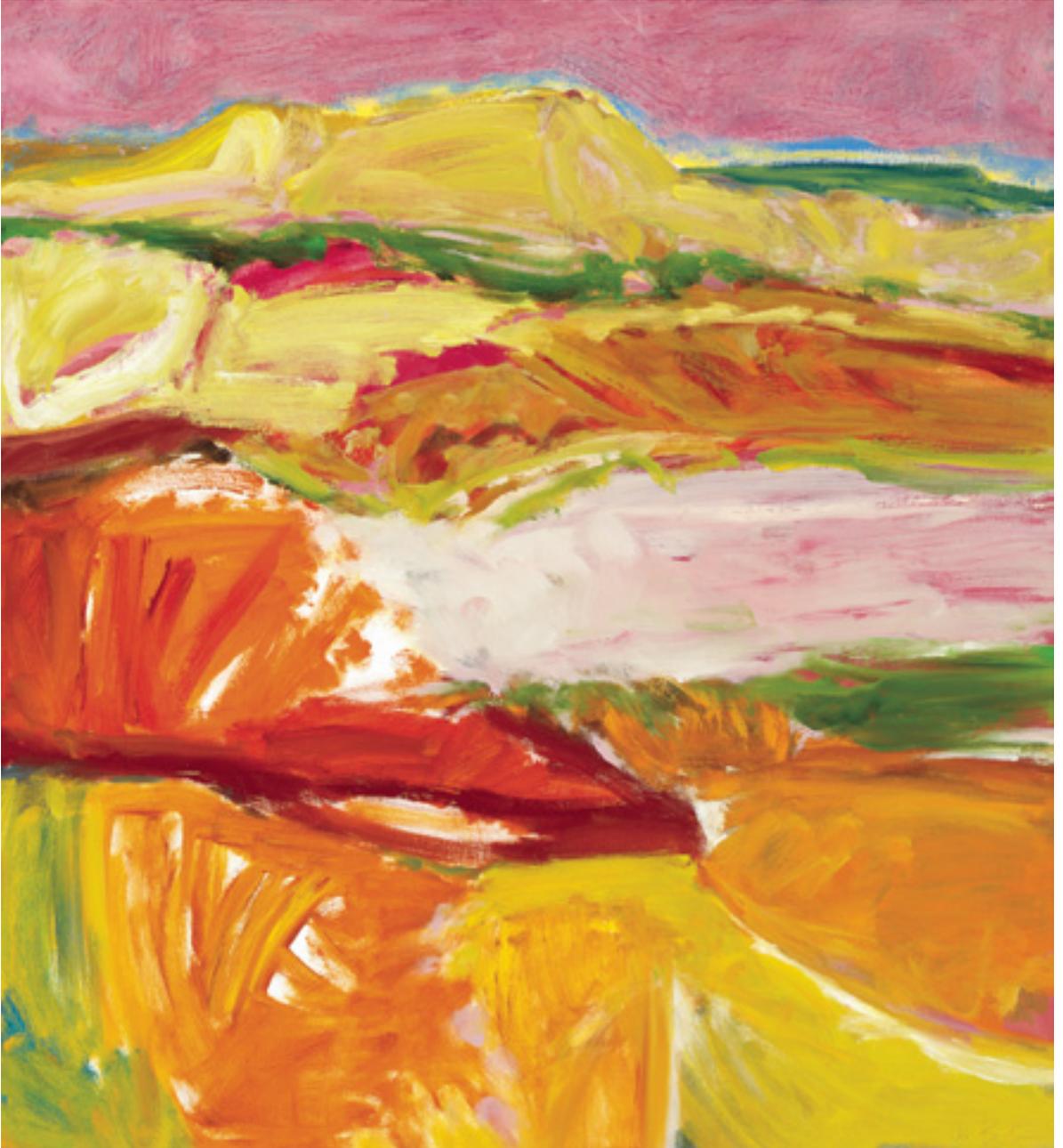


# Australian Poetry Members Anthology

Volume 3  
2014





# **Australian Poetry**

# **Members Anthology**

Volume 3  
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Jo Bertini, *Sandhill Series—Honey Grevillia and Spider Flowers*, 2012, oil on canvas 92 × 84cm

