



THE
TERRY KELLY
POETRY PRIZE

ANTHOLOGY 2020-2021

as part of TAKEOVER, Customs House

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**Terry Kelly Poetry Prize
2020-21 Anthology**

Terry Kelly

Terry was born in Jarrow, attended Saint Mary's Junior School and went onto Saint Bede's Senior School, Jarrow (which no longer exists). After 'A' levels at South Tyneside College he obtained an English degree at Sunderland University where he helped edit Poetry Review with editor Roger Garfitt and later an MA at Newcastle University. He became a junior reporter for the Johnston Press, trained at Harlow and had his first reporting job with the Blyth Post. After a number of years at Blyth he returned to South Tyneside and spent the rest of his career at the South Shields Gazette. He was married to Val and had one daughter, Kate and they lived in Jarrow. He was above all an avid reader and particularly loved the work of Bob Dylan and the poet Philip Larkin and wrote many articles and reviews on both. He enjoyed regular correspondence with poets including, Hugo Williams, Barry MacSweeney, Tom Pickard and Brendan Cleary among many others. Hugo Williams said Terry knew his poems better than he did! Terry's writing skills saw him become not only a respected Gazette reporter but a reviewer of poetry collections for major magazines including Poetry Review and London Magazine. He was also a regular contributor writing articles to About Larkin the Journal of the Philip Larkin Society and was a mainstay to the Bob Dylan fanzine, The Bridge. Michael Gray, Dylan Scholar said, 'Terry...was a shrewd devotee of, and writer on, the work of Bob Dylan.'

Tom Kelly

The Prize

Celebrating our sixth year, the Terry Kelly Poetry Prize is an annual poetry prize for young writers 25 and under in the North East. Commemorating the life of Shields Gazette journalist and poetry lover Terry Kelly, the prize encourages young people to try poetry.

This year's Poetry Prize has been ably led by two-time former winner Lauren Aspery, who continues to be an articulate and passionate advocate for young poets from the north east.

The event has been planned by actor and poet Jessica Johnson with young people who are part of South Tyneside's Care Leavers Team. They were delighted to be asked to judge a new category: 'The People's Prize' alongside the existing categories which are judged by Tom Kelly and Lauren Aspery.

Fiona Martin

Deputy Director- Learning and Participation, The Customs House

When I was first invited to be a part of the 2019 Terry Kelly Poetry Prize, I was absolutely thrilled. A year later, when I was asked to return and take on more responsibility for the 2020 prize, I was doubly thrilled. This year, we introduced two new categories: the Galvanise Prize for boys aged 16 and under and the award for Outstanding Group poems, and I couldn't wait to work on making the prize the best it's ever been for its 5th year running.

At times, it didn't seem possible. 2020 was a difficult year for a variety of reasons, for not only myself and The Customs House, but for all of our young poets and their families. But through it all, I turned to the TKPP entries and found solace in the outstanding and uplifting poetry of the North East's best young poets. And to receive that joy in return from proud parents and excited poets made my job a lot easier.

To say I was impressed by the volume and quality of work we received during the unprecedented challenges 2020 brought would be an understatement. Where life has thrown us all obstacles, the young poets of the North East have forged their feelings into words and I couldn't be prouder to be showcasing all of their incredible talent in this anthology.

I'd also like to take this opportunity to thank the wonderful staff at The Customs House past and present for allowing me this opportunity and for persevering through "the new normal". I'd like to especially thank Elizabeth Kane and Fiona Martin, for putting their faith in me and sharing their expertise.

But most of all, I'd like to thank everyone who entered this year. Poetry can do amazing things, and the 2020-21 Terry Kelly Poetry Prize has proven that in abundance.

Lauren Aspery
Terry Kelly Poetry Prize Coordinator

MAKER

Terence Kelly

Maggie scraped potatoes
as you struck bright metal
into heels and soles,
nursing each nail
between careful lips.

I have the last you used,
the words of its maker
running along the grey spine
into my heart.

