ability of living things / 
organisms in symbiosis 
to keep growing, reproducing 
transforming 
in response to their environment
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Australian Poetry Ltd
PO Box 21082, Little Lonsdale Street VIC 8011
www.australianpoetry.org

National Library of Australia
Cataloguing-in-Publications entry
Australian Poetry Ltd
Title: Metabolism
Dewey Number: A821.3

Australian Poetry Ltd is the peak industry body for poetry in Australia, with a charter to promote and support Australian poets and poetry locally, regionally, nationally and internationally.
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Foreword

Welcome to *Metabolism*, the inaugural Australian Poetry Ltd members anthology, which aims to provide members with a further opportunity to be published and acknowledged for their work.

Earlier this year the inaugural *Australian Poetry Journal* used ‘beginnings’ as its theme. We thought it an interesting place to start in terms of making a connection, as it made sense for the two separate yet co-existing publications to sing together, side by side. As such, metabolism as a concept seemed a natural response. This was because Australian Poetry Ltd is now a wider literary community, growing, reproducing and inwardly transforming in response to poetry’s changing environment.

The definition of metabolism has been woven into the anthology to become a ‘poem’ in itself, naturally forming the title and delineating its five sections. It’s a prescient example of how the physical and metaphysical world – as exemplified by poets and poetry – can work harmoniously together.

This anthology would not have been made possible without Australian Poetry Ltd, its poet members and the volunteer team of editors (also poets and AP members) who put *Metabolism* together over many months and many a long night. The team never met face to face. All communication was conducted by email. We battled technology, different time zones and both hemispheres. We communicated from Tennant Creek to Pittsburgh, from Adelaide to Tokyo, from Melbourne to the Sunshine Coast, from Washington to Canberra and Sydney. And there were many ‘all team’ discussions that buzzed around the world and back again to light up individual computer monitors or laptops.

The effort and commitment by anthology team members was enormous and truly amazing. Thank you so much to David Adès, Libby Hart, Heather Taylor Johnson, Vanessa Jones, ‘Danny’ Charles Lovecraft, Tim Metcalf, John Pfitzner, Susie Utting and Lyn Vellins. Thank you also to Michael Byrne, Immanuel Suttner and Oliver Quinn Wainn for their enthusiasm and early involvement with the anthology.

*Metabolism* is testament to the energy and diversity within the Australian poetry scene. It is also a vehicle of celebration. We hope you enjoy reading this inaugural Australian Poetry Ltd members anthology.

Libby Hart, Heather Taylor Johnson and Susie Utting
on behalf of the editorial team
1. ability of living things /
In pole position the usual gang,  
I suppose, poets and academics, enjoying  
communication between consenting adults.  
Words glowing with significance  
exploring subliminal territory,  
lightning flashing on road kill,  
moonlight on a pearl earring.  
Geostationary satellites,  
the gestalt of fragile images  
stopping the arrow of time.  
Glaciers melting into a sea of sand,  
the swoop of feathers on the edge of sleep  
like a premature sky burial  
before the entropy of old age.  
The tuning fork finding the nuanced ear.  
Just one person who says, ‘I can  
get to where you are coming from’.
Advice to an emerging poet

Know nothing. Write as if you know. Offend, the more the better. Beauty’s anodyne; avoid it. Readers will misapprehend wildly, but remember Wittgenstein has all the answers, so you should pretend depth, while on the surface every line seems only to present mundane despairs. This will not win you prizes, but who cares?

Doctors have their Hippocratic Oath. The language is your patient, so be sure you do no harm. You should therefore be loath to operate unless it will secure your satisfaction and the rapid growth of self-esteem. No benchmark is as pure. Critics and cops are there to make life hard. Plead guilty and they sometimes drop their guard.
A silver wind

You know how some layered days
you long for quiet, and your pockets
seem full of talkers like drowning stones?

Then maybe a silver wind will bring you
a woman who talks of her bees, and that
you must give them all the family news.
How she introduced them to her Latin lover, with his cucumber eyes.
How she told them that his tongue
was laurel leaf raspy,
and he tasted of sun-dried tomatoes,
avocado and crispy salad.

Suppose this woman tells you that
the bees tagged him for demolition,
saw through the colour and fluff of romance,
penetrated his olive-oil skin and
warned her of tasteless years to come?

If this woman’s last words to you are,
‘Always trust the bees’,
won’t your pockets feel a little lighter?
The explorer’s dream

Robert, the name a clue, emergent unbidden from dark garden thickets, violin bowed arc to arc, to jigs and reels, seafarers’ jokes borne rough in shoals below jagged headlands, dashing, a glint in a daughter’s eye.

This was never the location planned for the shoring party. This is not where flowers should be picked, sketched onto drafting paper, outlined with secret epigrams, sweated from lovers’ communiqués, signatures shifting underfoot.

Sir Robert, if only you knew, the colour of mulberries, port wine spilled across linen and lace, a brass button, floorboards, once all polish and interlock, before the aftermath of sweetly steamed pudding, hot French parfumerie.

The cue for a song, an epic poem, celebratory, in anticipation of greater times ahead: around the banquet table, colliery dust, steam whistles. ‘We used to sing like this on the river.’ Look, the calloused hands, the hardened heels.


Is it morning yet? Have the bells rung? A day for cicadas and bronze-tailed skinks. Historiography? Ask the descendants, errant tendrils coiled around forgotten guylines and windswept stays. Ask anyone who remained behind.
More fries, Monsieur?

If Voltaire toured America today
he might allow himself a little preening
finding his anagrammatic name in a vast library
under The Enlightenment Thinkers.
All around him, the progress he championed.

The natives would hardly look askance
at his powdered wig, elevated heels
especially in California.
He wouldn’t be black-bearded, with a backpack
or with a woman in a burqa.

This brings me to terrorism, and torture
which he campaigned against
knowing how a prison cell reeks.
What might he think of waterboarding
or torture not being unconstitutional?

Statements whimpered by suspected martyrs
are now admissible evidence, he’d learn
— with chagrin, one imagines —
a Harvard legal scholar having raised the issue
with regard to innocent citizens’ rights.

Freedom, choice, the rights of man.
But whose, yours, mine, that foreigner’s?
May I smoke, wear a wig, write what I believe?
Voltaire would read, argue, but mainly write.
I see him preferring a biro to the keyboard.
Angela Smith

Dylan Thomas at his desk

A heron stalks the shallows
below the faded green shack
above a tumble of rock wall
where you inked lyrics
onto thistledown pages,
preserving the world outside —
wingbeat, birdwhistle and waterlap
under a shroud of darkling cloud.
gillian telford

glass-bottomed

Volcanic remnant, island
paradise — there’s a shiftiness here
that’s hard to escape.

Look how the clouds keep
pulling away but always
return to the mountains;

how the surf breaks free
of the coral reef then runs back
over crushed white sand.

And those corpulent fish that wallow
and thrash till you wade through
the shallows to feed them.

Before first light, it’s doves and
pigeons to croon you awake, like
dreams of an English childhood;

and who could believe amongst
tropical palms to hear
blackbirds sing *appassionato*?

In the glass-bottomed boat
we lurch and bob and wait
for the giant turtles. I wonder

if Eve had the same
unease or was she just
tired of perfection?
At times a moment is known to be memorised, 
swallowed whole instead of dribbling down the chin: 
a figure standing in the dappled shade beside a wall, 
her head obscured by a tipped hat; 
the pattern of cracks in a path seen once; 
the smell of quartered lemons in a damp room late at night; 
and once beside a road at dusk 
the watching of stars assembling themselves 
like a woman arranging her evening dress, 
determined and slightly embarrassed.
Orange

It’s Spring and
the mandarin tree in your yard
is loaded,
the path between our houses
lit by a trail of bright orange.
The bitterness of peel and
sweetness in it:
like the time in August we walked up
Cassia Hill, your lungs grabbing
at the air, trying to talk about
food and how to get it down;
the bowls of soup left at your door,
what that meant to you.
We spent the afternoon there and
I wrote haiku about the clouds, how
they sailed across the sky like boats.
You sat away from me,
drawing them to your sketchbook.
When I heard the cough storm in
your chest,
I was afraid. And later,
I wept in my room for everything I
cannot change for you. Everything.