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# The Feast of Identity

Lucy Dougan and Martin Langford

In her poem, “Rubbish Removal Day”, Susan Adams writes: “After each stripping/there is a feast/to adorn myself/ with identity. . .” Writing poetry can be like that. There is, of course, the element of getting something out of one’s system, of needing, in some atavistic, or obsessive way, to “express” something: to make it visible, or external. But there is also the nature of the process itself: so often, there is a period of dislocation, of dissatisfaction with the bits and pieces in front of one, which will remain, sometimes for a frustratingly long time, until the poem takes on enough shape for one to be released from its imperfections. At that stage, if it is good enough, it will assume an identity of its own. Of all the language that humans create, nothing is as distinctive as a good poem: nothing else stands out so sharply from the welter of the vague and the incomplete. Not only, however, does the poem itself take on an identity, it becomes part of the identity of the author: a component, in turn, of his or her story. It was with these thoughts in mind that we selected the title, “The Feast of Identity”. And because that is what an anthology is: a kind of banquet, where the reader can savour the words with which others have articulated their experiences.

The anthology contains a mix of established and less well-known poets, and displays the wide range of styles one has come to expect from contemporary poets. It is, among other things,

a snapshot of the high level of skill possessed by the poets in Australian Poetry. The editors were particularly struck by the level of trust the poets displayed in the emotional nature of their material. As it is, both editors share a belief that poetry—or any art—which disowns emotion is either lacking or diminished, or better defined as something altogether different—philosophy, perhaps, or cultural dialogue. We agree with Andrew Motion when he says that he “never quite believe(s) it when poets say that they’re not writing out of their own feelings, and when that is the case, (that he) is not terribly interested in what they are doing.” This was, however, not an issue with which we had to deal. If one way of defining the lyric is to say it is a poem that is capable of musicality because its meanings are inflected emotionally, then the poems we were asked to consider were overwhelmingly lyrics. This is not the place to argue the lyric’s validity or otherwise, but on the evidence of the submissions to this anthology, the lyric tradition is robust.

We would like to thank the publications officer at AP, Bronwyn Lovell, for her energy and expertise in the management of this project. We would also like to thank all the contributors, successful or otherwise: it has been a pleasure and a privilege to work with your material: a members’ anthology provides an idiosyncratic and surprising survey of the quality of work sourced from a single organisation.

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Susan Adams  
Rubbish Removal Day

Twice a year  
I put myself out on the street  
beaten by the hits of god  
faded by the planets  
rained upon.

Discarded pieces kick at their life.  
When the truck removes this shedding  
my footprints are lighter.  
I shrink with this outage  
the trust of begone.

After each stripping  
there is a feast  
to adorn myself  
with identity,  
possessions become my persona.  
Heavy again with accumulated need  
there will be  
another pruning  
later in the year.

Plain has a fear of exposure  
we are frail without the clutter,  
the busyness  
of own and display  
hides bones  
shaved by doubt  
and wear.  
These cloaks hang over our mirrors.

David Ades

The Last Obstacle Finally Overcome

Here, high up the slopes of that last mountain,  
that mountain rising beyond deep blue into black,  
where the air is thin and getting thinner,  
you need to pause every few moments for breath.

How many times have you watched this unfold  
from below? Now it is your turn, come so soon  
though not suddenly, and others are watching.  
A breath and another breath: life's little summations.

It is about breath now, nothing else.  
You have made your farewells, quietly as is your way,  
so quietly they have yet to be noticed. All the old  
arguments are finished, all the opinions, all the stances.

Rasping, keeping departure at bay just a little longer,  
you summon the gathered patience of decades  
and wait for a moment, the perfect moment  
when the room is at last empty, the perturbed air

at last still, the audience departed: the audience  
for whom you save your final courtesy.

Kaye Aldenhoven

Five memories from the end of a life

## 1 They don't even know who I am

The Ward Manager phoned: *Bring Brett at 2pm, we will be ready to admit him.*

We arrived at 2pm, but they were not ready.

At 3pm I must leave to collect the boys from school.

I thought he'd be safe.

We had struggled to get Brett admitted to hospital.

He had struggled for months, coming home

from 5 hours in Emergency Department

with a pair of panadol and a warning:

*Don't waste my valuable time.*

Two panadol for advanced cancer stomach?

I thought my son was safe curled up in the big chair

I'd pushed into the room they said he would occupy

when a spare bed was found. When I returned Brett

was still in the big chair but in another room.

A nurse bent over his wrist, cutting off his identification tag  
with her scissors.