MAKER looks at Terry and Tom's Grandfather, James Robert (Tot) Henderson repairing his boots. The poem featured in MOCKING THE AFFLICTED Terry's only pamphlet, published in 1993.

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Poets 11 and Under

Primary

A Pocket Full of Toffees

Standing on a platform in a line,
we all wished we had more time,
it's now or never to say goodbye,
I try very hard not to cry.

My mother kissed me gently on the head,
trying to hold back all the dread,
she told me I didn't have to put up with this war,
but my heart was still horribly torn.

In my pocket were some toffees to chew on,
I knew this journey would take very long.
Mother released my hand,
I took one last look at my city that was being banned.
I hope to come home soon,
what if there is no home to return to?

Sophie Barnard

The Storm

Huge, dark clouds gathered across the sky,
like foreboding, grey waves rolling across the sea,
thunder booms and lightning crackles,
as the storm crawls closer.

The storm grows louder,
and the sky grows darker,
lightning strikes the ground with an almighty crash,
illuminating the windows of a small, wooden house on a hill.

The storm is raging, thunder rumbles the ground,
clouds slither across the inky black sky,
like a snake stalking its prey,
they twist and turn and fade away to reveal a charcoal-
coloured sky,
the bright moon reflects on an icy lake and stars glimmer,
the night is silent again as the storm has passed.

Lillah Birrell

The Battle For Britain

It's Monday morning across the UK
The children woke up to start their day
But soon their laughter turned to a shriek
As they all realised it's home school for another week

Covid-19
Is what we're fighting
In our country we are blessed
Because we have the NHS
Soon the days will brighten
And we will all be reuniting

But for now
Stay safe and stay inside
And soon we will be side by side
When this pandemic is over.

Oliver Brown

The Rainbow Poem

Rainbows in every window, as far as we can see

A wonderful display of colours and happiness, I'm sure you
will all agree

In uncertain times we all help each other out, we come
together and unite

NHS are some of our heroes, they will never give up the fight

Be happy, be positive, and always wear a smile upon your
face

Our world is a little scary right now, but if we all play our part
we can make it a better place

We will all get through this together, but we have to be brave
and bold

This will go down in history, something to tell our kids one
day, what a story to be told.

Joel Carline

Biscuits

Black and curly
With fur so swirly
Bouncing like a frog
Biscuits is my dog

She is very kind
And helps clear my mind
When I'm sad or feeling bad
Biscuits cheers me up
She is the bestest pup
She loves her ball and her ted
And loves to jump on my bed

I love her more than the best computer game
I wonder if she loves me the same

Ben English

Chocolate

Chocolate is brown
Chocolate is white
Chocolate is dark
Chocolate is light
Whenever you are hungry
Take a bar
Whenever you are sick
You've gone too far

Charlie Fleming

Confidence

Can't think
only my brain stops me,
nervous is only a feeling
fighting with myself to believe
I can. I can.
Do what you do
everybody has their thing.
Nobody judges you,
confidence is everything,
enjoy the challenge and keep trying.

Joe Gettins

My home

The ground is hot, just like the sun
Nowhere to hide, nowhere to run,
My whole world has turned flame red
no trees, no plants, burnt ground instead

The firemen work hard with all their might,
They blast their hoses day and night
But the water just can't flow fast enough
To stop fires that rage throughout the bush

I survived, I am safe,
Found by volunteers while hiding away
But lots of my friends weren't as lucky as me
No food, water or shelter in trees

The place we call home no longer remains
A quarter of koalas have passed away
Kangaroos, bats, camels and birds
The creatures that made up my everyday world

Everything has changed, how will it end?
What will happen to me and my friends?
When the flames finally die and the rain falls down hard
I will always remember the bush as it was.

My home.

Alice Jeane Maguire

Quinn and Norman

I have a dog called Quinn,
it is a she not a him.

I also have a guinea pig called Norman,
he is brown, curly and furry.

I like to play with my pets,
but they never give me any rest,
my dog is naughty she eats socks and rocks,
but my Norman is a good boy that brings me lots of joy.
I love my pets very much,
because they are super soft to touch.