It’s Spring and
you are falling.

The hungry birds and children
have left the path bright orange
between our houses.
I wonder how it is to
wake each morning to something
closing in,
pressing down like a heavy coat,
and to give yourself
to the day anyway.
bean dreaming

she dreams of beans
broad beans sprouting in her shoe cupboard
— it makes no sense as
there is plenty of food in the house
premium mince and frozen pastry
for Sunday shepherd’s pie
she does the shopping every Friday

she dreams of beans
chickpeas raining from the shower head
— on a cooking show she sees recipes
for beans she had never heard of
cow peas, moth beans, pigeon peas, velvet beans,
black-eyed peas (she thought they were a flower) and the
one she cannot shake
winged beans — will she feel their intimate beat
inside her, might they feel like tiny feet?

she dreams of beans
kidney beans delivered express post and marked urgent
— when he comes to take his things away
and parks the ute and the trailer rakishly
across the front nature strip so that people walking
have to cross to the other side
she does not even really hear his shouting
because
behind his head she can see a space on the fence
where a trellis could be built
she dreams of lima beans rolling cigarettes outside a mountain hut
and starts to slowly track down the exotic ones
via
the puzzled greengrocer’s son
and the smiling
Indian woman with one long eyebrow in the ground ginger-smelling supermarket
where they scoop flour and rice out of hessian bags and
tie them into plastic ones

she dreams of running beans hitching rides through the outback
to escape their domestic lives
and the vine she plants flourishes
Jack and his adventure do not feature in her plans awake
or asleep
she has no desire to climb to the sky
she is just impatient for the first crop to swell
so she can snap them open

she wonders if the dreams will stop
once she takes her first bite
and if
the string will get caught in her teeth
or if the beans
she has planted
are not those kinds of beans
That canted hip, that sated smile, they won’t last long

When your life is more lipstick on white china than someone’s husband’s collar, is it even possible to comprehend that things started to go downhill after Donatello? We let them, meanwhile, go to war, our brood.

Sated. Seductive. The soldiers listen, wired, to rock ballads as they chopper in to slut around the Gulf. Like David with their provocative smiles their bodies are only slimed metal nakedness beneath the crackle of a uniform’s gaze.

Jive those hips to the right, children, and let ecology reinvent you like an all-done sun. David loosely holds the fatal stone that will Goliath us all forward, bloodstained, to our souvenired destination. Rock on, glad confident morning.

The wave has done its thing in Minamisanriku: the next set is for you.
2. organisms in symbiosis
Butterflies twice landed

In the year you cheat death
you argue with portents
and are compelled by butterflies

two in one week alighting
on skin needled and savaged
by chemo drugs, why else

be stunned that your toxic blood
attracts the most beautiful wings
be transformed if you like

(solace is in the signs?)

at worst be baffled
by prognostic high flights:
15% survival might be short

of optimal but Dr Knife
is not your final sleep
you are greedier than ever

for sunlight, winged
optimism transports you
at least long enough for green butterflies

to use you as positive space
The sweetness and the sting

Once the suit is on, gleaming against the hill’s flank,
and the mask pulled down, shutting the world into shadow;
everything is slow, rhythmic, considered.
Breath and thigh rasp with a mourner’s cadence.
Thought of him rolls in the petals of her mind, then stings.
Her longing has the rapid throb of the wasp
but the commitment of the bee.
She approaches the city, hives arranged with urban precision.
Slowly, as if floating,
she lights wadded cloth, pumps the tiny bellows
and gusts the throng into a dream state.
Her thoughts turn him over, examine him exquisitely
with the intimacy of imagination.
The flight path traffic slows then stalls.
Meticulous as an astronaut she pries off the lid
inserts the blade between the frames and cracks them apart.
The rack is heavy with confusion.
She brushes them aside,
slides frames freshly wired and primed into place,
and leaves the rest weighted with winter solace.
She plans hopeful crossings of trajectory,
meetings where she can do more than just smile, tongue-tied.
The combs gleam wetly, thick with amber nebulae.
In the sultry heat of the honey shed
they orbit within the centrifuge
a whirling genesis, flinging sweetness into the universe.
Even her sweat tastes of creation.
She dreams a space where he reads her waggling dance,
decodes this mute desire,
hersumbling movements clearly pointing
that sweetness lies here, between us and the sun.
Come with me.
The hero always wears white.
Chasing Canadian geese

On the beach
the geese sleep
necks artfully bent.

*I’m going to get one*
she says,
and I believe her.

Blue-eyed she rushes
toward the water
tiny arms
scooping and grabbing.
The sound of goose exodus
and the ferry
coming in to dock
threaten, then
she’s on her knees

crying for lost chances
clutching a feather
to her chest.

Gone, the idea
of flight
as she walks

back up the beach
singing her goodbye
goose song

shadow trailing
like so many dark birds
wings slapping the sky.
Green poem

She stood in the green hall
At the green door
Watched the green light of apples
Seep around her feet.

Taken up on wings into the clouds
She looked down on the green prison-lands
And saw the spots with holes in them the shape of diamonds
Where they’d shot through the tiger, and left it bare.

After they’d farmed all the tiger that there was
And fenced them into reserves
They replaced them with cat.
Planted whole forests of cat.

It was neat,
Didn’t need cables or fish nets to catch them.
The thing with cat is they grow quickly.
Just as commercially viable

As apples in tiger-fields.
Let alone trees.
Though the people missed the birdcalls
In the morning. And the moon had a grey edge.
It begins with a comparison: a budgie
caged with mirror, spilling seed;
and a child pecking at the keys

of an upright piano, spilling notes
into the room, on odd occasions
stumbling into music. That’s the moment:

caged in a sudden net of sound
her hair falling across her face, floating
inside the bars as naturally as dreaming.

And then a sudden discord, the lid
slammed shut, the flight
to the bedroom, as though a change of scene

will shift the bars. The budgerigar
all bright with blues and greens, pecks
the plastic replica; it sways and nods

balanced as a Libran, impassive
while the cock struts and spills
a shrill appassionata to the mirror

then flits from swing to perch.
When she plays the piano, the blue bird
cocks its head and listens

and offers from the safety of the bars
a tentative grace note, watching
itself in the mirror, spilling its seed
on sandpaper at the bottom of the cage.
Thief

I hear you in the stillest hour of the night.
One short bright whistle upwards, one long
whistle downwards, like the gravedigger’s
shovel falling into black soil.

What bird are you that heralds the dawn three hours too soon?
I have searched for you in books.
But your call is not the nighthawk’s, nor
the bush stone curlew’s. It’s not the masked owl’s,
nor the barking owl’s. When I should be asleep
I lie awake listening to you. One short bright
whistle upwards, one long whistle downwards
like the gravedigger’s shovel falling into black soil.
Miniature

Dragon clouds curl a gold-leaf sky.
A brush of fine hair paints a beard
details a guardsman with his bow
— fine-tipped arrows at his side.
On tapered pins Chinese horses
pick their way, carry musicians
across a sheet of painted snow.
A blast of horns announce
the emperor on his elephant.
The aquarium

1

Sitting close with hazy vision,
I am almost mesmerised —
a kaleidoscope of shimmering colours,
scales glinting.
Each fish darts, hovers,
then a sudden downwards slide, swift
as the predatory bird dives for its prey.
Always movement,
these fish intent on
twisting, turning,
sliding, gliding.
Just right for waiting-rooms.

2

Is there contentment in such confinement?
Like fish, we once knew a liquid world,
then thrust forth, gulped air,
sought the confines of mother’s arms,
slowly learned the limits of family, kinship, tribe.

Men with dreams
impatient with inertia
of authority
became obsessed.

Some sailed to new horizons.
Others led armies through mountain passes,
a surging torrent spilling on plains,
spreading like a flood,
reducing towns to rubble,
pressed toward new targets.
Hannibal sought to free Carthage from bondage to Rome, Alexander of Macedon lusted for wealth, power. Centuries later Marco Polo, seeking commerce, brought his family to the realm of Kublai Khan.