*Don't leave me here Mum, he cried tearfully.*

*Don't leave me, Mum.*

*They don't even know who I am.*

An orderly had woken him,

tried to take him to Tiwi Gardens Nursing Home,

at first gently, then forcefully. Brett had protested:

*I am not Anderson, I am Aldenhoven.*

He physically resisted his kidnapper. When the orderly,

attempting to discharge his orders, sought assistance,

the error was discovered, but not admitted, never admitted.

When kindly Dr Rob asked Brett how he was

a short time later, Brett said:

*Monty Python's Flying Circus continues.*

## 2 Red Jelly

How hard can it be  
to give me red jelly?

*Only green*, the anxious Filipina explains,  
Handing him a tray with  
egg and lettuce sandwiches (can't eat them)  
an orange (can't eat it)  
cold custard with canned peach slices (can't eat them)

I reconnoitre the trolley shelves in another ward  
Thieve red jelly  
Return with my loot

In his journal my starving son wrote:  
*'Three spoons of red jelly  
And a cup of green tea.  
That's all.'*

## 3 I knew he would like yellow jelly

a glance at the old black dog was all  
I needed to be sure he would like yellow jelly,  
left-over yellow jelly that Brett could not eat  
yellow jelly that could not pass down  
blocked by stomach cancer.

a sweet old black dog with grey beard  
his owner dropped him at the hospice on work days.  
he enjoyed the air-conditioning, visited Brett's room,  
to lie with his stomach on the cool floor  
as Brett lay dying, listening  
to the black dog's regular breathing.

chin resting on the floor,  
black dog watched over Brett  
as his breath weakened.

#### 4 In Sympathy

When I was crying loudly, walking around the boxes of your bits and pieces, sorting shells, feathers, stone tools, fossils of marine creatures collected a Gunn Point, photos of plants, gardens, babies, dogs, red glass cups you put on the louvres to watch the sun pass through, the weighty rib bones of dugong, coloured lures with barbs still attached, books I had inscribed to you, a poem handwritten in 1986, your Graduation Programme, your primary school reports, the ivory fish you chose from Rene's relics, the dragon Louis drew and framed for your birthday, your favourite velour dressing gown you wore on your Black Dog Days, mud crab claw trophies of your most impressive catches, a fish shaped candle, a bowl of spindle reels, when I was wailing loudly, pleading *Don't look Brett, Don't look Brett*, as I threw some stuff in the rubbish bin, Lily lay on my bed with her brindle head on my fresh pillow-slip, and howled too.

#### 5 Strange food

At 3am I get up to soak  
dried apricots in a tin of apricot nectar  
I open a tin of baby food – rice cream the label says –  
to eat with warm stewed apricots for breakfast.

I feed two chocolates to my grandson,  
chocolates bought by Cousin Sonya,  
ones that melted in the warmth  
of your mouth, the sweet smoothness  
sliding down your hungry throat.  
To your blocked stomach.

With the two packets of red jelly crystals  
I will make a trifle  
To eat after we spread his ashes  
at his favourite fishing spots.

Kaye Aldenhoven  
After a year  
6 February 2014

The track is a waterway.  
We splash downhill downstream,  
lovely Lily, gorgeous Sully and me.

For a year Sully has searched  
for Brett, nosing around our places,  
chasing wind-sounds, smells.

Several times Sully has remembered.  
A shy follower of audacious Lily,  
at the fishing platform

Sully leapt from the back seat,  
galloped along the floating wooden gangway.  
He's remembered night fishing here with Brett.

Where Brett and I pulled stinking mint plants  
that patch is still weed-free.  
Clots of scarlet finches clutch grass,

their tiny claws hang on for dear life.  
Hens call low from wind shadow,  
the dogs' paws pink in clear water.

Red spikes of Grevillea dryandra pierce  
the grass. I don't need to pick one  
for you, Brett.

I feel you close, walking  
with me and your dogs,  
splashing barefoot with them,

nosing through the rubbish  
to see if there's something useful  
to bring home for your garden.

The year has passed, slowly  
and fast. Every morning, every afternoon  
we walk the bush looking for you.