Harley Miller

Paper on the pavement

I saw it
over there; swirling,
spiralling, soggy
from rain and snow melt.
Paper,
on the pavement,
creased, folded,
dirty and damp.

What message was carried?
Invitation or card?
"I love you" "I miss you"
A bunch of words;
abandoned,
forgotten,
dropped.
Never to be read.

Wrapping paper ripped
from treasured toy.
Broken, rubbish,
bin tipped over;
Tumbling now through
mud and leaves.

Family photo fallen,
left behind, from
pocket or purse?
Or simply none,
nothing, blank,
plain.

Alexandra Prideaux

Poets 11-16

Secondary

My So-Called Life

Living life as a young carer, is no easy task
I may be smiling, but I'm hurting behind that smile
Waking up, getting ready, off to help mum
Going to bed, listening for mum settling down
Then I can close my eyes.

Worried to leave the house for my bus
Some days I wonder- what will I come back to?
Frightened I will lose her one day
Some days it feels I've no freedom to enjoy

I love my mum, I don't want to lose her
If she does - my heart will be empty.
Feeling lost or just feeling upset!
This isn't how I feel
It's the start of the next chapter.

Feeling like giving up sometimes!
Or like I want to cry!
But deep, deep down,
My mum IS A FIGHTER!
My family is strong,

I will continue the *fight*.

Megan Alderson

Sunrise Liberation

Standing still, colours fill the sky
buried in ice, my joy in disguise.
Kaleidoscopes in concrete seas,
colours sharp descend in me.

With scarlet blood, gasping for air.
My sapphire skin so numb and fair,
purple bruises, joints inflamed,

green plump lips, in greed and shamed.

Frigid valleys punish me in beauty,
in loyal honour for their duty.
Buried in ice, I disintegrate
in seconds I await my fate.

Then sunrise came, in orange light.
My oceans fade into the night,
thawing limbs in sun rays' doubt,

former colours out my mouth.

My flesh and blood racing so low,
wet and warm in melted snow.
Standing still, in coloured cries
as the sun's warmth fills the skies.

Brody Amare

Nature

In the spring,
I can see the trees swaying-
The leaves standing tall of the branches
The buds starting to grow.
I smell freshly cut grass
I hear the birds tweeting
And all animals nearby.

In the summer,
I can see the trees,
Blowing in the wind
The leaves,
The shining of the sun
The buds are opening,
Beautiful colours grow.

In the autumn,
I can see the bare trees
The floor,
Covered with leaves
I hear the wind
And the animals –
Deer, prancing around.

In the winter,
I can see the snow
Covering the floor,
The ice on all the rooftops
I can smell the fires from houses.

Naomi Atkinson

Slam Poem

I've been resting and nesting so soporific in my bed
I've been making with baking and then it was fed
I've been working so hard to keep myself fit, at five o one
each evening did I mention... **The Fire Pit**
But overall my favourite thing, other than food and acting
Is time with family, and that's lovely, as they help me live so
happily
This poem was by yours truly
Now go make this day in a Greeeeaaaat way!

Conor J Carson

Poem About Me

To the earth my thoughts are bound,
my amazing knowledge is to astound.
To the earth I am bound with invisible ties,
I try not to, but sometimes I tell the stupidest lies.

My amazing intellect wasn't earned it was found,
when people think I'm wrong I think of putting their head into
the ground,
when I get nervous, my body stays, but my mind flies,
when I'm angry I stay silent for my mind gives up and dies

The days I'm good, I'm best
however, the days I'm bad I put to rest
as I know I'm always right
whenever people think I'm wrong I lose my light.

When that happens, my behaviour becomes sporadic,
Some people may consider it to be barbaric.
My mind is my powerful tool,
anyone that challenges it is a massive fool.

All of this is a gigantic burden to hold,
when someone takes what is mine, my blood freezes and my
heart turns to cold.
I know I need to enjoy my life the best I can,
when someone disrespects me they see me for who I am.

If someone thinks down to me, it destroys my day,
even in bed I struggle to lay.
As I am not a normal person, I am me,
I shouldn't need to think to flee.