Again I look towards the fish, some may hover, others slowly swim, twisting, turning, sliding, gliding.

3

Men blast their way into space, walk on the moon, press beyond our galaxy, search the universe.

In the mountains and the desert, free of city haze the brilliance of the sky binds me to earth, content. I am at one with those millions who through thousands of years marvelled while others named planets after their gods.

Forever moving, the fish continue twisting, turning, sliding, gliding.
Eve Gray

Anguis in Herba (Snake in the Grass — Virgil)

A snake has come visiting, Yes, visiting.
And I am frozen still,
unable to offer hospitality,
barely daring to breathe,
watching it from the corner
of my right eye,
starting and straining.
How it flows, Yes, flows
blackly, swiftly, without
effort, without intent.
Like a thing that wasn’t there,
being there,
and thinking itself forward —
a thick line drawn
by an unseen hand.
Its head moves side to side
the way an adolescent of any age
keeps headtime with an earpiece
of an MP3 or Pod nodding,
seeming more than a little
demented.
Meanwhile
my caller makes himself
a long, dark drink and wanders
away/tangos/swishes/sways
over the edge of the verandah,
away from the dog bowl,
boards scorching where it touched
the fire in its belly to their fibre.
And my hair slowly, Yes, slowly,
returns from the horizontal,
and my eyes resume
the shape of predator, not prey.
Eight things you may not know about Vladimir Putin’s dog

1. She is a fat black submarine of a Labrador called Koni. Originally a seal-woman, she emerged from the river and took her current form.

2. Every month she transforms back to a semi-aquatic state and does a lap between the Kremlin and St Daniel’s monastery. She is as sleek as a dolphin and quiet as a cat’s ghost. A true water-dog needs no fluff, no Portuguese froufrou.

3. She eats cake; all the cakes of the Cabinet and their jellies too. The jellies move into her belly just as she herself slips through water. The cabinet members grumble, but only quietly. Koni’s stomach begins to wail like a wolf.

4. She is connected by a device on her collar to the spirit of Laika, still spinning, although that less fortunate mutt’s can crashed back when Khrushchev was king. Koni barks up at the stars, twists her head like the trademarked dog of HMV, and eats her treats a little more thoughtfully.

5. Her collar contains another cunning device to detect radioactive particles, although this is currently turned off.

6. Koni loves to lick visiting dignitaries, and journalists, just as if they were luscious jellies. The German Chancellor Merkel magically turns to jelly when she does this! A quivering German jelly, thrown into a right pickle.

7. It would be the worst possible luck to run over Koni. Or to reel her in during her aquatic forays. Remember there is GPS in the special collar! Drive carefully, and never fish when the moon is full.

8. Every evening I pray to be reborn as a fat black Labrador seal-woman, caressed by the indulgent palm of ex-President Vladimir Putin. He loves a faithful friend.
3. to keep growing, reproducing
why i didn’t go to mike ladd’s 50th birthday party

the tractor-mower hits a stump on the slope and
flips in a second. thrown off, earphones ripped from
the ipod when sergio is between mas que na and da.

then an adrenalin-fuelled leap to avoid
being crushed between tractor and post
and trailing fingers go thump in the blades.

when the eyes see the end of the finger hanging,
a flap of mincemeat, a second thump of the heart —
ohristal stab in a horror movie soundtrack.

the other hand squeezes
mashed flesh to stem the flow.

the drive to flinders medical centre, cold sweat
dripping into eyes, blood dripping on gumboots,
willing myself to breathe slowly. hot needle pain.

triage, grass-clippings on the e.r. floor,
calming pulse, x-rays. the matter-of-fact
egyptian surgeon with french accent.

my eyes clamp shut as he works
for almost an hour reconnecting
nerves, tissues and finally skin.

later i watch him fascinated as he
reconstructs the end of my ring finger,

a busted raw sausage held together
with fine blue thread.
Chernobyl heart

Of the many quiet legacies
of a meltdown

most quiet are those
with two holes in the heart

seven thousand children
fourteen thousand holes

keep a surgeon busy
at three hundred a year.

Today this thin boy of indeterminate age
face like an empty plate

sits while the surgeon explains:
a Gore-Tex patch

the heart grows around it
like an apple tree after grafting —

the parents silent, the surgeon asks
do they have any questions?

their faces wide as apples
What kind of questions can we have?

Three hundred dollars
three hundred grafts

six hundred pairs of eyes
watch for each new bud.
Surprise

Our bodies are recreational vehicles, trammel across the sand, toss up mud on indignant wattle then sidling alongside each other in the creamy stroke of peak hour. There is nothing small about the joys, this car feeds the brain, eyes collide under blue the finesse of our collisions reckless sweat & the burning gilt trail of another’s fingertips.

That startled throttle of your smile, your suggestion. We leak & lift toward flame as both make the noise of heaven. Wear them out, the raw & the roar scratch the door a temporary floor as we fall into the wise old silence of void. Brush & polish the kidneys, spleen, these legs are our capital or maybe a long-term lease. Either way you feel the redundancy built in & that is a wry blessing.

Caltrops litter the bridal path … you run towards you walk away. The cancer found Toby. A stray bullet found Lieutenant Delroy. Our exploding Easter egg hunt, mortality glitches in the grass.

Council cleanup time, the thirsty grass verge explodes in television & couches.

Surprise is the enemy, across the suburbs
doors taken off dead fridges,
power cords on every appliance snipped methodically.
The history of Unexpected is remembered.
But there’s nothing static here,
a kind of bacterial energy as heaps rise, shrink, transform …
visitors, the neighbours … grazing pluck.
We are shaped by what we throw out. Redefined
by all we rescue, take in & make what we call home.
Children squeal at treasures unaware of
our secret griefs as all things pass
beyond our glass.

Found by knowledge,
grow in knowledge us. Theia was our sister,
we grew in parallel glide
until the size of our ambitions
sent her wobbling into catastrophe.
But each corpse leaves contention; even then
there’s the tangle for remains:
rootlets vie about our decay.
Something that was us,
obbed on that lava sea,
in perhaps one day
a new moon was birthed in debris.
From far enough away
it looks so inscrutably placid. To call it
‘solar system’, almost
a clerical breeze some
flawless catalogue built against aeons.

The engine kicks in,
we are discovered by a new day. Surprise.
Entire accident. Entire.
Graham Kershaw

She sent me emails from Manila

tropical swelter this morning
in the forest after rain
a sympathetic cloud of breath
obscuring bedroom windows
outside, the heady buzz
of singular flies seeking each other
the woodpecker tap of Illya’s hammer
demolishing his home again
a sleepy orchestra’s tuning
well before the overture

the song is on the surface here
 tripping between karri crowns
way out of reach
high, sweet and confident voices
calling across blue spaces

I am visiting the birds’ realm
sinking below the calm surface
of something I hold sacred
while the racket, the clatter,
the fret and sweat and labour
of cataclysmic cities
rings like a bell inside my head
and my noisy heart bangs away
at ribs, as if at prison doors
waiting to be seen
wanting to be let outside
‘Greening’ the harbour

Black rats jumped ship
like absconding sailors
swam in the miasmic sea
or ran down mooring ropes

connecting ship and shore
spreading their bubonic message
to produce-stores and rubble sea-walls.
The harbour was a highway, for colonists — and rats

boarding from Hawaii, New Caledonia, the East
in the warm, wet Sydney autumn
ferrying their contagion across the water.
Victims were carried in green-painted launches

or ‘death-boats’, to the quarantine station
corpses buried with shovel loads of quicklime
to speed up dissolution, their drum the muffled beat
of North Head surf.

* At Millers Point and Darling Harbour
they were pulling dead vermin from privies.
Each rodent-corpse fetched sixpence
delivered to the Bathurst St. furnace.

Whaling crews scoured The Rocks for rum and sex
while their foul-smelling ships were in port
sulphur burning to flush out the rats
bodies dumped on the foreshores.

