

# Welcome to Issue 4 of Antiphon

## Summer 2012

It doesn't seem five minutes since we started this project, and already we're completing a year of *Antiphon*. This issue is bigger and better than ever, with poems from Philip Quinlan, Sheila Black, Ben Wilkinson and L.M. Price, among many others, and reviews of new publications from James Caruth, Julie Mellor and Janette Ayachi. We have an interview with Poetry Business prizewinner Suzannah Evans, and a couple of thought-provoking articles on the sonnet.

Issue 5 will have the general theme of Time, but as always we will mix the themed work with a selection of other excellent poems.



**Issue 4, Summer 2012**

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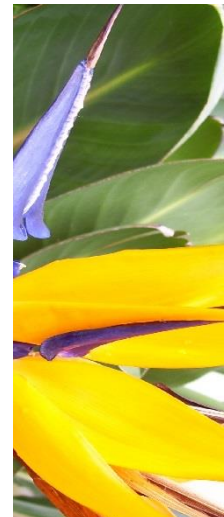
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**Applause - Our Contributors**

## Prologue

### Issue 4 Editorial

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When I first read Billy Collins's *Ballistics*, I summarised it as: "Time passes. Things change. It's sad."\*

Time has passed for *Antiphon*. This is our fourth issue, so we've been going a whole year. Things have changed. But there's been very little sadness involved. Quite the opposite, in fact. Rosemary and I are still friends, and both remain relatively unscarred. Our little magazine is no longer quite as little as we thought it might be, with hundreds of hopeful submissions and over a thousand visitors for each of the three issues to date.

Over the year, we've been pleased to have some well-known names offering their work, but even more pleased by the quality and range of work from relatively unknown poets. For that's still our aim: to offer opportunities for the many excellent poets around who've had less chance to be heard than their work deserves.

*Antiphon* has grown a little in that year, although we've aimed to keep the number of poems, articles and reviews in proportion. This issue, we decided to allow ourselves to accept more than one poem from poets we particularly like, so that's meant this issue is just a little larger than before. Hopefully we'll continue to grow in this controlled way, a few poems at a time.

It has been hard work, and that's the main reason we're not likely to let the magazine get much larger, despite its success. However, we're seriously thinking of producing a print anthology of the first year's work, which would be a significant next step. If you'd be interested in such a thing, you might drop us a line.

We've been delighted with the response to our call for sonnets and are pleased to publish traditional examples as well as those that play with the form. In all cases we've selected work where the form works with the poem, enhancing its musicality and meaning, rather than controlling it. It's good to see that the sonnet works well with contemporary language and some very modern subject matter. We have interspersed the sonnets with our usual variety of other excellent work.

As we look forward to our second year with issue 5, we thought it might be appropriate to invite poems on the theme of Time. As always, we'll accept good poems on any subject. We suggest a theme in the hope of prompting poets to try something unusual or more inventive, and to give the magazine a little unity, of course.

Unfortunately, Time is a bit of a cliché as a theme, likely to generate any number of poems about winged chariots, the inevitability of loss, the ageing process, nostalgia, regret, autumn and winter. These aren't really what we want to see. Unless (as for any subject) they're really good, original, musical poems, of course. What we really hope for is poems with an original slant on time—maybe some aspect of time travel, or musical time, or time zones, subatomic

time, time's arrow, anachronism, entropy, the time of your life, the end of time—you get the idea—something different. Time for something new.

NW

\*You may surmise I was a bit dismissive of Collins's work. I'm now a reformed character.

Act One



## The Hanoi Intricacy

Machine conceit to measure the already known,  
which keeps good secrets; a cantankerous affair  
of clanking latches, locks; cat's cradle; paradox  
which stacks the odds, leaving the evenings undone.

Here, clear full-filling finds its own solution  
drip by drop by ratchet lift, the flip and flop of  
instability. Water's unwinding is the key:  
vortices oscillate, replacing weights, then wait.

Nothing depends from this: no pendulum. Its face  
betrays no hands to finger figures. In pursuit of  
its enigma, it will tell in time, articulate  
in perpetuity, although it cannot tock.

Gilt lilies glister on its pediment of lead.

One day it dawns on you: *this clock is not a clock.*

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*Philip Quinlan*

## Brainstorm

The mirror makes her face a cubist jumble  
of planes and angles—fragments wrenched askew:  
the mouth is half gone, one eye takes a tumble,  
the forehead falters in and out of view.  
But no, Picasso's lines are more assured  
and bolder, modeled on a robust nude,  
while this pale portrait seems to have been blurred  
and cracked by brainwaves maimed or misconstrued.  
Alarmed, she peers more closely at deflections  
of cheek and jaw—but as an eyebrow breaks,  
she recognizes one of those reflections  
that neither stroke nor artful brush stroke makes:  
her vision has been twisted by the flak  
that signals migraine's merciless attack.

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*Jean L. Kreiling*



## **The Land God Made in Anger**

*for Marcos*

heavy with grief, I lean over canned lentils  
divining fire licks—my tent staked in a mud trail  
where hooked wait-a-bit thorns mangle skin.

I dream of the land God made in anger:

Namib dunes are nesting whales.  
The man is smoke from a mosquito coil.  
Great sharks wash themselves ashore,  
a shoreline littered in carcasses & shale.  
Damara terns clatter this place of disassembly—  
black-billed pluck at greening flesh.  
Gulls toss in ocean fog,  
brine & algal blooms of shipwrecks.  
Longshore drift.  
Scree in the sea foam.  
Sea foam on black sand.

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*Joey De Jesus*

## Will

I tried keeping it under a tight lid.  
It steamed and simmered, boiled and bubbled, hot.  
What else was I to do? Well, what I did  
was—nothing. But at least this did not  
blow up the house, although it scorched the pot  
which, ugly and unusable, I've hid  
in the remotest cupboard, way in back.  
You wouldn't want to see a pot burned black.

But now I've met, well, let's just say, someone  
who makes me feel I want to boil a bit,  
and taken out the pot and polished it  
like new, although I have not yet begun  
to heat things. This time, once the stove is lit,  
I'll stir occasionally, until done.

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*James B Nicola*

## Mostly

This is how it was: a dance perhaps, or  
sometimes in the cinema's plush dark  
lit by a match, a cigarette. A walk  
after the last bus was long gone: you know  
those story lines, the comfort of fixed form  
that frothed to wedding white (a virgin lie)  
then ran its course. The black and white of it  
framed on the sideboard, and the children came  
neatly, at intervals; the template's fit  
never quite right, but almost, till the time  
a face, a look—a cup smashed on the floor,  
doors slammed, unsilenced, all the house undone  
by that new making, every smile and kiss.  
Oh love, when were there ever rules for this?

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*D. A. Prince*

## Waiting

Some nights I've seen  
a slice of silver creep along the room  
I now call home,  
across my makeshift bed—a rickety chair  
beside the snack machine.  
Close by, the elevators whirr and beep.  
I cannot, dare not, drift asleep,  
let down my guard,  
inviting shoulder taps, a whispered *Sir*,  
or dreams of her  
once brilliant eyes that stare & stare & stare,  
cold, distant, hard.  
So I will will her through another day.  
Make crazy compromises. Pray.