I may not be a perfect sunshine ray,
everyday I do not think I should stay calm and lay,
everyone looks at me and thinks I'm bad
and others look and think I'm just being a rage

But all I have to say is I try my best
and every day is a very hard test.

McKenzie Davies

The New Ways of The World

The world is changing and for the better.
It's been modernised and even changed the way we write
people letters.
There are new gadgets in town, there's Alexas and Chromes
galore,
Google home and its Google Gnome will soon be beside every
back door.
There are no more stereos or cassette decks,
there is now DAB radio which is all digital and hi-tech.
Homework is no longer done on paper,
it's done online and sent in to the teacher in the blink of an
eye.
There's no way the original ways can compete with the
internet so don't even bother to try.
But gadgets have their downsides too,
kids used to play outside until they couldn't see
whereas now they would rather sit at home and play Forza
Horizon 3.
I think the new ways of the world are cool
and if I was asked what I'd prefer I'd say the present rules.

Harry Gettins

You're Never Alone

You're never alone
when going through a tough time
you will always have someone there,
even if it doesn't always feel like that
because, *you* will never be alone.

I once went through a tough time –
my mum had cancer –
she was brave and never gave up,
she is okay now
because, *she* was never alone in her fight.

There were many downsides –
she lost her hair and wore a wig,
she had one bad week, then two good
but she fought it.
She was *never* alone during her fight

You must believe me,
I have told you
I have shown you
for you to remember, forever.
You're never alone!

You may go through a tough time too
whether it's a friend or family
or something else,
even nothing at all,
just remember, you're *never* alone!

Sophie Harrison

The Long Break

Sitting on the couch today I'm feeling very agitated about what's going on at this moment in time
I'm worried about going out because of what could happen to me
This annoys me because of what I could be doing
So much more than what I'm doing right now
Such as going to birthday parties and going out to eat with my family and friends
I'm even missing going to school and being able to talk to my friends face to face
Instead of being able to do this I'm having to talk to them online
I'm even having to talk to some of my family members through the windows
This upsets me because I can't even hug my grandma because she might get the virus
I'm keeping myself busy by trying out new cooking recipes on how to make chocolate brownies and smoothies
I think my family have enjoyed eating them (hopefully they don't have food poisoning)
The main bad thing in my opinion about the virus is that nobody knows when this is going to end
It could go on for weeks or months and lots of people are dying, it's terrifying
I'm trying not to watch the news too much because it is so depressing
My family holiday at Easter was cancelled recently which I was massively upset about
I just want things to get back to normal
Hopefully it soon will.

Layla Howey

Fire & Nature

The Fire shines bright like Mars
While the lamp leader sings with his guitar
Roasting marshmallows
In the flames that are yellow

The trees swaying in the wind,
While the wind grinned
Although the summer breeze
Brings all the bees

The fire is burning
While the sun says goodbye
And the night approaches here

The fire dances like a night-fly
In the night sky
Now we say goodbye
And the fire is going to die.

Alex Olsen

The Sorrow Of War

The stench of death
Clings to their breath
As the brave men return
Their emotions churn
Sadness and fear
Elation and cheer
Their spirits broken
Their demons awoken
It clings to them like mud
If only they could
Return to that one place
Their tearful lover's face

Dylan Olsen

The mental health of a teenage girl

She hides behind a mask plastered with a smile, a heart as fragile as porcelain.

She struggles daily to face herself in the mirror as she feels nothing but unattractive, ridiculous and pain.

She often wonders about what happened to the happy, confident and friendly girl she knew and how careless she was before toxic thoughts really flooded through.

She walks upon the streets constantly comparing herself to the gorgeous models she passes reminding herself that she will never be as beautiful as those girls and is nothing compared to them.

She goes home and paints on a mask of perfection over her face in order to feel more confident about herself not realising beauty lies on the inside. Her expression bears a plastered smile and her eyes are a prison trapped with the demons that taunt her mind.

She walks towards her mirror and wipes the false beauty trapping her in her own skin of her face tears streaming down her face and ultimately realises that although she may feel undervalued, alone and judged that true beauty is what's from the inside and out and that she is truly beautiful.

