

Talk about it, you'll feel better,
but no one will understand,
crying's no good, your face just becomes wetter,
but sometimes it's nice for someone to hold your hand.

Don't worry it'll be okay,
people love you, they tell you every day,
or at least that's what they say,
how can it be okay? This is no holiday.

But you are a warrior,
you'll fight and win,
but they'll be even sorrier,
for not believing in you, especially since you stopped slicing
your skin.

Remember anyone can suffer with this,
just be around with some tissues,
just talk to them- it can be a bliss,
talking about mental health doesn't have to be an issue.

Rebekah Fitzgerald

Honey is Sweet but Decay is Bitter

Golden honey bleeds,
falling from the mouth of a once great God.
Athena warned you,
"Euphoria will be the death of you"
but now you bleed,
honey-blood flooding the streets like beams of sunshine
G L O W I N G.
Before the sunshine turns black,
decaying,
fruitless.

Eros erodes the purpose that once drowned you,
he chained you up,
forced you to clench to this new rapturous and
intoxicating glimmer
of slimy
hope.
Oopsies, moi Cherie!
Did we mislead you?
Did we cause you to saigner?

Black, inky twists.
Burning oil drops.
They're not what you expected, nein?
When you fall with the burning oil drips of past sunshine,
you are escaping the tendrils which once confined you.
Euphrosyne would be proud
of your crumbling and crippling
battered up and decaying form.

Bethany Hayes

Greetings, Seasons

Upon the frozen pond, we skate
with diamond dreams filling our eyes
with magic shards beneath our feet
and crystal raindrops from the skies.

With diamond dreams filling our eyes
flurried ice clouds sit in the trees
and crystal raindrops from the skies
Fill smiles and hearts with harmony.

Flurried ice clouds sit in the trees
and on the pavement down below
Fill smiles and hearts with harmony
as men are forged in thick, white snow.

And on the pavement down below
we filter from the icy tide
as men are forged in thick, white snow
and aim to watch our town all night.

We filter from the icy tide
we seek out comfort by our fire
and aim to watch our town all night,
our village that we do admire.

We seek out comfort by our fire
it's crackling in neon flame
our village that we do admire
grows bright and warmer once again.

It's crackling in neon flame
the globe that burns the sky so bright
grows bright and warmer once again
and rescues us from icy night.

The globe that burns the sky so bright
relieved the leaves from Winter's hand
and rescues us from icy night,
summer reclaims her rightful land.

Relieved the leaves from Winter's hand
causing the summer bells to chime,
Summer reclaims her rightful land
until next solstice, Winter's time.

Causing the summer bells to chime
no magic shards beneath our feet
until next solstice, Winter's time
upon the frozen pond, we'll skate.

Jane Carrick

Under the Bed

There are monsters under my bed,
who at night, creep in my head.

They play and dance around my brain,
laugh and howl at my pain,

Whisper in my ear to make me sweat,
and fill my heart with regret.

The tears roll down my cheeks at night,
while the monsters scratch and bite.

Their claws are sharp against my mind,
and no peaceful sleep will I find.

In my dreams, they stand so tall,
these monsters who feel nought at all.

Beg me to make them free again,
release them on my world to reign.

Make me imagine a blade of steel,
a cold touch that feels so real.

It runs gently across my skin,
my only armour so paper thin.

I think I need just one more session,
To help me mask this depression.

For no monsters live beneath my bed;
they all reside inside my head.

Michael Calder

Family Secrets

My mother did the lotus pose
In the school corridor,
she was fifteen, it was the sixties,
she had glandular fever.

They used to call her Morticia,
she was an Adams before she met
my father.

She was enough of an honest woman
to go and steal him, I look at
my half-brother,
and wonder how he sees the tiny thing
that upped and blossomed instead of him.

My mother wears pain better than I do,
death is a favourite aunt,
a book of poetry she clings to.

In one month, her dog, her grandmother
and her baby died, she said she was
most upset about the dog.

I was being flippant once when she looked
at me, older than she was then, older than
sixteen and told me she'd watched him
turn coal black in patches from the cancer.

With twenty years between us,
I'd never been upset about my brother
but I got older and cry whenever I think of him.

My mother read the Bible, the Koran,
some Sutras, people crossed the street
to avoid her so she read Gurdjieff and Steiner.

Before I was born she had a dream about
a coal shed, where she was led by angels
to me, they said "that's your daughter".
she said, "It's broken"
the angels said "fix it".

I was not so much precious as anxious,
I was the lucky one but
both my mother's children were born
with something that wanted to kill them.

My father painted sunflowers and
my mother called me saffron,
my mother got me in a headlock and
plucked my eyebrows at eleven.