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*Catherine Chandler*

## Act Two



## Letters from Maun, Botswana

*“Fatshe la dikgomo, fatshe la mabele/Fatshe la mašwi a elelang jaaka metse/Mašwi a dikgomo di gangwang di robetse”*

*“Land of cows, land of sorghum/Land where milk flows like water/Milk of cows milked reclining”*

~ L. D. Raditladi, *“Fatshe la Batswana”*

1.

in the delta I saw a springbok lopped at the knees  
contents kept inside four-bellied ruminants  
splayed like four ripped feedsacks of spelt

stampeding wildebeest startled by the changes  
in the grass—the tread of lioness ghosts

2.

a blinking satellite wheels across a scattergraph of stars  
I stand among the ungulates—blue as Sirius—  
another shadow in the dark bracketed by cattle  
as they groan and shit in the kraal

they lick beads of the day's rain from each other's coats  
while dry lightning glimpses distant papyrus

dear midnight fullness, stomach pang  
dear crunched numberless  
wildebeest counts      my nest of papers

I've never known such darkness:  
lazuli giants silently burn  
the space junk constellates  
like bushberries on the blacktop  
to me, Orion guesses at his extra limbs,  
the bull on the horizon has a snaking tail

3.

Dear Mother, I've learned of  
winnowed seeds in a woven grass basket,  
kerosene and hard corn

bushwrens flutter in the brush  
while the cattlepost priest  
praises in his courtyard apse  
made of chicken-wire and thickets

he screeches badimo meaning  
ancestor or demon—dust and air

a tremor hums low  
what gifts I have for the earth

an alloy incisor, alloy fillings

water lily root flavors meat of earth  
some miles away tsessebes race to the pan  
and risen water floodplanes on

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*Joey De Jesus*

## Flash Point

*Matthew 26:53*

The thunder of their wings fills the sky.  
The guards look up, astonished; they are the first  
dropped senseless, impaled by unbridled light.

The crosspiece catches fire and embers fly  
across the wind. The nails melt. Spears burst,  
stabbing brutal hands. Stones ignite.

I rise to glory in flames that flare and die  
away, and leave man to undying night.

The angels sing. Their flawless voices ring  
hollow. I walk uncounted crystal ways—  
discord trembles in the air: a thorn

that snags the seamless weave. *There's nothing wrong,*  
He says, *Why do you ask?* Each step I take  
burns gold to ash. I cannot meet His eyes.

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*L. M. Price*



## Wondering If They Really Should Be Called 'Breakers'

What really breaks here? Something we should mourn?  
It's true that skyward arcs aspire, then fail,  
collapsing when they meet the weighty scorn  
of gravity. Wet violence assails  
the blameless dry land, and damp molecules  
that flowed together, possibly for miles,  
are parted, some to languish in dank pools  
for hours before reclaimed by tidal wiles.  
But tension breaks here, too—a tension built  
perhaps for miles. And long-held silence breaks,  
as blue reserve yields to white water's roar.  
A wave breaks tangled clumps of weed and silt,  
but neither hearts nor promises. What makes  
us mourn breaks elsewhere, not along this shore.

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*Jean L. Kreiling*

## Metamorphoses

These things we knew.

That the dark mud of the mere  
swallowed the flocks of autumn nightfall.

That the hawk's amphetamine hunger in winter  
became the cuckoo's spite in spring.

That the rood goose was born  
from out of the barnacle's shell.

That the fireflirt's song of summer kindled  
from the embers worn by the robin.

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*Matt Merritt*

## **The Dream of Art**

The eyes of the Yemeni tribal chief are hard  
and wet. An altogether promising start,  
despite my painting from a souvenir card  
and not from the sitting model. His antique heart  
is next. But how can I find it underneath  
the robes and leather belt? Behind the knife?  
Impossible! Instead I count the teeth  
and wait. But I've been waiting half my life.  
The telephone rings upstairs. It keeps on ringing  
as I adjust the dangling iron lantern.  
I'm kneeling in my palette. The lamp keeps swinging,  
twirling, brushing light against a pattern  
in the gessoed canvas, on the bone-dry size  
of cavities and pearls that were his eyes.

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*Rick Mullin*

## Poem

Instead of the lily, consider the *Crocus longiflorus*, think on its star or blue windmill of David and the droplet of fire drawing-pinned to its heart or throat, and act the common vandal,

drop-kicking a good handful of its pursed-lip seeds, dusting them across the clean white sheet of a wide green field; let them nuzzle warmly at the soil's cracks, guests wrecking the guest-room bed; later, at home, sit

alone, where nothing remains to be grown or said—angels dancing, weightless, in a Zippo lighter—and ease off your muddy boots, your feet still inside,

and clear your throat of its slight Blind Willie Johnson edge, devote the still-life evening to chancing your arm at de- and restringing the old guitar...

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*Adam Crothers*

## **Musk**

Even longing has its dusky scent,  
a musk of faded yellows, blossoms

once tight bright buds, sun and summer leaning  
nonchalant on window sills

or seated at a small round table, a porcelain demitasse  
casting blue shadows on white linen,

you walking towards me across, perhaps,  
an ancient piazza, stones worn by the hurried feet

of lovers who also dreamed of rushing  
into waiting arms.

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*Janet Butler*

## Interval

**Julie Mellor**, *Breathing through our Bones*, 24pp, £5.00

Smith/Doorstop Books, The Poetry Business, Bank Street Arts, 32-40 Bank Street, Sheffield S1 2DS

*Breathing Through Our Bones* is a pamphlet often rooted in place, and a familiarity with locale that is destabilised by the recurring theme of place as temporal, as well as spatial. The poems explore the transiency of dwelling, whether in a small, domestic setting, such as in "The Pantry", or somewhere more expansive. The title poem opens the collection with a paleontological landscape described in concise, visual language:

deep down in the seams of the earth, the wings  
of the first dragonflies, the flattened shells of crabs,  
lie imprinted in coal, along with the thigh bones  
of tyrannosaurus rex, which hold evidence

of air sacs, the pneumatisation that enables  
birds to fly ...

This strange earth is presented in relation to the more immediate environment of "... the tangled gardens of West Street, / ... heaped remains of old bathrooms, carcasses / of kitchens ...". The contrast between the coal seams littered with dragonfly remains and gardens littered with kitchen carcass is well crafted, although it seems artificially dualistic to present these landscapes at their most oppositional. However, the end of the poem subverts this parallel, bringing them and us inescapably together: "... Here in these towns where everyone / is someone's cousin twice removed, / we are all breathing through our bones."

This conjuring of past as present, the shadowy layers underpinning the everyday, takes on many forms, and contributes to the coherence of the collection.

In "Autobiography", the speaker begins a journey into her own past as the "shadow / on a blue hanger that once belonged / to my mother's sister". The strongest section of the poem describes the great great grandmother's death:

shot in an upstairs room

of the Blacksmith's Arms,  
the landlord's lover,  
two children to him, another

on the way. Three hours to die,  
bleeding through floorboards,  
a last kiss on her dying breath.

There is a tendency to explain the poignancy of the poem. In the final stanza, the speaker explains how she knows what's gone before, "because I'm the daughter / in this history of mothers". The value of this ancestry to the speaker, that she feels it as intrinsic to herself, is clear, and potentially more powerful, without this closing statement.

In "Inventory", the lives of those described are nameless, presented indirectly through household minutiae, a list that subtly generates vivid images of place and character:

A bed frame hoisted to the kitchen ceiling  
used as a rack to dry washing and flat cakes,

socks nailed to the mantelpiece, hanging  
like rabbit skins, steaming dry.

But here, too, there's a tendency to explain, with the delicate image of the penultimate line brought down by the ending: "and a child ... / threads of flax falling like snow from his hair, / trapped between his world and mine."