Hannah May Purvis

Stars Don't Shine Without the Darkness

I look into the sky,
and dream of precious diamond-like stars
twinkling in the darkness.

Angels in the midnight-blue
hidden away, looking over us.

They help us conquer our fears -
destroy our weakness.

I gaze into the night sky and
remember all the lost loved ones

The stars will take their midnight nap
and see you soon.

Holly Roper

GREY PARADISE

There is a hummingbird on the moon
Defiantly flying free
Away from his home
But he always comes back

Zooming through the air, buzz, buzz
On his small grey paradise
Being himself for once
Being himself for once

Playing rough with his friends
Trying to snatch a seed
All gone away for now
Because he's on his own grey paradise

Flying around the dunes
Never stopping for a rest
Watching the sun come up,
Someday, he'll return to his own grey paradise
Someday, he'll return to his own grey paradise.

Kieran Simpson

She

Airbrush your personality and
convince them you're so different,
just like she,
you're cool, quirky, your physicality is of hers,
you are not like the other girls

you are sexy and tasteful, poreless and flawless, hairless with
bare legs,
and you really couldn't care less
if she said, "I think she used a filter"
for that she is bitter,
for you are gold in that picture
so she must be glitter.

But if I say she is beautiful it is because she is, and she
carries grace and strength and love
like she carries her burdens and regrets
with just as much strength as no one would expect,
It doesn't mean I believe
I'm not of her worth, I couldn't achieve.

So with the fears I will eventually
lose sight of my hips and flat stomach,
Then progress into a trapped algorithm
because Mr Zuckerberg wants his system
to be as thorough as my occasional calculator
specialised for calories and could you please,
not offer me that opportunity again,
I just need some time to myself
and my phone.

But one day you will know,
there is no need for a filter to suppress your flaws that glow,
only flowers and pure love in everything you see,
not taken up by appetite suppressant remedies.

don't be fake, you are always enough,
you are an immovable piece of art,
not beautiful, not made for the pleasure of others,
you are an inscrutable treasure unlike any other.

so you get up and get out,
unafraid to be the girl that can do it successfully.
and then, like baby steps, so steadily,
will you become your own she.

Eliza Grace Strassheim

Splintered

Gun jaw to matted hair and tired face,
But not to bite but maul,
To frozen, fractured cell encase,
A creature of perpetual fall.

Wrack the lace of venom that,
Ensnares the common flower,
But not to broken scars get at,
And wear the teeth of great devour.

To writhe within a captive soul,
Of straight jackets jewel encrusted,
To patch a ripped heart with a hole,
For in what intangible mass have I trusted.

Crumpled paper fly from hand to hand,
Thorned with privilege is conversation heard,
Days in front with nights between are banned,
Slow hours on the clock are slurred.

Pace of life whiles away beneath my feet,
As judge dictate nail to wood through dry hands pass,
Back down coil to cell through empty street,
All saw, I do not see but bottled gas.

Of isolation shadows of the now appear,
Flowers drawn on window water again revealed,
Flock like hungry canines with teeth to jeer,
Minds of empty dust and beetles sealed.

Lay down on cobbled floor to sleep,
To my empty sockets refill,
In dark for all I've lost I weep,
But wake again I will.

Anna Sudlow

Poets Over 16

To and From Love

How shall you be loved, O world?
With your painted sea of blue.
When I have seen so much,
And yet so little, to pledge my love to you.

The gathering of the first sun,
As it smiles its rosy glow,
Or listening each breeze inhale,
Along severed grass that grow.

What of the scorch across desert lands?
Of those starved from weak of heart.
Glass broken that struggles to fix,
To love all and restart.

The transfixing beauty of the stars.
The pungent air's darkness haze.
And to sit and dream a garden,
With the moonlight all ablaze.

What of the shadows discord and lurking?
In the night's tears so blindly,
And of those who've lost and weep so,
Loving and losing unkindly.