Richard Allen  
Kokoda

*I breathe in*                    this moment is  
    the same as any other  
*I breathe out*                beneath every action, every situation,  
    the sameness of the moment  
*I breathe in*                    the thereness  
    of the moment  
*I breathe out*                the here-I-am-ness  
    of the moment  
*I breathe in*                    and think back to those men  
    who died in the jungles of Kokoda  
    or who died later like my grandfather  
    from exhaustion  
    or those who died on beaches, in ravines,  
    behind rocks, in the air, on the sea  
*I breathe out*                I see now that they lived and died  
    in the same thereness of the moment  
*I breathe in*                    we are the same  
    my moment is your moment  
    your breath is my breath  
    my blood is your blood  
*I breathe out*                all that separates us  
    is the illusion of time  
    the illusion of life  
    the illusion of death  
*I breathe in*                    thank you  
    for sacrificing your moment  
    so that I could have mine  
  
*We breathe out*

John Bennett  
Dusk Deep Creek



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Lisa Brockwell  
Earth Girls Are Easy

That old song has it wrong, I don't find them  
easy. When I bring them back to my place  
they won't relax and let go. I offer  
them a holiday, a chance to shrug  
their spirits free from all that bile and bone,  
that ribcage, lock and key. But they  
are as heavy as a riverbed, a seam  
of oil too deep to reach. I see their spark,  
their potential – at the ski fields or when they're dancing  
they show me they want to be airborne. So I  
try to help, to loosen the root so they can wiggle  
their spirits like milk teeth, ignore the gore,  
the dull tear and dive through that moment  
of pulling free. But they never do, they're stuck  
at the wiggling, endlessly. They prefer to sit  
in the saddle of pain. I see their thoughts.  
What if there's no coming back? I can't leave  
my children, my friends, my cat. I could switch  
to earth boys, some swear by them. But they  
are just as clenched, and more into the spaceship  
than me. Also ungrateful: when I drop  
them home they complain about a stopped watch.

Lisa Brockwell  
Waiting for the Train

Early spring cherry blossom by the tracks – so prim  
and so dirty, all at once. The bees must be dropping  
to their knees. For me, it's after the harvest, only just  
but even so, a different season. There are elderly women  
on the platform in beautifully cut coats and expensive shoes.  
I know that's where I'm heading, but not yet. I can feel the sap  
humming in my hips and legs; my hair taken by the wind is still  
a good thing. You surprise me with coffee and wait with me.  
It's unexpected and lovely, your regard. Window box platonic  
but definitely that spark. Like standing in the sun on a bitter  
cold day, tasting the froth brim over the top of my cup.  
The station master recites where the train is going;  
no one cares where it has been. I step on  
with the well-dressed pensioners, my hair warm from the sun.

Jennifer Compton  
Like In A Movie

When you know that God doesn't love you any more,  
if he ever did, and won't move you around the board  
with a deft hand, for your own good, you might turn  
to a hefty theory of conspiracy, unfolded in darkened  
venues at so many frames per second, or in the privacy  
of your own lounge room on a plasma screen, while the  
little engine on the shelf below goes *un poco agitato*.

It all makes sense, or at the least, is meta to your fiction.  
They are watching you make a withdrawal from an ATM  
behind a sheltering hand, and as you walk beside the river  
they keep a weather eye out. For all you know that timeout  
that you took in hospital, on the eleventh floor, with a trim  
nurse who took a special interest in your case, wasn't just  
another routine procedure, an appendectomy, rhinoplasty.

And now you have a lump under the skin on your wrist  
that doesn't itch, and suddenly you crave camomile tea  
and want to buy a gun. Sprung by a ringtone, you concoct  
an infusion, in your own kitchen, dipping the mesh ball  
into the pot so many times, exactly. And then, deep sleep  
and driven dreams. You wake at first light with a fugitive  
memory of a ride on a helicopter invading your first thought.

There is a gun, that you don't remember buying, glinting  
in the half light on the windowsill. Where you can't miss it.  
The man with the compassionate mouth that contrasts with  
his cropped hair, raises a finger to tap out your number.  
Behind him sits a man with less character who reads code  
on a monitor. Or it could be a woman, sometimes she wears  
a pink Chanel suit and a feather boa and smiles at the camera

with perfect teeth, as the music swells *ma non troppo*.  
Do you have perfect teeth? No, of course you don't.