*
Hammers peck away
at Sydney’s sandstone, its finger-wharves
the profile of a broken comb.
You walk past glassed-in

waterfront apartments, Three-Hat oyster bars
heritage pubs, galleries
of Aboriginal artefacts
to pull the tourist trade.

Where mirage of quarantine
and fumigation filters through
(the Chinese quarters blamed again)
black rats still roam the city.
Anne M Carson

Digitalis

I peel purple and lilac gloves one by one
from the stem, cuffs decorated with dark
pigment against a pale ground, a trail of dots
running into the depths like footprints

you can’t help following. I slide a finger
into the soft dark shaft; the slip, the snug

fit in the tapered tailored tip, napped like suede
or fur, one for each finger. Femme fatale,

heart stopper, dressed to kill. Under cover
of dark, I slip into the quiet garden, take
gloves from the plant as easy as from
a shelf. My paws glide, tread-softened,

stealthy as shadow. Shapeshifter; one foot
in the ordinary world, the other in the wild wood.

Am I the fox stalking night, or the grown
woman, flower bells dressing each finger?
The house I left behind

The garden I left in autumn, tidied up
for new people, is a riot of purple, gold and green
among winter’s neighbours, drab since the dry.
It has shouted another spring and its hard rain.
The long drought died after the second winter
and the garden knew long before anyone
that its time had come. Rosemary’s falling arcs,
purple-blue for the sun’s light and wallflowers, gold —
russet-stained to remember its species genes.

The tubbed lime on the verandah died a year ago,
the shrivelled border of box below its lip
greening at last. Winter iris struggle through tangles
of uncut leaf, their blue and gold carried into the earth,
and neglected lavenders thrust dry, infertile brush
through the shining flood. The rose, the Mermaid,
stands ragged; withered flowers among sprouting leaves.

The garden I gave to someone else: my face to the road,
the neighbourhood, the world, all I could leave them,
unvalued in the price, left to itself and the seasons: like
the broken bones of a geranium warped to the iron fence.
The passer-by will see only the huge riot of gold and purple,
smell the unavoidable fragrance of flowers, self-sown,
perennial, from the stone walls of another country,
and the bee haunted arcs of purple flowering:
the persistence of roots that will not be forgotten.
the well from which she turns to look

I

ripples its gauze
up and down the bodies of the bare trees
the scarlet sky, the waist-high grass

swallowing water in the wind
who cares how her heart softens
the hard rind of a day lived without love

adjusting its sore gristle-gears
to the steady seepage of use
how she could live well without love

cool as a glass pool, not too small a box
and calm but for this red gauze
rushing her through the gate of evening

massing and lifting its cockatoo cloud
its rip of rosellas bursting
its salted juice

on a shiver of wings
gap-toothed and whistling
this stone on her tongue
the shoes were sprouting ears
legs running without bodies without feet
struck like a bell dug from mud and water
impaled on a boat sailing with arrows after it
bent figures whose torsos fit the shape of keys
the knife with the mould on it
my dress with the hem hanging

hands scrubbed raw the pluck of feathers
all the fruit rotting
the weatherboard splinters
the mad chaos of the bearded potatoes
glowing in the ground
\textit{beget beget beget}
war coming down the driveway

the timber giants felled and falling
me in my loose dress caught on a flagpole
the flapping artillery in the blackboy clearing
sheets on the line heavy as thunder
faces like ghosts in the breadknife
this spotted dress with the hem hanging
all the shredded skins
III

since ladders climb both ways
frost on the grass
water flowers that burn underfoot
no wind and no one else at the pool
the roof beams behind her
inside a tree and sets the satin swaying
the mirror of her passage
stretching her chest bone open to the bliss
the swim of this the closest
struck like a bell dug from mud and water
drifts up on the out breath
of a drowned women’s orchestra
she parts and plunges with her breathing
along the cut mosaic floor
of breathing the nameless underwater
she will ever come to flying
the ephemeral two-toned note of her crying
the aerial touch
buzzing the bones of her face
a catacomb of tombings
opens to meet her
in all its burnings
she turns to look

the shape of a note in the dark
the island in the car park
built on the fruit of all her soul’s doorways
the water in reams rippling
as a duck’s breast parts the cloud
she rises up
and because it must the morning Spring
the glaze on the asphalt
the well from which
David Falcon

Ode to a pear

You are a misshapen bell
Off-centre below your woody stem
Your striker long hidden
In your white flesh
Has held its tongue
Through the long angelus of summer
Waiting until when
For a few brief moments
You’ll release your rigorous pride
Your core will soften to wet white flesh
Once more in search of the sun
Oh, I could be like you
Sucking in my stomach
Standing forever at attention
But like you
When I finally tear you apart with my teeth
I’ll know in my last moments
That I would still have been me
If I’d made no effort at all.
4. transforming
the mortician’s kiss

teri louise kelly

this love is thermal
waves of sensation under constellation covers
saturates and penetrates,
the wolf’s pelt shelters stolen lovers
from separation
out on the desolate plantation
where everything fell; husks of past encounters wither
the dead hang in trees
lanterns shedding light into the corners of possibility
the journey never ends, nor begins
in another time, another place
remember this bite, this touch, these words,
the stigmata of union overrides
incarnations
there is no perfect square, no complete circle
the universe inside your mind is infinite
the soul of your essence distilled
can never be taken;
burn down your reputation and expectations
you are immortal, you transcend time
this love is a torch
find it
leave your book open, your bed cold
the way ahead is through the known,
beyond the unknown
to the blue light of magnetism and attraction
push the door — begin
the first step is not the hardest
the last is,
start by accepting the mortician’s kiss.
When

As a nine-year-old, I decided to kill myself
if I couldn’t run from the back porch to the Hills hoist
before the wire door shut behind me.
When I was three stepping-stones short, it slammed.
I wet my pants, and cried,
then comforted myself with a promise:
I’ll definitely do it, I just don’t know when.

We’d skipped evening lectures
to see Les Sylphides at the Palais.
Afterwards, a car hit a black cat at St Kilda Junction.
It arced, frothed, convulsed,
headlight eyes frantic, claws shredding air.
My boyfriend drove on when the lights turned green.
Cat and death writhed a pas de deux in endless dreams.

I’m slapping my three-year-old because he’s woken the baby.
She screams, vomiting a two-hour feed
of milk and raw-nipple blood.
Dirty nappies engulf the laundry trough.
I’m a madwoman adrift, shrieking: ‘Pick up your toys!’
My son crawls under the couch, sobbing:
‘I want a new Mummy.’

When I get to Resthaven,
my father will be lying on the bed with his shoes on.
His urine bag will wet the leg of his trousers.
All three clocks on the bedside table will say 2 p.m.
but he’ll tell me it’s time for dinner. I’ll feed him
macaroons studded with cherries. He will ask my name.
A nurse will bring tepid coffee in a brown plastic mug.
When I leave, Dad will weep.
Driving down the tollway, I will not permit myself to think about the future, and will repress distressing memories. But I shall allow my eyes to veer — just a little — and I’ll notice, once again, the solid reassurance of light poles.
Here, in a typographical family reunion
are the Wynnes together at last,
this private significance
ranks one line in the long lines
the ‘Y’ hammered heavier
all the way down the page
as if some bored clerk
has been drawing patterns
to keep himself sane.

His better, at least, than the corrected
‘Frederick George’,
simply typed over,
or the long lines of K.I.A.s

I remember being disappointed as a kid
to learn he was in the Signal Corps,
not some front-line regiment,
carrying a rifle, not a bunch of wire.

I didn’t know anything.
I didn’t know anything.