Yet, I have love for thee, O Earth!
To search some goodness in our lives.
There is everything to do.
To see so much,
And always so little, I pledge a love to you.

Anna Blackwood

Hear This.

Before my hands house blue rivers
And my legs are solid stone
Before my eyes lose their shine
And you no longer make sound
Before motion is painful
And the world becomes cold,
Hear this.

Before my fingers seize up
And my mind seizes too
Before my memory fades
And my hair is snow white
Before I need a third leg
And can no longer wear shoes
Hear this.

Before my world becomes dark
And I sit here alone
Before I can no longer dance
And answer the phone
Hear this.

Before my organs shut down
And my blood cannot flow
Before I can no longer breathe on my own
Hear this.

Before I must leave you
And accept my fate
Before my body closes its gates
Hear this.

After I'm gone, I'll look after you still
Though my body is gone
My spirit will
Look as I once did
Not withered, or old just
Spritely and bold
And happy that the world is no longer cold.
Remember this.

Jane Carrick

The beauty of a Blank Page

The beauty of a blank page is that it has no visible flaws,
It has no rips or cuts or crinkles that distort its flat shape.
It may glisten with a golden hue under the flicker of
candlelight,
And it is smooth and clean, but it lacks the personality
through life
That you will glean.

The horror of a blank page is the time you fear you may
muddy it,
Or make a mark you may regret.
Haunting you until the ears can only hear the distant tolling of
the bells
And the pitter patter of soil like falling shells.
Deep and deep and deeper you will go,
But the blank page will only rise, it won't stay below.

Although what can you say when all is done and the only
thing you know
Is the boring perfection of white paper, an unstained soul?

No dimples, tears or stitches.
Who are you?
A blank reflection.

I have learnt that the ship's journey may wet it, but it will dry.
Little cracks will appear and it may shrivel like a crinkle cut
crisp,
But it may change colour as a kiss will blend it with another.
A divorce may leave it with tears against the grain, but a love
may nurture it,
Just like a scraped knee meets a band-aid.

It is a space of utter freedom, intimidating perhaps at the
start,

A place to run your paint-brush or paint over and re-start.
No work will ever be lost, the masking leaving bumps your
fingers can trace,
It may fall out of a plane with you, or finish last place in a
race.

It may be embraced with warm blue waves, or lost in bright
white snow.

It may take off to where golden birds perch on boughs and
sing a sweet song.

It will become a map, like the back of your aged hand, with
sun spots and scars,

The beauty of a blank page – well there are lots, and lots of
uncertainties,

So who knows how yours will go?

Vicky Gill

Time

Is life made only beautiful by death?

Rising
after dreams of being loved,
I thought:
we dream as we die.

Beach Baby made me cry
by my Mother in the car,
driving past the cemetery
where the blossom trees breeze
beside the rays of cold February light
that shine through
over the ground of graves;
they must've been wonderful people,
and this must've been a wonderful place.

Like the end of an indie film,
maybe this world was not made for me.

Love is probably fatal.

Harry Lowery

Adrift

A masterwork of metalwork
Degrades dainty into darkness
As fragments float
On an oasis of ocean

Salvation sits stagnant
Atop the ancient abyss
As scattered souls
Await rescue or ruination

Delicate dreamers dare
To think of futures first
While sour-hearted cynics
Delve into deadly despair

Daniel O'Donnell

An apology from the past.

Sorry he was disgusted at the way he was.

Sorry he ironed out all the odd parts of himself.

Sorry he honoured likes and numbers and grades:

Such as GCSEs, As, SATS, Insta feeds,

over BAME, HFA, OCD -

Who cares about his autism?

- it didn't get him any more views.

Sorry, he remained "normal" for so many women,

each tempting summer he neglected their pride,

Except his very own – to swallow and die.

Sorry, he was mentally barren for so long,

Denying the feeble child inside the man,

Denying his mulatto blood under his pale skin.

"The more white I am - the more right I am"

He would always stutter to himself, as he

Purged through his imperfections,

one by one.

Sorry there were so many smiles, so much joy,
posted on a socially-crazed nightmare,
Instead of being suspended in precious youth
A past long gone.