The imaginative leaps the poems make are engaging, from the personification of "Hen Brook" to the "Whisk" turning like "the winding gear at Dodworth pit". Again, it is Mellor's playful relationship with place that informs these poems, and the precision of her language, landscapes and narratives that pulls you in.

Breathing Through Our Bones was a winner in the 2012 Poetry Business Competition, judged by Carol Ann Duffy.

Angelina Ayers

**Janette Ayachi** *Pauses at Zebra Crossings*, 36pp, £3  
original plus, 17 High Street, Maryport, Cumbria, CA15 6BQ

Whilst the appearance of this pamphlet is not as slick as those of some other presses around (margins are uneven, printing has slewed the type on one page) these small oddities nevertheless give it a certain authenticity. In any case, whilst the presentation is slightly distracting in some cases, it doesn't detract from the poems themselves. However, they might perhaps benefit from a slightly stronger editorial control. Whilst one can never be sure what is intended and what is accidental, there appear to be missing and spurious question marks, missing apostrophes and perhaps a missing word.

The poems themselves centre on the life of cities. London, Edinburgh, Barcelona, Rome, Los Angeles, Amsterdam, New York are all featured. Some of the accounts seem strongly biographical, others more imagined. Somewhat surprisingly the cities are not always distinct, despite the level of detail Ayachi aims to squeeze in. In fact, the same details appear in her accounts of different cities. For example, she notes the 'Bauhaus architecture' of both Edinburgh ('Pauses at Zebra Crossings') and Amsterdam ('Amsterdam's Spine') and identifies two different entrances as opportunities to enter 'another story' (aircraft lead to 'another city...another story' in 'Airports'; windows in 'The Madwoman and her Lover in the Attic').

It's perhaps not cities but the stories they contain that intrigue this poet most, especially those of human relationships: 'Barcelona will always be about us' ('Our Barcelona Ending'). At their best, the poems suggestively evoke a place, put consciousness in it, and let the reader interpolate a story:

All the brickwork is unsteady, my inky  
fingertips grip the edge as the wind wraps  
around contours to tap the pile of scented love  
letters on the table  
(‘Durer in Nuremburg’)

Cityscapes are filled with images that cross the boundaries of place and awareness, so the account of one becomes an image of the other – cities as states of mind. This sometimes works very well, place and the experience of it being inseparable. But sometimes the accumulation of detail, aiming for accurate observation or emotional intensity, seems overdone and unsatisfying. A poem may be vivid and expressive at one point, then seem to be striving for effect. For example, I feel the alliteration here is simply too much:

An army of hostesses hosting high hair  
high fashion and high eyebrows  
(‘Airport’)

This may be done for comic effect, but it doesn’t really work for me. Compare this with the much stronger sonic effects in:

The lipsticked Tynemouth creases a smile,  
leather gums undertow, deadlocked under docks  
where a slippery mass of bearded stalactites  
blind the depths and deafen the shallows.  
(‘To Drown in the Tyne’)

I’m not entirely convinced by the facial imagery for the river here, but the phonic devices are powerful.

Similarly one image may be strikingly imaginative and another simply puzzling. For example, the phrase ‘I felt like an amateur sniper accomplice’ in ‘Los(t) Angeles’ could mean the accomplice of an amateur sniper or the amateur accomplice of a sniper (or various other possibilities). Whereas ambiguity in poetry is often an enhancement, the extra detail here adds ambiguity which merely perplexes.

In fact, there are several occasions in this volume where I think the poems might benefit from slightly tighter editorial control. There are the relatively minor punctuation issues mentioned above, but also some lines where the grammar seems to me simply wrong. Of course, the syntax of poetry may vary radically from normal language, but the examples I’m thinking of simply seem wrong in the context of the poem. Here’s one: ‘Uranium light belts / behind nebula and bounces off my body’. Is ‘belts’ a verb, equivalent to ‘bounces’ or is ‘Uranium light belts’ a noun phrase? If the former, shouldn’t ‘nebula’ be plural, or is there an article missing? Or in ‘To Drown in the Tyne’:

I am hung-over on the Millennium bridge,  
its cinematically haunting like a mist  
over a reservation

Isn’t ‘cinematically’ the noun subject of ‘haunting’, so intended as ‘cinematicity’? Or if it is intended as an adjectively modifier of ‘haunting’ shouldn’t it be ‘cinematical’? Such difficulties, though minor, can complicate the interpretation of poems which are baroque or ripe with detail, sometimes spoiling the imaginative richness of the work.



So, whilst the work has many strengths it could probably be more controlled in its intent. Observationally, emotionally, imaginatively and in its use of language it has much to offer. But it sometimes goes too far, sometimes chooses an exaggerated expression where simpler language might be more effective and the poet might find a less relaxed editorial hand more helpful. At the same time, one wouldn't want to suppress Ayachi's questing imagination nor limit her reach – there are some vibrant, unusual images here and a sense of the grit and grease of real cities that's well worth the exploration.

NW

**James Caruth**, *Marking the Lambs*, 32pp, £5

Smith/Doorstop Books, The Poetry Business, Bank Street Arts, 32-40 Bank Street, Sheffield S1 2DS

Jim Caruth's poems are infused with melancholy. They note beauty, but often only in its passing. Whilst they're not nostalgic or sentimental, they are full of backwards glances, and a wistful acknowledgement that we must deal with life as it is, irrespective of how it was or how we would like it to be.

The language is everywhere sparse and subtle, almost, but not quite, conversational, and often urged on by a sense of real people's histories, perhaps the poet's own, perhaps imagined. At times there's an almost mythic simplicity in the work, simple words that resound. This, for example, from 'Into the West' could stand as the poet's review of himself:

Wind in these parts  
tastes of ice, makes a man  
weigh everything he has to say  
so language tightens  
to a few words –  
home, death, rain, love.  
The loss of love.

In these poems the proper response to ice in the wind is not fear or flight, not even to bow the head, but acceptance of what is and the preservation of what signifies. The poet faces into the wind, searching for the exact word that will cleave it. Each word of his does have weight. Each poem has a heft, like the balance of a well-crafted tool, offering pleasure in the holding of it, irrespective of what it might be for.

There's beauty and delight stolen from the icy wind. True feeling, it seems, can't be articulated, not even by a poet so skilled, but it can be suggested, and that's what Caruth does again and again. He notes with wry irony the collisions between what we want and what we are, between what we were versus what we become. The annotations themselves, the noticing, are where poetry lies.

An anonymous woman asks for a dance. It could be an adventure. It could be the start of something. But the poet is preoccupied.