My mother called me backwards, stilted,
my mother called me you would look better, thinner
my mother called me, no man will ever love you
since you decided to be asexual,
my mother never called me anything bad enough for me to call
it anything other than complicated.

My mother watered the garden the garden three days
after her hip operation.

My mother taught me strange,
my mother taught me how to call to the dead
so the animal gods will bring them, my mother
taught me god so well all of mine are different to hers.
She said
I have given everything to you so you can live.
She said her life is over

But my mother taught herself god too
she says he sends Jehovah's Witnesses to our door like carrier
pigeons, she says it's all they're good for
she says he talks to her.

She asked me yesterday if I had heard
the Green Luminous Voice of God lately
I said yes, mother,
I have.

Kym Deyn

Song for the Ghost of Spring

Could love be like flowers wilt?
Could a song of joy be a song of guilt?
Could an apple bloom bright red and ripe;
leave a stain on my heart tonight?
Could a Winter's day disguise as Spring?
Could my lover's heart be not love bring?
Song for the ghost of spring
may God take that poison-pen.

Kill me softly, my lover's twist
take my heart but leave me kissed
beholden is my body so limp
know that my peaceful mind did think
song for the ghost of spring
for the ghost of love, she did bring.

Go now my mournful dove
for you took my heart and could not love
leave your blood-stained nightie tonight
when tomorrow comes dress in white
song for the ghost of spring

May God forgive your hopeless sin!

Lyndsey Darcy

Hold On

What is it that makes your heart sing?
Bringing a sweet melody to your mind.
Each time you've tried to suppress it,
It rises up like the sun in the morning time.
With it brings an array of colours that outshine the darkest
days.
With it you can display your feelings without being ashamed.
It aimed to bring you happiness beyond all belief.
What is it that makes your heart skip a beat?
What is it that will get you up off your feet?
In this world there will be many troubles,
as there are mountains to climb.
You'll find that the road you are walking down,
Wears you out and makes you tired,
You've been wired the quit when you see a hurdle on the way,
That's why you've never experienced a win in any kind of race.
You have always compared yourself to them, so you put you in
second place.
The fact you think that confidence is arrogance, is a mistake;
You constantly put yourself down.
Before you know it you've buried yourself in the ground,
you're unable to move.
You think: there's nothing in this world for you, and that you're
destined to lose.
These views have made you a turtle, hidden in your shell.
For the things you love, you must be brave and speak out.
What is it that makes your heart skip a beat on the darkest of
days?
Imagine that, being taken away,
You're stood quietly, allowing it to happen?
You have the power the make it stop, however you feel
inadequate.
This is the current situation of our society today,
The things we like, we say we hate so we will be accepted.

Neglected views will ensure that we don't feel alone,
We have worked to bring home fame, money and authority,
With it we've lost our respect, ourselves and our individuality.
So shall we take priority, and say we are who we are?
Will be speak out for what we believe in, be loving and stay
strong?
Let's support one another in this long human race,
When one person falls we will pick them up again.
I want to be content in the life that I have,
For the things that make my heart sing, I will never turn back.

Natasha Brown

Nestflight

And what if, after all these years, in one
vacant moment, it all disappears?
All the ironing, the school runs, the birthdays' precious basalt,
the times you got their breakfast out for them.
Recall interrupted lullabies that caught us flailing
in room after soon-to-expire room of posters and sweat—
all gone, in the urgent click of a motherly finger,
the fridge magnets, the four by sixes, the basketball hoop.
Take the smile of the son in his football kit as he
smirks "thank you" through the glass, before turning,
to dive, to laugh, now stitched to his teammates,
The daft rag of his shirt number not lingering.
The radio un-detuned, the engine not stalled,
Now you must press on, mustn't you?

Aidan Tulloch

Skyriders

We soar towards the sky
and rapidly gain height.
For we rule the world
when we are in flight.

Almighty steed a-wing,
you are in control
like a father, you protect me
from the depths of your soul.

We glide over the sun-kissed land,
watching, hawk-like, from the sky.
The countrymen, worthless, down below
gaze up as we fly high.

Like armour, is your scaly skin,
in your ultimate power I believe
for us to rule without protection
as through the mighty winds we weave

This journey is our freedom
when we fly at this great height.
We rule the kingdom and the sky

And we rule the world when we are in flight

Rebecca Smith

Terry Kelly Poetry Prize 2018 Anthology

A collection from young poets from the North East.
Published with funding from The Barbour Foundation.



Supported using public funding by

**ARTS COUNCIL
ENGLAND**



Foundation

SCOTTISHPOWER

THE SHIELDS
Gazette



South Tyneside Council