Cayman Osei-Bonsu

A place that wasn't mine and a place that is

I

I pick you out on a map a year ago today
Received the blueprints for the house and traced every sliver
of white with my fingers
to then be demolished
a hole within me cut clearly with a tower
chiselled by a morning choir

I am reduced to no more than an examination
stripped bare and splayed on glorified parchment
and perhaps a little girl still reaches out for a dark blue ribbon
and perhaps a spinster cranes her neck to look above again

but perhaps a hand will brush your walls
and perhaps the wall will exert equal in return
to breathe with me
respire with my very being
even if for just a second
for the same soft navy to loop around my wrist
and wave, wave you down the river

I still bow to you, but perhaps you should bow to me
and ask
'why do you kneel for what is really only bricks and mortar?'

II

you will adopt her bricks and mortar that crumble
and you find debris in your court shoes ten years later
with spires etched into your skin
spring gentian pools at your ankles

always your beautiful stronghold
the walls that take you in when you first meet
to tell you of safety and longing and wanting, wanting
you will cry for her when you hear her bells sing

the flowers that seed from you make their own pilgrimage,
flanked in soft palatinate
you reach out for her countless times,
give her all you can bleed.
she will match you
she will catch you every time, every time.

Holly Parkinson

What we need

Sunflowers grow towards the sun
Darkness frightens
the glare of the moon
it does not compare
The brightness of the sky
The sunflower grows
So why can't I?
Fed goodness in life
positivity and good vibes
Shouldn't it lead to a generation to shy away from darkness,
from the unknown within us?
But we fall
We are not flowers
Soft structured and wilting away
Vulnerability does not sustain itself in the mindset of a
champion
But rather captivates the attention
of the mind's eye
We drive on
Determined to be brave
Sunflowers need light
All we need is ...

Millie Taylor

A Book Discarded in the Park

A story stifled,
Pages outspread like the branched arms of trees,
Yearning for the illumination of the sky,
Or perhaps the light of a bedside lamp
During midnight reading.

You once loved her printed words so,
That you welcomed her into bed, and wherever you'd go,
With fingertips flicking with desire,
Aching to know how the finale would unfold.

The finale flopped, just like the pages as they hit the same
ground
Where they still lie, soaked in sunlight,
The dry mud inscribing its own story
Over forgotten imagery and metaphors

Leanna Thomson

Anniversary

It was their anniversary
and they were having an argument.

She knew this because his face
was flat like a stone
and just as impenetrable;
lips a flat line
like a pulse monitor
hooked up to their onion heart.

Carol Ann Duffy was right.

They were making plans,
spinning a globe like children
and just as petulantly;
making plans for next year
like they weren't going to be over
by next Thursday.

It was their anniversary
and they were having an argument.

Emma Turner

Group Poems

Inspired by Cornish

CHANGE

Change is something different

Having a second chance

A change could be good

Nobody can stop you from changing

Going that extra mile

Everyone can change

LIFE

Life is where you start

It was where Norman started his journey

Forever changing his way, his work, his practice

Everything, everywhere and everyone changes

JOURNEY

Journey is about getting started

Opening up your eyes

Unable to tell people he was great

Reminded himself never to give in

Never listened to those who said he'd never become an artist

Everyone liked his work

Yesterday was like my journey had just started

FOOTBALL

Football is a physical sport

Our hard work pays off

Our team move forward like a pack of hyenas

Then we have an opportunity to score

Beating the opposition

Always practice makes perfect

Losing isn't an option

Learning from my mistakes

GAMING

Going for wins

Achieve tiers

Make a better team, so everyone can be involved

If I make a mistake, I try and try again

Never be negative, always be positive

Give people a chance

MONEY

Make more money by working hard and investing

Offer money to people who need some

Never stop working hard

Everyone should work hard, to earn their money

You'll always need money for something

Greenfield Community College

*Kallum Bagnall, Leon Derrick, Ellis Hudspeth, Bradley Lauder,
Kieran Walton, Sophie Williamson*

Working Together

We scratch our heads
We bite our pens
But all the ideas are scarce,
We think and think but nothing comes
With no time to spare.