Ah, my dancing days are over  
and I can't hear myself think  
(*'On Being Asked to Dance'*)

The poet calls for another round while:

around the city's edge  
black hills stand like guests  
at a wake

The refrain, 'Let's dance', is a refused call to action, a reminder of the dances with lost women of the past, a disturbance of the man listening for hidden sounds:

while the names and faces of people I knew  
go up in smoke from the dying fire

The mourning here expresses the secret undercurrent of the middle-aged. They

....may pause  
to watch the sun come up over the city,  
seeing as if the for the first time  
( 'On Days Like These' )

but if they do it's because

Your mouth will feel the edges of words,  
stenosis, haematoma, infarction,  
the bitterness of carcinoma.  
( 'On Days Like These' )

Yet these poems are not depressing. Rather the opposite – they're life affirming. They remind of the beauty in the world, in nature, in human connection, in art, in simply being. The poems themselves are beautifully crafted, delicately spun. The subjects return repeatedly to loss, broken relationships, the fallen, the decay of past joys ('I'm a stranger in my own town' – 'Marriages and Funerals') and the desire to recover more meaningful times:

Take me back again,  
not to that place  
but to that moment.  
( 'Take Me Back' )

Yet every poem is itself a moment to relish, with its carefully honed lines and perfect images softly crafted:

the sky lies open like a book ('Take Me Back')  
She smiles, bows low / in a cape the colour of oceans and night skies. ('Conjuror')

suggesting that, whatever losses we face, there will be the small beauties and daily gratifications which help us bear what we have to bear, the everyday comprised of protective ritual

Each day is filled with small observances ('Bruce Ismay Speaks')

where the barman is also a priest, and the quotidian, prayer:

so the priest will turn, tap-off  
the waiting pint, set it pristine before me.  
And I will take it to my lips and pray –  
every day should begin like this.  
(‘The Priest’)

NW

We’re delighted to publish a brief interview with **Suzannah Evans**, whose poem ‘Swallows’ was published in Issue Two of Antiphon. Since then Suzie has been a winner in the **Poetry Business’** 26th annual pamphlet competition, judged by Carol Ann Duffy. The pamphlet, **Confusion Species**, was published in June 2012 by Smith/Doorstop Books. ([www.poetrybusiness.co.uk](http://www.poetrybusiness.co.uk))

The following poem is taken from Suzie's pamphlet:

### **Land**

My vegetable patch is six feet square.  
Dandelions and ragwort are rowdy  
on the sidelines, but the bean plants slip  
shy tendrils around their canes  
and dance, awkward partners, in the wind.

I’ve become my own scarecrow. When I work  
straw hair hangs down uncut.  
I’ve got a rifle in a drawer, a bicycle,  
five nearly-new blankets. Come evening  
I will wear one like a cloak and light a fire.

All night the gutter chatters itself loose.  
Tomorrow I’ll get up at dawn and wire it tight.  
I’ll climb to the top of the rusting caravan  
and look to the sea. Everything  
between here and the sand dunes is mine.

**Hi Suzie, Congratulations on your success with the Poetry Business! We’re interested in the process of putting a collection together. What sort of things did you consider when choosing which poems to include in your submission? And how did you decide which to leave out?**

The subject matter of what I write can be all over the place so a lot of the questions I asked myself were variations on the theme of ‘can a poem about sex follow a poem about allotments?’ However there is a ‘tone of voice’ and a style of language common to the poems in the pamphlet which I relied on to hang them together. I did ask a few friends for advice as well, but if I thought they were wrong I over-ruled them!

Entering a competition imposes certain constraints and I did have to cut two poems just to

fit the requirements. I found this quite easy, they were just the ones I had the most doubts about, and I think the collection is stronger for it.

**What made you choose this particular competition? How much did you consider the type of poetry this publisher has promoted previously?**

This certainly isn't the only pamphlet competition that I have entered in the past couple of years but I had been to a few writing days so I already felt a familiarity with the Poetry Business, and I had entered the competition once before, a few years previously. I've never read a bad Poetry Business pamphlet so I could be confident that I would be in good company if I won. I didn't think too much about winning though, it was rather unexpected!

**What about the editing process? What issues did you discuss with the Poetry Business before the pamphlet was published?**

I had a meeting with Peter Sansom to talk over edits that they wanted me to consider. The majority of them were quite minor—a word here and there—but I did replace one poem from the pamphlet with another because we agreed it wasn't as strong as the rest, and we had to think about where in the order of the pamphlet the new poem would fit. It was ultimately my decision to make any changes but I agreed with a lot of them.

I edited some of the poems in between entering the competition and publication, so some of these were modified, although one ('The Horses of Meanwood') felt 'too edited' and the original was kept. It has taken some discipline not to just carry on tinkering with them post-publication.

**Was there anything special you considered when deciding on the order of the poems? Did this change between submitting the pamphlet and publication?**

I sat on the living room floor with the poems for a long time, read them aloud and listened to them, and put them in an order. I had a vague memory of the advice given in the film *High Fidelity* about making a mix tape... start with a good one, then a better one, then slow it down.

Beginning and ending poems seemed to announce themselves; for example the first poem in the pamphlet, 'Guided Tour', is a bit of an oddity and I think it would break up the flow of the collection too much if it were positioned anywhere else. It is also a bit of a mission statement; it encompasses most of the things that I write about and a lot of what I want my writing to be. The rest of the order was fairly intuitive, ensuring that each poem was not too similar, but not too different, to the poem preceding it.

**I'm sure most poets view getting their first pamphlet published as a great high-point. What happens next? Is it easy to keep writing?**

It is a massive high point and the whole thing was so exciting—seeing the proofs for the first time, reading at the launch, and so on. I had to try not to think about it after a certain time at night because I would get too excited to sleep! I'm grateful to be able to draw a line under those poems—to say that they are finished and published as a collection.

Since publication I have concentrated more on reading and writing poetry and less on making submissions to magazines and competitions, which I think has been beneficial. It's

easy to get bogged down in the glory of publication or the horror of rejection and forget about how much I enjoy writing.

I have just started to make submissions again, but I am planning to finish my MA at Sheffield Hallam University next January, for which I need to submit a full collection, so more writing is still very much my priority.

### **Cathy Shrank:** *Turning Sonnet*

By the time that William Shakespeare was composing his sonnets – and certainly before they were printed in 1609 – sonneteering had become susceptible to parody, the first symptom of callow love. Its clichéd status is epitomised by the pat couplet opening Samuel Rowlands’ Epigram 15 – ‘Amorous Austin spends much balleting, | In rhyming letters and love sonneting’ (1600) – and is mocked by Shakespeare himself in plays of the 1590s. Smitten, the bombastic Don Armado in *Love’s Labours Lost* (c. 1594) calls for the assistance of ‘some extemporal god of rhyme’; ‘I am sure I shall turn sonnet,’ he declares: ‘Devise, wit; write, pen, for I am for whole volumes in folio’ (1.2.183-5). Nor is he alone: the parkland of that play is soon full of lovers, composing what the protagonist of *Two Gentlemen of Verona* (c. 1591) calls ‘wailful sonnets’, designed to catch (‘lime’) their mistresses’ attention (3.2.68-9).

The first English sonneteers were the Henrician poets Thomas Wyatt (c.1503–1542) and Henry Howard, Earl of Surrey (1516/17–1547). Their translations and imitations of Petrarch’s sonnets were the cornerstone of the Tudor bestseller, *Songs and Sonnets* (aka ‘Tottel’s Miscellany’), which went through eleven editions between 1557 and 1587. The assorted form of Tottel’s volume – mingling fourteen-line sonnets with other forms without distinguishing them – spawned a confused legacy. Mid-sixteenth-century sonnets can be fifty lines long, or a mere couplet, as in Barnabe Googe’s beautifully succinct parody of Petrarchan oxymorons in 1563: ‘Two lines shall tell the grief that I by love sustain: | I burn, I flame, I faint, I freeze, of hell I feel the pain’. George Gascoigne endeavoured to impose order in 1575, in ‘Certain Instructions’ (the first printed treatise on English poetry). ‘Some think that all poems (being short) may be called sonnets,’ he complained, before advocating a set of rules akin to our modern definition: ‘sonnets [are] of fourteen lines, each line containing ten syllables. The first twelve do rhyme in staves of four lines by cross metre, and the last two rhyming together do conclude the whole’.