I should type that all day.
These things I must steel myself against
Old men packing books into boxes
The empty seat between people at the movies
The smell of armpits on cardigans
Ironing on the dining table with a towel underneath
Friends who no longer talk to each other
Bejewelled butterflies or fairies
And cards with ‘reach for the stars’
Square brittle toenails
And plastic bags filled with plastic bags
A choc chip muffin to celebrate something
And unplanted punnets with the white roots
Straggling from beneath the blue plastic
Board games with missing pieces
And everything with pieces missing
And everything that is in pieces
And everything that is missing.
Dry air preserved us. They stood us here in rows,
Thinking us miracles, the work of God, but we are just
The work of air. In the dark we wait in lines like a standing army,
Encamped on this side of forever, until we are dust.
Our delicate tendons more subtly carved than marble,
The soles of our feet arch, delicate, prepared for our next step
Though we no longer walk. Considerate, we turn our gazes
Down: you would find our empty sockets too direct.
Our hearts lighter than yours, the water dried from our tears,
Soldiers of dried hide, pillars of salt and ash;
Taut frames of bones our lives once hung upon.
We wish to be helpful: in case you’ve forgotten the map,
We are your destination. Our tongues are stones that rattle in our mouths
But still we are speaking to you: hear what we say ——
Welcome. We are glad to have you as our guest — and when you leave us,
Remember: one day, you will be coming to stay.
Devil’s sestina

Unlike you-know-who, Sir Pie-in-the-Sky,
I prefer it down here, unvisited
by a gawping mob of hangers on.
I don’t need your reverence, or even
worse, devotion. Devotion is a word
for dogs. Just call me Uncle Ghost.

I’m no conjurer, like that hackneyed ghost
with his orders of merit, his seating plans in the sky,
vanishing acts, and god help us all, those word
games he’s addicted to. May the plagues that visited
Egypt choke him and his word games! Even
Job when he got there wouldn’t take them on.

‘I am that am’, and so forth, droning on,
puns that wouldn’t make a cat laugh. Not the ghost
of a laugh to be had up there, not even
a day off just to ramble round the sky
and meet your mates. No, he has to be visited
day in, day out. Eternally, in fact. I hate that word!

You don’t want to go there, take my word
for it. Straight up, I wouldn’t lie. I’m on
your side, I’ve sussed it out, I’ve visited
His Dodginess the Pope. This unholy ghost
has got the facts to blow the priests sky
high. And not just for malice, not to get even

for what old bossy did to me. From morn to starry even
I fell — for what? A sidelong look, a cheeky word,
that’s all. There’s not an angel in the sky
would tell you otherwise, unless they’re on
his payroll, or just plain scared of the holy ghost.
There’s not many haven’t visited
his office for a caning. But it’s you I’m thinking of. I’ve visited your churches — you know what? You got an even crappier deal than me. At least, before I was a ghost I lived it up, in every meaning of the word. All you get is stick and carrot, stick. Chuck it on the rubbish heap. There’s no good time in the sky to come, not ever, on my word. Let the churches rot, unvisited. Don’t live as if you were a ghost. This is the only sky there is.
Get it!

The best mathematicians, like the best poets, are good at putting together things you would never expect to go together. Like my angel, who wears her hair in ringlets, courtesy of a hot curling iron and tells me that she wants to learn to cook. From first principles. I ask her if there’s good food in heaven and she just answers, ‘Depends.’ Depends on what, I’d like to know. Depends on your taste, the camera angles and whether the director’s into visual jokes like casting a short person as the shrink. Get it? My angel gets it and giggles like a wind chime as she rolls the dough, dusted with flour, out over the bench.
The dream

I watched above the bed in which I lay. And on a bed, sheeted, my mother, dead ten months now, stirred. But she is gone, I said, and saying it returned still mired in care to where my mother stilled with barely a word left from the hundred years she sealed away.

That strange arrival — seeing death reversed, the sheet tensing with movement, the unspoken demand we resume together, she being wakened. A wondering horror held me, and her hair as never in life, was mine, and I lay there creature of her imagining, as at first.
Tricia Dearborn

Prescription

The gentle haze sleep-hunger wraps
around the events of the following day
can be just what the doctor ordered.

A doctor, that is, who knows that the world
can appear as a maze of knives;
that fatigue blunts as well as anything

you can get at the chemist and is
cheap and readily available. It’s worth
putting up with bloodshot eyes,

a metallic taste in the mouth and
a slight loss of balance
for what extreme tiredness can do for you:

create a featherbed for the nerves;
lull you out of a false sense
of emergency. Use insomnia responsibly.

Don’t operate any heavy machinery.
If you’re obliged to go to work or to school
think of it as a note from your mother

excusing you from perfection.
Last night insomnia sat
for a chat on my bed.
As if I needed company!
Handcuffed to the moon
he came through the window
on a band of light as broad as day,
as long as a sleepless night,
tossed me from side to side
like a hollow log
and would not go away.

I thought he might leave
if I made him a cup of tea,
but he sat on my shoulder,
drank the pot dry and talked
so much I returned to bed
just to get him off my back.
Yet still he stayed
till dawn broke down.

I never slept. It was, I think,
the timbre of his voice,
the familiar touch of his words
that seeped under my skin.
You see, he could have been you.
possible

in another life I will be
one of the systems programmers
at Deakin University
who doesn’t show up for work
when surf is running at Bells
with a partner
who keeps goats and geese
teaches ceramics at TAFE
and shares my interest in
ten acres at Pararap
where we are planting vines
and experimenting with
vintages of white shiraz

and perhaps at times
alone with the sea
I could think of another life
where I have a disabled son
and all the heartbreak and joy
of ongoing care
that mixed with
snatched moments of stillness
make poetry possible
5. in response to their environment
Meckering earthquake

Eleven days before it happened
a policeman reported
that the ground was like jelly
and Mr Sudholz’s groceries left
the safe-keeping
of his tidy cupboard.
On the day itself
three dogs barked at nothing,
a murmur folded through the trees,
a brimming dam mounted its banks
and a table stamped on floorboards.
Ceilings spat puffs of plaster
and sheep in outlying paddocks
faced each other in groups.
As in a town meeting
a flock of swallows
walked round the Railway Hotel’s
upstairs verandah. Its easterly wall
careered into the street.
A shudder of light fell across wheatfields
as if hands skimmed the fat heads;
there was a rattle
like schoolgirls dragging
sticks along fence tops.
Mrs Nichol closed the general store,
dancing around the mouthing crevices
and, out of town, laterite pebbles
bounced like manic fleas.
A scarp rose from flat land,
crossing the highway.
Railway lines curled across their sleepers
like soft, loose spaghetti.
An empty farmhouse shivered
and sat down.
Ashgabat desert market

He leans into the wooden rail finding the groove made by his father. Steam rises from fresh dung. He quiets the camels and horses, rolls a cigarette and watches with a trader’s eyes. The women walk by in single file. He hears their tour leader warn, *stay in pairs, keep your money close.* With a half smile, he nods, *I have costumes, very cheap, silk, cotton, velvet.* He signals to his wife at the stall,

she smiles, gold tooth glinting in the sunlight, turns to their son, *grandma’s suzani, show them.* The boy hesitates, holding the textile close, then unfolds each bright embroidered flower. The tourists, huddling together against the din, are circled by hawkers as they pass astrakhan hats, green melons, sacks of yellow spices, carved bassinets, cochineal carpets and white felts. He sees them in the haze at the centre of the marketplace, a blue bobbing ball unravelling, as women pair off arm in arm, clutching bags, patting money pouches beneath their breasts. One figure alone turns towards the costume stall where his mother’s *chyrpy,* dyed with indigo, is hanging for sale — he imagines her sitting with red and yellow thread sewing the familiar Turkoman Teke patterns of his childhood. The woman removes her dark glasses, picks up the *suzani* then heads towards his mother’s coat, fingers the stitching, the best *chyrpy* in the bunch. She raises a hand full of dollars bartering for his daughter’s dowry. He has prayed about this moment — to hold on to the past or reach out to the future? After the sale, he inhales deeply then coughs a cloud of grey smoke; his chest hurts as he turns away.
The opening

Tracing Charles Conder

The Scriber wakes above the river

The scriber wakes and shines above water; the shadows harden into grit
This little groove is washed by song; under Big Men’s smooth feet

And two men are fighting in the middle of the road

There is much *focking* in the tongues of the people

Dark ones are flopping in the dark

Blue-wired girls are slopping in the breezeway

A man in a dreamcoat’s standing in the rain

and in Africa, a lake is turning over …

Bruise and black: I put in my ears

I put in my ears and listen:

A coot’s wide feet are made for walking

as a message a breeze is shining

water on the Broadway stripping the canyons

Sinatra lifting her boots forever

Hard and alone among the glitters

wind sweating along St Kilda Road

a couple arch their backs to the wall

Somebody cries out from the opening:

Ms red-fingernails screaming curses

Weightlifters clinking their chains in Grace

Bro’s and the Honourable Member getting his feet

wet and cool on the concrete grillway
The land sloping out in another country:
the random wine of the body spilling
its way along the shining
the gullies echoing under the archways
her breath in your ear, the drunken gasp

~

Now impure Goths are bleeding in the street

The Gorges of the Tarn are a jet-breath away
from the ledge these girls are squirming under
and elsewhere, say, in the classical underground
the vandals play glass music

which could come from anywhere, rolling down
this way forward in the Old Quarter or
sleeping again in the Todd cutway or
riding their boyfriends or

slitting their wrists in the breezeway
falling, falling, singing their ears and showing their eyes
as black-eyed Susans lifting their lit
faces to dark suns in the Roo Montegeuee
white legs pressing on heels …

Red and purple: I put on my eyes

The Honourable Member presses his skin:

Red and purple the bodies tumble;
A Romanian starves in the Piazza San Marco
Angels are dying at the Stalingrad metro
several saints sleep kindly
Hard and alone along the pavement
several women are screaming lewd
comments at the muddy bishops
counting their rosaries, louder, louder

Here the tramps, who walk for ever
while Luna is coming, cold and silver
hard-rinsed and borne away
by the tears of the sufferers
among the cobbles, the old villages
and the machines going down skint
  someone crying from an opening

~

Someone is crying from an opening …
  Cloudwire gathers at Sanpan Bay
White ghosts are bearing their firesticks
Eels go starving in the beautiful, the beautiful and

at last the pattern emerges: a whorl of dust red
in shapeless Euclid never glimpsed
  a form for random red
the pattern, at last, emerges:

Blessed are the hopeless, for they’ll be made blind.

Yellow and silver: all this will happen in a single breath

All this will happen in a single breath:

Out of the underground for Uni and the girl turns left
and Conder turns right for Euclid and
Baiame walks straight forward among the animals and
the Temple of Wisdom strikes its gongs
and we all die together in the evening/morning.

Fire in the greenstone tilts its tongue
toward the falling water falling:
the estuary flooding in for the haunting
a mountain standing on itself in water

Grendel spewing the beautiful soldier
The coal flowing up from The Burning Mountain.

Smoke in the underground, banging in the city
limbs are falling, limbs are falling
The Honourable Member getting to his feet
and the crowd whispering ‘Yes, again’

The glacier’s spitting out its dead

Scraping knuckles in the opening opening …

We will all hear nothing, at the End, in the morning.

The purple noon’s transparent might:

So breathe, now, of sun-high dreams; the purple noon’s transparent might
the several women late for the stoning; some light hissing from a whimpering

Down in mud water, in the canal; blue murders whisper the beautiful skinlight
trunks and openings hard in the streets; stand straight up in the mind-eyes

Thieves steal a living in Finsley Road; a sun wheedles in in a slanting manner
A lithographer clings to blue sky clearing; a yellow rain falls on Kurrajong Hill
And up in the village, a skitter on the cobbles …

~

Some water silks in the river and laneway; no-one shelters in the Austral light
The lithographer’s eyes are seared from seeing; the dividers cut rock in time
with moths

Deep in rock: a young girl snickering; imagined blood-cries, etched in the river
Water blackening in the Mughal’s garden; a woman coughing, coughing and
again, coughing

**A sun is darkened in the glass:**

The double blaze is cut right in; the arrow swings its certain North
A sun is darkened in the glass; a branch is a ship’s creaking

The etcher weeps his messages in stone; in midnight lightning, under the hill
writes his lost wakening behind the lens; turns his head to scour the seasons

The colourer’s head is going dark; the Honourable Member can’t hear himself
speak above pines: the wasted, remembered; voices, the darks at midday

Limbs & spark-winds speak; about the last fire, about the last opening
sliding out, her face glowed, split; her tongue grown thick with grasping

A sound like ringing, among his ears; a ground like a whispering
The darks at midday, the little silences; the sweet birds clamouring, closing in

Black lion pausing in his roar; ledge worn down by suns above the river
And the creek reflects, flows, into its own becoming …

~
Look, Reggie, the mist is coming in
The house in Normandy’s falling in the sea
The poets are drifting … I lift your skirts
I am reaching for my colours …

~

The sea sweats away:

Orchards’ blooms fall without issue; the ground coughs up its smoke and dances:

White against red, white against the grass; white against the light’s weakening
Red on her breasts her mouth black her shadow’s lain open in the vineyard
the sea sweats away and she sleeps sleeps in her moistures
quick to the end never

Mother, mother, the light is opening.

Note: Focking – the two men, a black man and a British hoody were saying fock and fighting in the middle of the road.
Grey sky

The dusk-moth brushes
colours away:
each thing joins with others
in one silhouette,
a grey harmony.
A myth floats
in night’s shadow,
a ghost,
a wish,
a soft wing —
I forget.
In my grandfather’s surgery

The rules were
to stay in the room left as he’d died
but not to touch;
I liked that desk of his

so many books
even the flies were laid before them in ellipses …
and the stilled clock,
in its brown-skinned shell.
Simon Hanson

Morning appearance

downstairs they lie
silently waiting for the dawn
slowly the shapes awaken
unconscious colours begin to bloom
the old carpet
reveals its floral pattern
shadows in the hall
become coats
tan and blue

grey curtains bleed crimson
in soft velvet folds
sleeping animals emerge
from their gloomy cavern
transformed as furniture
and the darkened mirror
dreaming on the wall
becomes again
this clear silvered pool
Prodigal son (and his partner)

A city boyfriend
when taken to stay with parents
in rural Queensland
must be made to feel
that it’s normal and neighbourly
to step in and out
of nearby paddocks at will.
It’s customary to laugh
at his ignorance of barbed wire
and the methods of rendering it benign
by lifting or lowering its strands.
Looping a gate’s galvanised chain
back upon itself and over
the mushroomed stay
must be done whilst speaking
of something entirely unrelated,
such should appear the second nature
of gate administration
in a boy born and bred on the land.
After the well-timed peach of sunset
is photographed and declared to be gorgeous,
the homeward path should take in views
of whoever’s herd. And when they stamp,
lower horned heads and begin to follow,
smile knowingly at his sweet uneasiness
— they’re only cows —
whilst shepherding him over the fence
by the most direct route possible.
On your birthday

I brought orchids
mauve like the jumper,
the last one you knitted

I found it in your wardrobe
neatly folded, the cashmere
soft as your hands,
permeated with the scent of Mitsouko

In the jumper’s pocket
a piece of paper, my name
in your hand writing
a telephone number of my work

I shut my eyes, you were there,
wanted to embrace you
ask the questions
no one can answer now

It’s cold today. I’m wearing
your mauve jumper and the last drops
of Mitsouko, the bottle
still in my drawer

I don’t know why I come here
this place is foreign to both of us
your name on the plaque
has no meaning to a stranger

this concrete vault, the urn, the ashes
are not you and I don’t need to drive
a hundred kilometres
to tell you my thoughts
I can scatter the orchids
over the sea, you always liked
the ocean, the walk on the beach
even in the rain

No one will be there this evening
only you, me and our past
and the sea will talk
In September, the river

catching under the city’s din
the river’s old yearning

how each afternoon
the wind comes to us with brown arms
with bare sandy feet

the old lull and sway
is back in the spring air
remember, remember
the lilt of the moving river
its colours of mud and sky

(I weary of work, I forget the point
of shopping malls)

meanwhile the river’s salty hair
streams to the bay islands
where mangroves grow on a line
inked under sky-glitter

take me back

to the knife and cup
the silvered boards and tin
that cast a square of shade
under the salt wind
May Day in Hangzhou

Behind multi-coloured fields
foothills, like ocean liners,
cruise over lakeside languor
to the holiday’s seasoned applause.
Dozing garlands
in rhythmic array
stir in the breeze.
Orioles sing in the willows,
night noises murmur
and stars try to come out.