Brett Dionysius

Forty-five

The earth did its best to swallow him as a child once.  
In his backyard things went from green to dead; grass  
runners petered out like burnt fuses or a satellite map's  
x-ray of dry river beds. A scarred country with veins  
of straw-coloured gold that decayed & only made  
Dalby's black soil wealthier. It was a town coming  
apart at the seams, as the drought dug in & enfiladed  
the farmers with relentless fire. The Barley Board's  
empty concrete silos steamed like a nuclear plant.  
Bored boys climbed this highest point & surveyed  
their uniform world or played chicken & shot arrows  
up into space & waited to see who would run. He  
couldn't be warned. He played with no shirt on.  
No hat. In a lab, someone was inventing sun cream  
& cells dug out of a nostril bullied weaker ones in  
their agar dish. There were gashes in his mother's lawn,  
a carnosaur's claw print across its prey's armoured hide;  
parallel cuts ran in the same direction, as all moisture  
fled the ground. A mass migration of water molecules  
that were detained high up in the atmosphere by pressure's  
chokehold. The gaps looked to him like a poison victim's  
plum-stained lips & felt like a mouth's taut skin stretched  
over a rotting skull. The splits yawned black & fit half  
of his hand, sucked in by the abyssal jaw, when he was  
game enough to play finger-chicken, quell his trapdoor  
spider fear & push his arm into the topsoil's maw;  
a lion tamer backing his skill. This is where all of his  
working knowledge of the future stopped, as the laws  
of physics broke down into particles of shadow.

There were thin fault lines within his father too.  
His skin became drum-taut over his cheekbones;  
a landmass picked up by a continental plate &  
roughed-up into mountains. Corals' sedimentary  
graveyard that over millennia, metastasised into  
limestone & matched his father's chalky face.  
Then, not even one second of geological time,  
at forty-five he was pixelated behind his home's  
screen door, fragmented into a hundred thousand  
tiny squares; the receptor cells of a praying mantis's  
compound eye, as this last scene crawled around  
in his son's head & stalked him. His father was  
disembodied as he jumped into his friend's car;  
a loose wire that didn't connect anymore, memory  
losing power over distance, as his sleepover began.  
Or, if time was a set of stairs, than his father fell on  
the top step. He was diffuse, beekeeper anonymous  
behind the door's muslin veil as his son drove away.  
This follicle-thin barrier, its bottom torn, where cats  
had tried to force their entrance; sharpened claws  
extending like broken shinbone through a foot.  
Their flash of separation was only fly-screen thick,  
the breadth of a silicon chip. Out in the backyard  
the ground refused to shut its trap, where generations  
of buried pets pushed through to the other side.  
The screen was irreparable, as was his father's body,  
that burned itself out like a giant exhausting its gas.  
The coal-dust of his cells creating a new nebula

Anne Elvey  
Treasure Hunt

The silver glints in the ti-tree. A clue is wrapped in foil, peeled from the lining of the cigarette pack and rolled into balls. The clue says, *look behind the beach hut*. The rosaries clack as sister strides through the yard. The bell swings with her right arm. A boy's hands are full of paper. *Ten paces from the chapel a blue cape*. On Sunday afternoon we play monopoly. I land on community chest. *That's Victor's dog*, Dad says. A Jack Russell explores the walkers and wheels. *When I was a boy*, Dad tells me, *I made treasure hunts for the other children. What was the treasure?* I ask. *There was never any treasure*. Sister Gertrude sees his cuffs are frayed, the singlet and shirt tucked into his shorts, his socks pulled up in shoes he gives a lick and polish at the gate. Five boys and a girl gather. *Once upon a time*, Joe says, *there was a rider on the moor and mist hung all around. A bird called out a single note and nettles stung*. The bell. Dad lies in bed. The TV shows an old war movie. *We used to watch Saturday matinees*, I say. *Hmppyh*, says he. *Forgive me*, she says, as she bustles past in the corridor tight with dinner carts and walkers. *She's a nice one*, Dad says, *likes my little funnies*. Dining, Dad sips chardonnay. *We'll get there*, he says. Joe writes on the back of an old composition. At lunch, *a horse whinnies on the moor*. Water pools in the ?? asphalt and the shoes. *Joe, Joe*, a boy yells, *I found a clue: under our lady's toe, the crushed head of the snake. I got it Joe. I got it! How many clues are there? I can't wait to see the treasure*. A personal attendant admires the picture on his wall: beach huts in a yellow light. *I painted that*, Dad says, *forty years ago*. *For an hour today*, he tells me, *they left me in the corridor. I used to be top of my class*, Jim says. *Jim's lost it*, says Dad. The virgin's foot covers a clue. The wattle's gold hides another. *We'll get there*, Joe tells the children who eat clues for lunch. His mother leaves the church with mop and broom. Sister Gertrude drops a few coins in her hand. *A grey shawl hangs on the moor all day. I might be a modern-day Dickens*, he writes. Under the crocheted rug at the foot of the bed, the gap for a toe is a word that just escaped him. *We'll get there*, Dad says. Small fingers wrap clues in silver foil.