The posthumous printing of Philip Sidney’s *Astrophil and Stella* (1591) established the fourteen-line sonnet as the norm and prompted the Elizabethan sonnet boom as poets sought to emulate their late, great, literary hero. Sidney’s influential sequence usefully illustrates key trends in the sonnet tradition within which Shakespeare worked. First, there is a habitual self-reflexiveness about the act of writing, a trait found in the Italian sonnets on which the English tradition was founded. As Sidney derides lesser versifiers with their pastiches of ‘poor Petrarch’s long deceased woes’ (*Astrophil and Stella*, 15), he simultaneously signals his awareness of, and position within, a long poetic heritage. Secondly, English sonneteers, from Wyatt onwards, generally took a much more caustic approach to the female figures they address than did their Italian models. Petrarch’s Laura is cruel because she is chaste; the women in English sonnets, because they are fickle. Moreover, whilst Petrarch’s poet-lover learns a higher, divine love through his adoration of the remote and virtuous Laura, English sonnets characteristically eschew such transcendence, remaining fixated on very earth-bound desires. Sidney’s Stella, despite her starry name, is a flesh-and-blood woman, there – in *Astrophil’s* eyes – for the taking. We consequently witness Sidney’s morally-flawed protagonist exploiting his rhetorical prowess to wheedle the married Stella into an adulterous

liaison, and – at one stage (Song 2) – hovering in a rather predatory fashion over her sleeping body.

This, then, was the tradition that Shakespeare inherited. Unlike Sidney (whose *Astrophil and Stella* deploys seven different rhyme schemes in the first seven poems), he did not attempt much formal novelty, adhering – for all but three sonnets (99, 126, 145) – to the template laid down by Gascoigne. Where Shakespeare did innovate was in terms of content, including the way in which he pushed to extremes this notion of the attainable woman. The last twenty-eight sonnets, mostly addressed to the dark-haired, dark-eyed mistress, pulsate with post-coital disgust (see in particular Sonnet 129) as the poet-lover lies thrall to a woman recurrently and brutally portrayed as promiscuous: ‘the bay were all men ride’ (137.6).

Like Sidney’s *Astrophil and Stella*, Shakespeare’s sonnets also explore the potential, and problems, of persuasion. How they do so shifts over the volume. The first seventeen sonnets are a bravura display of rhetorical invention. As sonnet after sonnet strives to convince a young man to procreate, they manifest the copiousness – the ability to say the same thing in different ways – valued by Tudor writers and readers. Yet, at the same time, this need for repetition ultimately suggests the failure of persuasion. Language has limits, but it is all the poet-lover has, as we see in the latter sonnets as he attempts to cajole (or even threaten) the mistress into compliance. ‘Suit thy pity like in every part,’ he tells her: ‘Then’ – and only then – ‘will I swear beauty herself is black | And all they foul that thy complexion lack’ (132.12-14).

Where the archetypal Elizabethan sonnet compliments the lady, praising her snowy breast or golden tresses, Shakespeare sonnets not only treat of an unconventional, brown-haired beauty: they also make their topic as much about the power-play in which the sonnets originates. Most poignant, however, is the way in which Shakespeare exposes the poet-lover’s desire for self-delusion. Sidney’s *Astrophil* is rhetorically accomplished, his performance polished (if, in the end, ineffectual): we might be invited, by Sidney as author, to disapprove of *Astrophil*’s endeavours, but we never glimpse far beyond the facade. Shakespeare, in contrast, shows us a poet-lover straining to convince himself that all is well. Sonnet 42 is a case in point. Abandoned by both friend and mistress (who are enamoured of each other), the poet-lover attempts to resituate himself at the centre of this relationship, recurrently insisting their actions are ‘for my sake’ (ll. 7, 8, 12). Yet the repeated word ‘both’ (ll. 11-12) punctures this pose, reminding us – and him – of the twosome that excludes him. As the web of words proves all-too-fragile, Shakespeare’s sonnets give us a protagonist who is psychologically complex: one through whom we can trace the emotional toll of thwarted desire.

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*[Cathy Shrank is Professor of Tudor and Renaissance Literature at the University of Sheffield. She is currently editing Shakespeare’s sonnets for Longman Annotated English Poets; in conjunction with Art in the Park, she will be holding creative workshops on the sonnets in the Ponderosa, Sheffield on 22-23 and 29 September as part of the University of Sheffield’s ‘Festival of the Mind’.]*

## **Notes on the sonnet**

William Carlos Williams supposedly called the sonnet a ‘fascist’ form, although I’ve not been able to track this statement down, so it may well be apocryphal. What he might have meant,

had he said it, was perhaps along the lines of the sonnet being rule-bound, restrictive and culturally privileged in such a way that it traps poets into a particular way of writing, establishing itself as a benchmark for the pure and beautiful in poetry, especially the poetry of love.

I imagine the comforts of fascism include having someone else do your thinking for you and so being able to dispose of uncertainty. I expect other authoritarian absolutisms offer similar escapism. So I'm sure that some sonneteers will feel that the rules of the sonnet give a regulation and traditional authority which readily make 'good poems' without the poet having to worry too much about what they're actually doing. How well does iambic pentameter truly represent contemporary speech rhythms? Does the turn create a shift in attention that is actually meaningful in this poem? Do the words paired in the rhyming suggest any connection beyond their chime? We'll generally not worry too much about such difficult poetic questions, if what we end up with has fourteen lines of ten syllables, a Shakespearian rhyme scheme and a change of tense or viewpoint in the ninth line.

But, as Cathy Shrank shows in her wonderfully erudite essay elsewhere in this issue of *Antiphon*, the rules of the sonnet are not rules, they're conventions, semi-formalised in the late sixteenth century. All, therefore, testable. Breakable. And, as her essay also suggests, from the earliest those rules have often been reacted to or deviated from, especially in the sonnets posterity preserves as of particular interest.

In his introduction to his edited collection, '101 Sonnets', Don Paterson pretty much contradicts the 'fascist' position on sonnets, seeing them as open, variable and the quintessential expressions of imaginative thinking (in English, at any rate). For Paterson, the combination of a fourteen line chunk of thinking/feeling structured into a two part dialectic or dialogue represents a building-block of experience, articulated in a way which is natural, intuitive, with a clear internal logic but also infinitely flexible. Following the rules is no guarantee of worth, so there are no fixed rules which must be followed to yield something which might legitimately be called a sonnet. Here's what Paterson says:

The truth, these days at least, is that the sonnet is pretty much in the eye of the beholder. The form has diversified to the point where its definitive boundaries are so blurred that it has effectively ceased to exist. All we can say with any certainty is that sonnets often demonstrate certain characteristics. But these characteristics are frequently described as if they were laws...

(Don Paterson: 'Introduction', 101 Sonnets, Faber and Faber, 1999)

This seems little different from the situation Shrank describes prior to Gascoigne in the 1500s. Paterson's sonnet anthology in its variety in many ways confirms the similarities. Perhaps nothing has changed. Perhaps it doesn't matter one way or the other. What we are interested in is good poetry, not definitions and rules. And if good poetry comes from a set of mutually reinforcing possibilities which, taken together, typically yield something sonnet-like (a poetry paragraph, a clearly colonised dark patch on the centre of the white page), that's fine.

In this issue of *Antiphon* we've aimed to represent both more restrictive and more open senses of what a sonnet can be. We've only taken poems that we like, of course, poems that we feel work well and effectively. So we've not taken some looser sonnets which have pushed the boundaries but which we've felt were doing nothing more than that, not working

as effective poems in their own right. Where, for example, instead of using the traditional characteristics of the sonnet, something new was done – but nothing interesting was then done with the novelty.