In China, expectations labour
under the weight of too many.
A mercurial charm whispers
while feathered plastic in tattered strips
floats high on the wind.
As blue brushes the dusk
shadow sinks a ruffled absence of light,
a soft desiccated imprint
on a translucent, brooding
pocket of peace.
After Mallarmé

my house at the extremity
garlic & onion plantation
scent does not waver in the ascension
so visitors
don’t stay about for long
they do not crackle the drying skins
in their palms
and there are no autumn leaves
clagged on their shoes

I sit behind my window, now
muffled in plastic
waiting for the glazier
whose glitter is always Sun

& lavender is the basket of flowers
on the horizon.
Contributors

**David Adès** has been a member of Friendly Street Poets since 1979. His collection *Mapping the World* was commended for the Anne Elder Award in 2008. He currently lives in Pittsburgh, USA. David is a member of the editorial team for the inaugural Australian Poetry Ltd members anthology, *Metabolism*.

**Neville Andersen** was born in 1922 and was a medical practitioner after graduating in 1945. He began writing poetry following his retirement in 1987 and has one published book, *The Crow’s Threefold Amen* (1998). His work has been published in Five Bells, Kalimat and Writers Voice.

**Connie Barber**’s fourth collection is *Between Headlands* (Five Islands Press 2005). She is widely published in journals and anthologies, including *Motherlode: Australian Women’s Poetry 1986–2008* (Puncher & Wattmann 2009).

**Susan Bradley Smith**’s latest books are the memoir *Friday Forever* (Radcliffe 2011) and the poetry collection *supermodernprayerbook* (Salt 2010), shortlisted for the 2011 NSW Premier’s Awards (Kenneth Slessor Poetry Prize) and the 2011 *The Age* Book of the Year Awards. She teaches in the English Department at La Trobe University.

**Margaret Bradstock** has five published collections of poetry, including *The Pomelo Tree* (awarded the Wesley Michel Wright Prize), *Coast* (2005) and *How Like the Past* (2009). She edited *Antipodes*, the first anthology of Aboriginal and white poetic responses to ‘settlement’.

**Anne M Carson** has been published in the USA and widely in Australia. She has curated two *Poetica* programs and last year won the Martha Richardson Poetry Prize. *Corvid* was highly commended in the Reason–Brisbane Poetry Prize. She is also a visual artist and teaches creative writing.
George Clark has a writer’s retreat near Oberon (NSW) where he ponders the relationship between our fragile sensitive being and the great world around us. He reads regularly at Live Poets in North Sydney and won the 2011 Oberon Poetry Prize.

Sue Clennell is co-author of *The Ink Drinkers* and has recently released a CD, *The Van Gogh Cafe*. She has been placed twice in the Josephine Ulrick Poetry Prize and has been included in *Best Australian Poems 2011*.

Emilie Collyer writes poetry, prose and performance works. Her writing has appeared in journals including *Blue Dog, Kill Your Darlings, Page Seventeen, Torpedo, Cottonmouth* and *The Australian Book Review*. Her plays have been produced by ABC Radio National, St Martin’s and numerous independent theatre companies. Visit her online at www.betweenthe cracks.net.


Tricia Dearborn is an award-winning poet and short story writer whose work has appeared in literary journals and anthologies in Australia and overseas. She was joint winner of the 2008 Poets Union Poetry Prize. Her second collection of poetry, *The Ringing World*, will be published by Puncher & Wattmann in 2012.

Benjamin Dodds is a Sydney-based poet whose work has appeared in various journals, including *Southerly, Blue Dog* and *Famous Reporter*. His work has been included in the post-colonial anthology *Antipodes: Poetic Responses* and also in *Earthly Matters*, a chapbook of poetry celebrating National Science Week.

D J Dowsett lives in the Southern Highlands of NSW. He has had half a dozen poems published in small magazines.

David Falcon’s work has been published in the *Sydney Morning Herald*, various anthologies and literary journals. He has performed his work at Varuna, NSW Writers’ Centre, Poets Union venues, Radio Station 2NBC, and the Live Poets Society. He was a winner in the 1996 Sydney Writers’ Festival Poetry Olympics.
Susan Fielding has worked for many years with Indigenous communities in adult education and community development. More recently she has freed up time to focus exclusively on poetry writing. Her work draws on the rich and challenging experience of living and working in the remote desert community of Alice Springs, with its complex social structures and history.

Ian Gibbins is a neuroscientist and Professor of Anatomy at Flinders University. His poetry has been published widely, including *Best Australian Poems 2008* and broadcast with his electronic music on ABC Radio National. His first full collection will be published by Wakefield Press in 2012.

Jill Gloyne has won numerous prizes, including the inaugural Martha Richardson Award. Her poems have been published in *Wet Ink*, *Blue Dog* and *Five Bells*. She lives on Kangaroo Island where she is a member of the Dudley Writers’ Group and also Friendly Street Poets, where she was chosen for New Poets Nine.

Fran Graham loves her four children, six grandchildren, her beautiful partner, singing, and life in general, and looks forward to travelling in her new campervan. She sometimes writes poetry and her first collection, *On a Hook Behind the Door*, is due out soon from Ginninderra Press.

Eve Gray lives on a wildlife reserve in NSW’s Lower Hunter Valley. She has been published in newspapers, magazines and anthologies, and has written extensively for ABC Radio. Her focus is mainly on the natural environment and she has received a number of awards for her poetry.

Simon Hanson lives in rural South Australia. His love of the ocean and interest in science and philosophy often find their way into his writing. He has been recognised in national and state competitions and recently had a collection published in *Friendly Street New Poets 16* (Wakefield Press).

Libby Hart has received the Anne Elder Award and was shortlisted for the Mary Gilmore Prize, a Victorian Premier’s Literary Award and *The Age* Book of the Year Awards. She is editor of *Five Poetry Journal*, and is a member of the editorial team for the inaugural Australian Poetry Ltd members anthology, *Metabolism*. 
Dimitra Harvey has a Bachelor of Performance in Theatre and Acting from Theatre Nepean, University of Western Sydney. She is currently completing a Master of Letters in Creative Writing under the supervision of Judy Beveridge at the University of Sydney.

Ron Heard is a Brisbane-based poet whose first collection, *river, she-oak and wind*, was shortlisted for the Thomas Shapcott Prize. His verse novel *The Shadow of Troy* will be published this year by Ginninderra. He edits *The Mozzie*, a magazine that publishes over 400 poems per year.

Paul Hetherington has published eight collections of poetry and edited the final three volumes of the National Library of Australia’s four-volume edition of the diaries of Donald Friend. He is Associate Professor of Writing at the University of Canberra and a founding editor of the online journal *Axon: Creative Explorations* (www.axonjournal.com.au).

Vanessa Jones is currently studying a Bachelor of Arts, majoring in Philosophy and Creative Writing. Alongside poetry, she writes prose and freelances in copywriting. She is an SA Writers’ Centre young ambassador and a member of the editorial team for the inaugural Australian Poetry Ltd members anthology, *Metabolism*.

Anne Kellas’s books are *Poems from Mt Moono, Isolated States*, and the forthcoming *In the bell clear blue air*. Composer Matthew Dewey has set some of her poems to music. Currently moving towards creative non-fiction, Anne worked in youth research for many years (as Anne Hugo).

teri louise kelly is the author of the poetry anthology *Girls Like Me*. In 2012 she will be releasing two new anthologies simultaneously, *Like God, Only …* and *Post It Notes From Hell’s Scrapbook*.

Joan Kerr’s work has appeared in *Best Australian Poems, Antipodes, TLR Web, New England Review, Blue Dog, Space, Island* and *Famous Reporter* among others. She has featured on Radio National’s *Poetica* and has won a number of prizes.
Graham Kershaw has published two novels with Fremantle Press, and more recently has had poems accepted by *Westerly*, *Southerly*, *Eureka Street*, *Canberra Times*, *Indigo* and *Famous Reporter*. He works as an architect in Denmark, WA.