Diane Fahey  
Heatwave

Near dawn, the house still sweltering,  
I walk up and down the driveway, breathing  
slowly as rain comes, almost too soft to feel.  
When it stops, the air is taut with new heat.  
From the drive I can see the bay's dream-silver,  
coral cinders in the east.

I'm remembering how, as I grew up  
the moral rubric was to know your place,  
not get above or ahead of yourself,  
and later, too late, never to be down on yourself.  
What, then? Walking past the plants in my nightdress,  
buoyed by tintured green fragrances,  
I wait for an edge of coolness: at home now  
in this calm aloneness; this wakefulness.

Angela Gardner  
Space Faring

*for Laika*

Our noses pressed against glassed-in reflections: death  
stars, habitable planets, the deep of distance.

Me and the dog cosmonaut take a space-walk above  
earth's small diatom. Her crystalline yelp coming back  
fiery and atomic. Leakage that echoes all her dog-years  
of accidental radio out in the far beyond.

In this imagined future our bulky selves are weightless  
far beyond belonging to earth's gravity, alive  
in the matter-transfer of dreams.

Ian Gibbins  
Bayside Reporter



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Kevin Gillam  
chamber musing

(i) 43 days

all on foot, drug ripe and addled,  
Tramadols and Endones puppeting mice

in the peripherals, trekking lanes and  
limestone, withered grapes atop walls, to the West

sky smeared peach, on the demolition site  
pink ribbons around the trunks of two tuarts –

heritage listed? termites? brake lights and  
brittling couch grass, the bruising of a

week closed, sutures of hours – clockwise  
is off. to the wharves, slap of ropes

and tide, 'Spliethoft', Dutch, engorging.  
it's a Vaselined moon tonight, March brooding

(ii) venn intersects

in this convalescence – good word that with its  
gauze-like length and syllabic wrap – been

practicing the lost art of waiting, bus and  
train stations, doctors' rooms, never enough

shade or new 'New Ideas', been watching,  
the wizened and the upright, figs ripening,

footpaths that flow like prose then trip like  
misspellings, been rubbing paperbark trees,

listening in on frogs, been mulling over the  
difference between learned and remembered,

the venn intersects, making a mantra  
of 'clockwise is off' while pondering the

origin of knowns, the mind that did  
the choosing, hands that shape our days

## (iii) rope armies

taken my lungs to ocean, remembering  
that on taps, clockwise is off, though

that is my truth, my tomorrow, not that  
of the clock hands and been thinking

'bout tides and un-neaping, and lets call it  
global swarming though we'll never get there

of course, when, for every ant there's  
a human – they know that, 'cos for us

'mining' means 'mine' and we're more blind  
than they are and while we're making

books for our faces they're forming rope  
armies to bind and save the world

Ron Heard  
Hedges

sussex

I cycle a country lane  
one field away  
from the cliff  
fields    footpaths    hedges  
run to the clifftop

cease where the land  
falls to the sea

beside the lane  
english flowers I am learning to name  
campion    cranesbill    samphire

in the bright mist  
the sea  
is still as milk

this is the place  
or very like the place  
where Verlaine spoke of  
*l'échelonnement des haies*

yet I can find no way  
to say that  
in English

ranks of hedges  
scattering of hedges  
alignments  
rows upon rows  
ladderings  
an unfolding

none will do

with those words  
Verlaine  
has remade  
this landscape

*l'échelonnement des haies*

Siobhan Hodge  
After Labé

*Il me convient hors de moymesme vivre;  
Ou fais eoncor que loin sois en sejour.*  
—Louise Labé, Sonnet 17

Nerve to speak  
though you plied  
a quiet retreat  
after the plague.

*La Belle Cordière*  
your ropes still prop  
an indignant bower

lounge room civilities  
rot in bones planted  
at your feet.

Beauty in symmetry,  
your back bares a sweet  
new abject –

tongue rolling curb-chain love,  
you turn and chide, your  
teeth crack stones

ripped free of Petrarch now,  
rebuff the cold arms  
for your own.

Your letters have slipped,  
lost in a pyre  
stoked by nameless hands.

You shift now  
between lines  
that would pin you  
through the resin.