Formally, therefore, most of the sonnets we have on offer are quite conservative and would be pretty much recognisable to George Gascoigne as such. However, Gascoigne would perhaps be surprised by some of the sonnets here, such as the sonnet in a single sentence or the sonnet built on an inverted rhyme scheme. Phonic effects are one of the things we like to admire in the poetry we choose for *Antiphon*, and there are certainly some excellent examples here. My personal favourites include rhymes on *déjà vu*, tum te tum and halitosis, though possibly some of the most interesting sonnets among those we've selected either ignore rhyme or use it in the most elusive of senses, barely an echo of consonance.

You'll find scattered in the pages of this issue very few sonnets that are love poems, even with a wide understanding of what love might be. Those of James Nicola and Carol A. Taylor are perhaps the most conventional in this respect. Nicola's uses a sustained analogy very much in the sixteenth century mode, though with a very contemporary voice. Taylor's seems to hearken to a more romantic tradition. Catherine Chandler's sonnet describes love of another kind, though her lines are a long way from iambic pentameters, and she's offering a slant on another traditional theme – transience. We might call L.M. Price's 'Flash Point' a love poem, too, though it's a very contemporary take on a relationship which has not exercised poets very much since Cardinal Newman. Amongst subjects we've also sonnets about computer games (or possibly existential angst), tectonic shift, art, Samuel Beckett, fathers and sons, migraine and waves. (At least, that's what I think they're about.)

The contemporary sonnet remains traditional in that it both accepts and reacts to the tradition, the form, the rules, the characteristics, the subjects. That's how the sonnet's vitality persists. It's only a fascist form if there's no resistance to it, and a great virtue of fascism, perhaps the only one, is that it breeds active resistance amongst those who're imaginative, prepared to think for themselves, to experiment and question what is thought necessary or desirable in poetry.

NW



Act Three



## **Orbit**

*for Harry*

We can be found in University towns,  
fathers trying to communicate with sons,  
sons with fathers, generations in orbit,  
drawn in awkward loops into speechless  
intimations of hope, trading acceptance  
with each slingshot and curve of conversation,  
each parallel step towards the bar  
or restaurant; attempting to fit  
the same plane, the same dimension,  
and, occasionally, our arms extending  
into an unaccustomed embrace,  
tracing that eccentric spiral of the genes  
in which our unavoidable likeness  
can, to our quiet delight, sometimes be seen.

---

*Stephen Boyce*

## **And Snow and a Strange White Flight**

Still trying to put aside something necessary,  
I can see the persistence of the river and  
the cut-bank tumbled to its own separate life,  
its silt and leaves choking the thick weary flow.

I can see the white meadow without me,  
as peaceful as an empty schoolyard, with  
a fresh snowfall to muffle the pounding  
footsteps that aren't even there, but

I am not alone, and no child has died,  
lending credence to the separation  
of one world from another, and you  
have learned to say what is needed,

our talk passing softly from one to the other  
like two ends of a stream so quiet and still  
you can't tell where it started or even  
which way it might be going, and this

is the way we like it now, at rest and  
letting things that come to it stay  
and in this way settling down into  
whatever is going to take us in.

And then a snow-owl begins  
sliding down the chill wind and  
breaks through the crusted snow,  
its talons grasping something

it must have seen some sign of,  
although I still can't, beneath the hard  
white edge, where need has reached,  
holding on to instinct, rising. I button

my jacket, and I shiver. The thought has  
grabbed me and stays cold and cannot  
see what I know. What I was looking for  
was not what I had gone looking for.

---

*Rich Ives*

## Observing Beckett

I've watched his skin marble like a lizard's  
as he sat in a bar on the Boul' Miche.  
I have seen him turn his back, raise his collar  
and step out towards the A3, Verney,  
Dublin, the black void of the auditorium;  
always his knapsack slung over his shoulder  
and looking like he might be gone for good,  
like the thief Augustine said was damned.

But Jim has observed him at close quarters,  
scanned the craggy camouflage for symbols,  
scoured the raptor features, come away unscathed.  
Because Jim, too, could hold his whiskey,  
knew the importance of a maiden century,  
was practiced in the art of runic script.

---

*Stephen Boyce*

## Vision of Light and Shadow

*“Light, more light”—Goethe’s dying words*

*Light, more light.* The shadow of the sun turns back on the dial. A rod into a serpent, iron floating on water, the hysteria of visions and prophecies, clairvoyance and magnetic sleep. Letters read

while laid upon the bed sealed in thick sheets. Spirit-drawings, tongues and abstruse theories, chest cramps, haemorrhaging, loss of teeth. A ring of metal lying heavy on the nerves, the lamp

dug deep from the grave to illuminate the world. *Light, more light.* Footsteps following from room to room, a jug and basin thrown, paraffin moulds, veils and shawls. Wax hands, ectoplasm,

chewed-up tissue regurgitated through the mouth and nose. Muslin concealed within the undergarments, instruments rattling behind cabinet walls. Voices bellowing through

paste-board speaking-trumpets, the dim-lit spirit-forms. *Light, more light.* The curtain guarded at either end, masks and wires, telescopic rods. The stock in trade of every third rate conjuror.

Items hidden in moustaches and whiskers, secreted in gathers of skirts. Slate writing, table rapping, apports and deports. The destined apparatus of deceit manifested in the presence of dupes.

The sitter and the medium holding hands, pressing feet, a chair slowly rising to the ceiling, a body levitating. *Light, more light.* The mind abruptly gravitating, a voice corruptly speaks.

---

*Gerard Beirne*

## **Before the Flood**

*pace* Paul Muldoon

I had no idea what she wanted from me,  
my brains or my heart, my love or my liver,

so took in what I could as I slowly uncovered  
that classical torso, the simple and supple  
truth of it, on which we would both go to town.

The country, meanwhile, was enduring cloudburst  
after cloudburst, an irresistible torrent  
of floodwater drowning the best and the worst.  
I had no idea the unquenchable current

was heading our way, and when I looked down  
to check who-knows-what, there was no hint of trouble  
in store as my little boat slunk from its culvert

into the wider stream-bed of a river  
that was pushing inexorably out to sea.

---

*C. J. Allen*

## **You should say**

Scraped hollow, it was only fruit  
you said, as you pointed to the painting,  
with no purpose but to return  
my eyes to the picture of the pomegranate,  
to focus me on the nonhuman world  
of the still-life. You said, last night  
you packed into boxes, you took the fragments,  
the seeds of the fight, buried them  
under old records, under sweaters  
& other sewn up things. Slice a circle  
out of any wall, whether museum or not,  
I said, you will find art, you will find rot,  
you will find the color of all hidden things.  
I said, you should say that you're sorry.  
You said, I don't have to do more  
than remember where the scissors are,  
because scotch tape and cardboard are weak  
& our eyesight might be salty, but it's clear.

---

*Darren Demaree*

Act Four





## The Burning Horse

I read the news about a boy and his horse set on fire on the border by Palomas. I felt like him, my hair crackling, or him after, the dryness inside of what has been irrevocably razed to ash. What they don't tell you about middle age—that it will feel like youth burning away—that same restless river, desire turning, flashing silver in the setting sun or the tiny fish which keep slipping through your fingers, their loss made sharper by the weight of what you know. No one innocent, no one true. Not even you, though you try so mightily. Today a friend wrote me an injured e-mail, which I deserved. I had dispatched him so efficiently, the way I cut bread for sandwiches, the serrated edge of a knife, wrapping them tight in plastic not enough like skin, the crumb-strewn table, which I wipe sterile-clean, which I keep wiping. Nothing ever *clean enough*. The boy kept riding for five minutes, his last—flare of such acute agony my hand shakes imagining it. I carry him in my head. I can't help it. The papers say they are working to uncover his name, and I know there is terrible courage in even the smallest weight of time. I think tonight of my hurt friend, my sorry self. I think of all the things I have not done right. My snug house ticking beside the denuded canal. The horse rearing up, the boy screaming. And you who I have loved in such a way it has only made me less kind. A cloud of mosquitoes swirls over the acequia. If I walked out there, they would bloody my legs, but here, though the window screen, they are breathtaking—a bright thistle, gold cloud that flickers with dark lights.