The ink touches the paper, and we start to write
The short lines of success start to flow
We are agreed we like doing this
We like to have a go.

This is our poem about writing poems.
Then the headaches become scares.

Holly Roper and Naomi Atkinson

Tom Kelly – Head Judge and brother of Terry Kelly

Head Judge Tom Kelly was born in Jarrow has had a varied career from his first job in a Jarrow shipyard Time-Office; to a song writing contract and writing the BBCTV musical documentary Kelly, with Alan Price (of the Animals) and writing songs for a number of artistes including Marianne Faithfull. He has had a number of full-length stage plays produced by The Customs House, including award winning I Left My Heart in Roker Park which has been produced four times. Tom's musicals, written with John Miles include: The Dolly Mixtures, Geordie, Tom & Catherine, Dan Dare, The Machine Gunners. In 2016 he was a runner-up in the Journal Culture Awards, in the Writer of the Year category, for Geordie-The Musical, produced by The Customs House in 2015 and reprised at the Tyne Theatre & Opera House, Newcastle in 2017. 2016 also saw his eighth poetry collection Spelk published by Red Squirrel Press. Of late his poetry has appeared in the Bloodaxe anthology Land of Three Rivers - The Poetry of North-East England. He was Writer-in-Residence at The Word from March to May 2018. He has had the short story pamphlet The Last Clockwork Whippet on the Tyne and a short story collection Behind the Wall published by Postbox Press. His most recent poetry collection This Small Patch was published in 2020 by Red Squirrel Press.

Here is a poem Tom wrote for and about Terry. The poem features in his collection This Small Patch.

Memory Stairs
(Terry Kelly 1958-2016)

It's not a constant ache, more longing,
email will suffice,
something bridging this gap.

I see your doppelganger
in a city street:
high forehead, eyes alert, searching
for the book no-one else will *ever* have.

I am calculating your age,
this or that year. Your hair spreads,
lapping up and down on your brow,
the time escapes me.

Some moments appear,
running down memory stairs,
fall apart with my heart.

I will not keep the review from 'The Independent.'

It's March and snow is up to my knees,
crossing the dene where it is deeper.
Auntie Bridget struggles into galoshes,
has me hold her arm jiggling down the path.

The rest is clanging bottles of oxygen. And you and
mother screaming through papier-mâché walls.

My memory is going into over-drive,
getting it all wrong.
You went over the handlebars and your curly locked head
danced to the ground.

Now I see you. Like our father,

on the day before your birthday.
Snow has gone,
only edges remain,
bacon rinds on an empty plate.

You would say Ian Hamilton would have pared this down
to a silver thread on a dark overcoat,
standing out so clear
like you today.

Lauren Aspery – Terry Kelly Poetry Prize Coordinator

Lauren, originally from Middlesbrough, recently completed an English Literature masters at Newcastle University, where she researched British children's poetry prizing and poetry picturebooks. Lauren is a two-time winner of the Terry Kelly Poetry Prize (2017 and 2018), and since then her success has continued, having now been published in three print literary journals and six anthologies, as well as appearing in various places online. She recently won the Loft Books International Poetry Competition, came second in the Young Poets Network Carol Ann Duffy challenge in 2019, and was named the Poet-in-residence commendation at Chester Cathedral's inaugural Young People's Poetry Competition, while also being shortlisted and longlisted elsewhere. When Lauren isn't writing poetry, she works as a school librarian and has a life-long fascination with the sinking of the *RMS Titanic*.

"The day I began believing in my poetry was the day I found out I had won the Terry Kelly Poetry Prize for the first time. It is that confidence that has allowed me to send my work out into the world, and I've never looked back since. It all started in our little corner of the North East at The Customs House! For any young poets (or parents/guardians) who are unsure of where to start, please get in touch with me at tkppcoordinator@gmail.com for a chat."

**Terry Kelly Poetry Prize Anthology
2020-21**

A collection from young poets based in the
North East.



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