Shari Kocher Campbell’s prize-winning work can be found in numerous literary journals and poetry anthologies across Australia. She has lived in many places and is currently studying at Melbourne University, raising two children and writing poems that gather moss slowly.

‘Danny’ Charles Lovecraft began P’rea Press in 2007, publishing Australian and international weird and fantastic poetry and non-fiction: www.preapress.com. He also conducts panels and workshops at national and international fantasy and science fiction conventions. Danny is a member of the editorial team for the inaugural Australian Poetry Ltd members anthology, *Metabolism*.

Jennifer Mackenzie is the author of *Borobudur* (Transit Lounge 2009), which was presented at the Ubud and Melbourne Writers Festivals. She is particularly interested in French and Asian poetry.

Rachael Mead is an emerging poet from the Adelaide Hills in South Australia, currently juggling a PhD with managing a second-hand bookshop. Her poems have been published in *Westerly*, *Going Down Swinging*, *Verandah*, *Poetrix* and *Meanjin*. She was the Dorothy Hewett Flagship Fellow for Poetry at Varuna in 2011.

Tim Metcalf is Director of Medical Services at Tennant Creek Hospital in the Northern Territory. His sixth book is *The Effective Butterfly* (Ginninderra 2011). Tim is a member of the editorial team for the inaugural Australian Poetry Ltd members anthology, *Metabolism*. 
Graham Nunn is a founding member of Brisbane’s longest running poetry event, SpeedPoets. He blogs at Another Lost Shark (www.anotherlostshark.com) and has published five collections of poetry, his most recent, Ocean Hearted (Another Lost Shark Publications 2010). His debut CD, The Stillest Hour, was shortlisted for the Aural Text Award.

Sue Ogle is a Geriatrician and Associate Professor of Medicine, where she uses stories and poetry to teach medical students. Currently she is completing a Masters of Medical Humanities and is Writing Co-ordinator for AMA Creative Doctors Network. Her poetry has been published in medical and literary journals.

Barbara Orlowska-Westwood was born in Poland and arrived in Australia in 1979. She is a retired physician who enjoys writing poetry and prose. Her writing has won a number of awards and commendations, and has been published in Australia, Poland and America.

Maureen O’Shaughnessy is currently completing a Masters of Creative Writing at UTS and has been published in Best Australian Essays 2010. She has been awarded the Gwen Harwood Poetry Prize, highly commended in the Bruce Dawe Poetry Prize and shortlisted for the Blake Poetry Prize.

John Pfitzner, a publishing house editor, is a board member of Friendly Street Poets. He has received a commendation in the Max Harris Poetry Award and has twice been a prize winner in the Studio Poetry Prize. John is also a member of the editorial team for the inaugural Australian Poetry Ltd members anthology, Metabolism.

Ron Pretty’s seventh book, Postcards from the Centre, was published in 2010. For 20 years he ran Five Islands Press. He has edited the magazines Scarp: New Arts and Writing and Blue Dog: Australian Poetry.

Sarah Rice is an art theory lecturer, visual artist and writer. Her art-book of poetry Those Who Travel, with prints by Patsy Payne, was published by Ampersand Duck in 2010 and is currently on display at the National Gallery of Art. Her poems have been published in Island, Southerly, and fourW twenty-two anthology.
**Liz Robinson** is an emerging poet who worked as a medical scientist and corporate trainer before taking a part-time job that allows her to pursue her passion for writing poetry and short stories. She has had some success in competitions, and has been published in *Notata* and *Poetrix*.

**Judith Rodriguez**’s published books of poetry include *New and Selected Poems* (University of Queensland Press). *Manatee* is a recent chapbook. She collaborated with Moya Henderson on the opera *Lindy* (2002), and with Robyn Archer on a play with songs *Poor Johanna*.

**Brenda Saunders** is a Sydney writer, artist and activist of Aboriginal and British descent. Her work has appeared in anthologies, journals and on the web and been featured on *Awaye* and *Poetica*. Brenda was shortlisted for the David Unaipon Literature Prize (Queensland Premiers Awards) and won the Banjo Paterson Poetry Prize.

**Pam Schindler** is a Brisbane poet. Her first book of poems, *A sky you could fall into*, was published in 2010 by Post Pressed.

**Angela Smith**’s poetry has been published widely in Australian literary journals and broadcast on radio. Her first poetry collection, *The Geometry of Flight*, was published in 2010.


**John Stokes** has won or been shortlisted for many prizes including the Blake, Rosemary Dobson and Newcastle Prizes for Poetry. Publication credits include *A River in the Dark* (Five Islands Press, 2003) and *Dancing in the yard at Eden* (2011). He represented Australia at the 11th International Poetry Celebration in Italy in 2011.

**Jeanette Swan** is a speech pathologist and word enthusiast. Words are both work and play. The part of poetry she most loves to read and write is imagery that creates emotion.
**Patricia Sykes** is a poet and librettist. Her poems have won the John Shaw Neilson, Tom Collins, and Newcastle Poetry Prizes. She has collaborated on two projects with composer Liza Lim, *Mother Tongue* and *The Navigator*. Her new collection, *The Abbotsford Mysteries*, was published in 2011.

**Heather Taylor Johnson** is a poetry editor for *Wet Ink* magazine and reviews madly for literary journals. Her second collection is *Letters to my Lover from a Small Mountain Town*. She teaches in Creative Writing at Flinders University and is a member of the editorial team for the inaugural Australian Poetry Ltd members anthology, *Metabolism*.

**Gillian Telford** is a NSW poet, with work published regularly in journals such as *Blue Dog*, *five bells*, *Island*, *Eureka Street*. Longer poem sequences have twice been shortlisted for the Newcastle Poetry Prize. Her first collection, *Moments of Perfect Poise* (Ginninderra), was published in 2008.

**Tim Thorne** lives in Launceston, Tasmania. The latest of his twelve collections of poetry is *I Con* (Salt Publishing 2008). He is a former Director of the Tasmanian Poetry Festival and won the William Baylebridge Award for his *A Letter to Egon Kisch* (Cornford Press 2007).

**Susie Utting** has been published in *Hecate*, AAWP’s *Nth Degree*, *The Canberra Times* and the *Australian Poetry Journal: Beginnings*, and has a forthcoming collection. She holds Masters degrees in creative writing from the University of Melbourne and Queensland, and is a member of the editorial team for the inaugural Australian Poetry Ltd members anthology, *Metabolism*.

**Lyn Vellins** runs the Sydney-based ‘RhiZomic’. She was on the Poet’s Union committee, the editorial committee for *five bells*, and has helped edit *Phoenix*, *Hermes*, and *Threads*. Lyn is a member of Australian Poetry’s National Advisory Council and is part of the editorial team for the inaugural Australian Poetry Ltd members anthology, *Metabolism*. 
Rob Walker is a writer and poet from South Australia with three published collections of poetry. Recently he’s also been working with Max-Mo and writing short stories. He frequently finds himself torn between Japan and Australia (www.robwalkerpoet.com).

Kate Waterhouse is co-editor of *Motherlode: Australian Women’s Poetry 1986–2008* (Puncher & Wattmann 2009). She has moved from Sydney to Auckland and is working on her accent and two poetry collections – one set in Australia and one in New Zealand – and on another editing collaboration with Jennifer Harrison.

Les Wicks has toured widely and seen publication in well over two hundred different magazines, anthologies and newspapers across 15 countries in 9 languages. His eighth and most recent book of poetry is *The Ambrosiacs* (Island 2009). leswicks.tripod.com/lw.htm

Georgina Wyatt was born in Bowen in 1973 and lives with her husband in Canberra. She is currently undertaking a postgraduate Diploma of Professional Writing at Canberra University. Her love of poetry is a secret she has kept her whole life, which she has now decided to share.

Warrick Wynne is a Melbourne poet and teacher. His most recent collection is *The State of the Rivers and Streams* (Five Islands Press).
Metabolism is the inaugural members anthology of Australian Poetry Ltd, a literary community that, as the title suggests, is growing and transforming in response to poetry’s changing environment.

Readers will find this collection a testament to the energy and diversity within the Australian poetry scene.