---

*Sheila Black*

## **Link's Awakening**

*after The Legend of Zelda*

Long weeks lost at sea in your little boat  
caught in the gathering storm of yourself  
you cling to the mast and dwindling hopes  
as lightning transforms all to darkness.  
You wake: the surf's spray across your face,  
weird bird calls, the faint smell of coconut,  
a soft, familiar voice... What is this place?  
Stranger than you could ever believe it,  
though the islanders call it Koholint—  
these beaches, lakes and forests that ring  
a dark, uncharted mountain. You set out  
in the vague hope of unravelling things,  
but find the waves never far from your ear.  
Is that owl watching you? Why are you here?

---

*Ben Wilkinson*

## Sere

The hills are heading north against the storm  
hunching their shoulders into the bleached wind  
and raising ragged peaks to heaven. *Ten  
And Twenty Acre Plots, With View* are torn  
to dust and splinters. Rivers thin and clear,  
lick color from the sky, skirt claws unsheathed  
by secret glaciers. The granite bones beneath  
upthrust from ice-rimmed hollows to cold, austere  
splendor.

The hills are heading north. They leave behind  
orange-smearred skies, and pens of placid cattle, acre  
lots of asphalt, neon signs, and plastic ferns,  
and muddy ponds, and landfills piled with mediocre  
detritus: a warm and undemanding land  
whose fields are flat and suitable for planting corn.

---

*L.M. Price*

## Roger

Roger Federer came to my bed last night  
and said he was in love with me.

But you were once the world's number one tennis player,  
I said.

He shrugged, modestly:

there was a play on at the West Yorkshire Playhouse  
he wanted to take me to.

I told him I could get free tickets  
and surrendered to his embrace  
though I was bit worried  
what you would think.

Then—horror—I heard the front door go  
and you called up the stairs  
in that eager, sweet way of yours  
and Roger shot out of bed  
and put on his headband  
and one of the turquoise tee-shirts he wore  
to beat Andy Murray in the 2010 Australian Open.

I stayed put: I knew the game was up.  
And Roger was cool  
And Roger was hot  
And Roger was willing to take me away  
from our terraced house  
with the problem chimney  
and the low mains pressure  
and all your failings  
and maybe some of my own.

But as the bedroom door flew open  
all I had were questions  
it was now too late to ask.

Will you let the dog up on the bed, Roger?  
Will you make an effort to get on with my Dad?  
When I wake in the night, frightened,  
Will you make tea and talk to me?  
And when I dream of Rafael Nadal  
will you see the funny side?

---

*Mandy Sutter*

## Denial

When I was small I had this fear of big  
dogs turning up round bends and corners, hounds  
that all along the long and desultory zig-  
zag way I traveled home from school to confound them,  
found me. Always. I had but one defense  
which I learned from Winnie the Pooh: simply hum  
a little tune. It throws them off the scent  
of your fear. Pretend to consider the weather. Tum tee tum.  
Denial, that old sweet song in the face of death,  
it's always been the way to go, even  
in the mouth of death, in the jowls and drool and halitosis.  
Denial, perfected, is a faith that works. Take St. Stephen  
full of arrows, or the Gnostics full of gnosis.  
We sing out sweetly who deny, though we breathe in dog-breath.

---

*Paul Hostovsky*

## **An Explanation**

Kipling's big joke, or Aesop's lost fable:  
the story of how man got the feeling,

deep down in his heart or gut, of falling.  
As I have it he was sloshed on whiskey

and hoping for a pull at the sky's flask,  
snatching at the odd coins in the sea's purse,

thinking them moon or cloud: a fish-cirrus,  
a dripping wad of tangled lunar rock.

Or somesuch. Thing is, it was such a shock  
when he noticed the mermaid-girl weeping

that, all but sunk, he confused the open  
water with close grey beach, plunged at what else

but a rabid breach, this drenched drag-Alice,  
senseless, wrong-sized, far from ineffable.

---

*Adam Crothers*

## Connected

The chain uncoupled at its weakest link,  
and that should be the end of us; and yet,  
across a void of miles and years we think  
in patterns set too deeply to forget.  
You populate the crannies of my mind,  
leaving your trace in everything I do.  
Your words and my ideas are so entwined  
I hardly know who thought them first, or who  
said what, or if you're sending me vibrations  
on airborne currents. Is it déjà vu  
or just a range of shared associations  
cuing thoughts in me you're thinking too?  
A tenuous connection—still I find  
a presence on the wind and know it's you.

---

*Carol A. Taylor*

## Contributors: Issue 4

**C. J. Allen's** poetry has appeared in magazines & anthologies in the UK, USA, Ireland and elsewhere and has regularly been awarded prizes in numerous competitions. His most recent collections are: 'A Strange Arrangement: New and Selected Poems' (Leaf Press, 2007) and 'Lemonade' (a red ceilings press e-book, 2010, <http://issuu.com/theredceilings/docs/lemonade>). 'Violets'—winner of the Templar Press Short Collection Competition—came out in November 2011, and 'Oblivion Revisited' (a revised re-issue of 'At the Oblivion Tea-Rooms') is forthcoming from Leaf Press.

**Janet Butler** relocated to the Bay Area in 2005 after many years in central Italy. She teaches ESL in San Francisco and lives in Alameda with Fulmi, a lovely Spaniel mix she rescued in Italy and brought back with her. Some current or forthcoming publications are *The Blue Bear Review*, *The Chaffey Review*, *Miller's Pond*, *Town Creek Poetry*, and *Red Ochre Lit*. Her most recent chapbook is "Searching for Eden" from Finishing Line Press.

**Gerard Beirne** is an Irish writer now living in Canada where he teaches at the University of New Brunswick and is a Fiction Editor with *The Fiddlehead*. His most recent collection of poetry *Games of Chance: A Gambler's Manual* was published by Oberon Press, Fall 2011. His collection *Digging My Own Grave* (Dedalus Press) won second prize in the Patrick Kavanagh Award. He has published two novels including *The Eskimo in the Net* (Marion Boyars) shortlisted for the Kerry Group Irish Fiction Award 2004. His short story *Sightings of Bono* was adapted into a short film featuring Bono (U2)

**Sheila Black** is the author of *House of Bone* and *Love/Iraq*. A third collection *Wen Kroy* is forthcoming from Dream Horse Press where it won the Orphic Prize for 2011. She is a 2012 Witter Bynner Fellow in Poetry selected by Philip Levine. She lives in San Antonio, Texas where she directs literary nonprofit Gemini Ink.

**Stephen Boyce** lives in Winchester, UK. His poetry has been published widely in magazines including *Staple*, *The Interpreter's House*, *Frogmore Papers*, *Smiths Knoll*, *Tears in the Fence*, *Ink*, *Sweat & Tears*, *Acumen*, *14 magazine* and in various anthologies. He has been a prizewinner in the Kent & Sussex, Leicester, Ledbury, Ware Poets and the Plough Prize competitions. His full length collection *Desire Lines* (Arrowhead Press 2010) was described by Katherine Gallagher as "intelligent, sophisticated, formally assured... a truly exciting new voice". [www.stephenboycepoetry.co.uk](http://www.stephenboycepoetry.co.uk).

**Janet Butler** relocated to the Bay Area in 2005 after many years in central Italy. She teaches ESL in San Francisco and lives in Alameda with Fulmi, a lovely Spaniel mix she rescued in Italy and brought back with her. Some current or forthcoming publications are *The Blue Bear Review*, *The Chaffey Review*, *Miller's Pond*, *Town Creek Poetry* and *Red Ochre Lit*. Her most recent chapbook is "Searching for Eden" from Finishing Line Press.

**Catherine Chandler** is the author of *Lines of Flight* (Able Muse Press), a full-length collection of poetry in a number of forms, and *This Sweet Order* (White Violet Press) a collection of twenty-seven sonnets. Winner of the Howard Nemerov Sonnet Award and nominated for the Griffin Poetry Prize, Catherine's poetry, translations, podcasts, interviews



and essays have been published in numerous journals in the US, Canada, the UK and Australia. She currently lives in Saint Lazare, Quebec.

**Adam Crothers** was born in Belfast in 1984 and received his PhD in English from Girton College, Cambridge in 2010. A winner of the Quiller-Couch Prize and the Brewer Hall Prize, his poems have appeared or are forthcoming in *Ducts*, *Five Poetry Journal*, *Icarus*, *The Litterateur*, *The Mays* and *Poetry Proper*, among others.

**Darren C. Demaree's** poems have appeared, or are scheduled to appear in numerous magazines/journals, including the *South Carolina Review*, *Meridian*, *Grain*, *Cottonwood*, *The Tribeca Poetry Review* and *Whiskey Island*. Recently, *Freshwater Poetry Journal* and *Blue Stem* have each nominated him for a Pushcart Prize.

**Paul Hostovsky** is the author of three books of poems, *Bending the Notes* (2008), *Dear Truth* (2009), and *A Little in Love a Lot* (2011). His poems have won a Pushcart Prize and been featured on Poetry Daily, Verse Daily, The Writer's Almanac, and Best of the Net. Visit him at [www.paulhostovsky.com](http://www.paulhostovsky.com)

**Joey De Jesus** Formally trained in poetry and wildlife ecology, he received his B.A. in Environmental Studies and Creative Writing from Oberlin College and his M.F.A. in Poetry from Sarah Lawrence College. His work has appeared or is forthcoming in *LUMINA* vols. X & XI, *The Cortland Review* and *The Nervous Breakdown*. Joey was the winner of the *LUMINA* vol. XI poetry contest, judged by Carolyn Forché. He is a recipient of the 2012 Archie D. and Bertha H. Walker Scholarship from the Fine Arts Work Center in Provincetown. His poems and videos have been installed at Harvestworks in New York City (2011). He currently lives in Ardsley, NY.

**Rich Ives** has received grants and awards from the National Endowment for the Arts, Artist Trust, Seattle Arts Commission and the Coordinating Council of Literary Magazines for his work in poetry, fiction, editing, publishing, translation and photography. His writing has appeared in *Verse*, *North American Review*, *Massachusetts Review*, *Northwest Review*, *Quarterly West*, *Iowa Review*, *Poetry Northwest*, *Virginia Quarterly Review*, *Fiction Daily* and many more. He is the 2009 winner of the Francis Locke Memorial Poetry Award from *Bitter Oleander*. In 2011 he received a nomination for The Best of the Web and two nominations for both the Pushcart Prize and The Best of the Net. He is the 2012 winner of the Creative Nonfiction Prize from *Thin Air* magazine. The Spring 2011 *Bitter Oleander* contains a feature including an interview and 18 of his hybrid works.

**Jean L. Kreiling's** poetry has appeared widely in print and on-line journals and in anthologies. She was the winner of the 2011 *Able Muse* Write Prize for Poetry, and has been a finalist for the *Dogwood* Poetry Prize, the Frost Farm Prize, and the Howard Nemerov Sonnet Award.

**Matt Merritt** is a poet and wildlife journalist from Leicester, whose published collections include *Troy Town* (Arrowhead, 2008) and *hydrodaktulopsychicharmonica* (Nine Arches, 2010). He blogs at <http://polyolbion.blogspot.co.uk>

**Rick Mullin's** poetry has appeared in journals including *Measure*, *American Arts Quarterly*, *Epiphany*, *Envoi*, and *The Flea*. His epic poem, *Soutine*, was published earlier this year by Dos Madres Press, Loveland, Ohio. His book-length poem, *Huncke*, was published in 2010 by Seven Towers, Dublin. His chapbook, *Aquinas Flinched*, was published in 2008 by the Modern Metrics imprint of Exot Books, New York City.

**James B. Nicola** has had over two hundred poems appear in publications including *Tar River*, the *Texas Review*, *The Lyric*, and *Nimrod*. A stage director by profession, his book *Playing the Audience* won a CHOICE Award. He also won the Dana Literary Award for poetry, was nominated for a Rhysling Award, and was a featured poet at the New Formalist in 2010.

**L.M. Price** lives and works in Montana and Wyoming, U.S.A. She has had poems published in *Raintown Review*, *The Centrifugal Eye* and *14by14.com*.

**D.A. Prince** is a poet and reviewer. HappenStance Press published her full-length collection, *Nearly the Happy Hour*, in 2008. A second collection is due in 2014.

**Philip Quinlan** has a chapbook, *Head Lands* (published by White Violet Press). He has received nominations, in 2011, for both The Best of the Net and Pushcart. His work has appeared in: *The Flea*, *The Chimaera*, *Lucid Rhythms*, *Lilt*, *Soundzine*, *Numinous*, *The Avatar Review*, *The Centrifugal Eye*, *Sea Stories*, *Shit Creek Review*, *Shot Glass Journal*, *Victorian Violet Press*, *Whale Sound*, *Studio 360*, *In Stereo Press*, *The Hypertexts*, *Lighten Up Online*, *Antiphon* and *Raintown Review*. He is also co-editor of *Angle Journal of Poetry in English*, [www.anglepoetry.co.uk](http://www.anglepoetry.co.uk)

**Mandy Sutter** is a poet, fiction writer and hypochondriac who lives with her partner and a large black dog called Fable near the famous Ilkley moor. She went to school in Nigeria and has co-written and published several non-fiction books about the lives of Somali women. Two pamphlets were published by Slow Dancer Press and The Poetry Business. Her first novel, *Keeping Mum*, comes out in 2013.

**Carol A. Taylor** is a translator and language teacher living near Houston, Texas. She has published both light and serious poems in print and online journals including *Light Quarterly*, *Lighten Up Online*, *Rattle*, *Iambs & Trochees*, *Susquehanna Quarterly*, *Umbrella Journal*, *Trinacria*, *The Barefoot Muse*, and *14 by 14*. Carol has played an active role in the promotion of metrical poets and poetry on and off line. She served as Administrator of the workshop Eratosphere and as Light Verse Editor of *Umbrella Journal's* *Bumbershoot* division, and currently directs the online metrical workshop *Poet and Critic* and the bilingual open mic group in Houston, *Alianza Poética Intercultural*.

**Ben Wilkinson** was shortlisted for the inaugural Picador Poetry Prize. *The Sparks* was published by tall-lighthouse in 2008; he is working towards a new pamphlet, *Last Hope: Poems after Paul Verlaine*.

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