John Jenkins

When he read the poem in the room above the stairs

1.

When he read the poem in the room above the stairs,  
the walls had been repainted, and a new skylight put in.  
As he looked to see that his pages were in order,  
noticed old photographs of people – older poets  
he had once known – had been removed,  
and a glass-topped bench with vases on it.  
You approach from the lane. A mirror still on the stairs,  
and when he glanced, had hardly recognised himself.  
As he began to read, the poem had stayed  
exactly the same as always, not a comma or character  
or pause had ever been replaced. And, as his voice  
rose to meet it, he realised how little ever changed.  
He was still himself, for better or worse. As always,  
the audience sat courteously, still listening, and fragile.  
Whether full or empty, the room was just a room.

2.

When he read the poem in the room above the stairs,  
he imagined it was full of blind people, and it was hard  
to read their expressions. So many dark glasses, black  
as the shiny coffee served here. He rubbed his eyes.  
He knew he'd have to discard the poem he once thought balanced  
and complete, and continued in a brave, quiet panic.  
At which point the room filled with light, which dazzled  
off the walls and lit up cups. It shot sharp lances  
from the sides of things, so intense it made his eyes well  
with tears. He thanked the room, which had shrunk in the glare  
to the size of a pinhole. Putting the thought away, he smiled.

3.

When he read the poem in the room above the stairs  
people felt they could hear things they had forgotten.  
As he read, and they listened, his voice reached out  
across the space, or was suspended in the air. Beyond  
the room, he remembered wind and rain, sighs shot through  
with longing, sounds climbing like some impossibly high staircase  
of emotion, that was not his and seemed to belong to no one.  
The audience, in contrast, heard sounds of journeys never made.  
As he read, all these things could slip away, back into silence:  
they were accounted for, and finally done. The poem returned  
to absence where words had been, a listening without regret.  
So he raised his voice, and looked down where a girl  
was doodling the word *more* in a cold winter's morning.  
But it was summer now, and the room flashed past, shuddering,  
as if at speed, merging into other words not yet written.  
He read until the poem was entirely given away. At the end  
of this, he knew it was not raining outside, and could not be.  
He would always be in this room. Had always been, forever.  
Beside him, another self sat and wondered. At last, he sipped  
his coffee, sailed out, still listening carefully. Below the stairs,  
out in the air, found the marvellous street and sun.

Helga Jermy  
Saaremaa

I steal your stories  
but it is a reverent kind of theft.  
It feels like inheritance after loss,  
greeted by trees that walk  
in fables, Saaremaa gods born  
from falling meteorites,  
all those tales washed in from the sea.  
I look only for geography as we drive  
through the heart of this land,  
but each tree holds a clue in its DNA.  
I welcome the fading light  
as it stops painting shadows.  
I can reach for the dark here.  
It is a warm dark, sepia,  
somehow unaware of its capabilities.

Barbara Kamler

A love letter to my mother-in-law

*after the portrait of A Levine by Noel Counihan, Melbourne 1953*

I see how you look at us, elegant fingers poised,  
amber beads framing an ochre cashmere twinset.

You are as they say, a beauty, passionate to know  
more, be more, glue the family heart with fierce

ambition and a gentle touch. Your friend the social  
realist captures your rosy gaze, a stylish ease

at odds with tales of you raking those fingers through  
managed curls, fretting for love betrayed, for children

who did not marry as you hoped they would. Let me  
take you from your chair a while to walk in our garden.

Your son loves me as only men who love their mothers  
can. These roses grew from rootstock, their white

blooms thrill us still and the purple hydrangeas nod  
yes to all we do, but lately we favour native grasses

resilient like you, they thrive here. You know, your  
children agreed on everything except your portrait

so they multiplied your likeness, rotate the original  
every two years. We have you now, lit up at the end

of the hall. I greet you each morning. The night you died  
you left your criminology essay on the bedside table

half-done, a closet of fine silk blouses spattered  
with cooking oil and rooms full of grieving friends.

I came too late to love you. We are held in filaments  
of memory – your hand on his, his hand on mine.

Joan Kerr  
3 poems

<i>maintenant</i>		<i>ora</i>
<i>l'amandier</i>	<i>Now that the almond tree</i>	<i>mandorlo</i>
<i>perdre</i>	<i>has lost her leaves</i>	<i>perdere</i>
<i>feuilles</i>		<i>foglie</i>
<i>rames</i>	<i>the branches are masts for</i> <i>little birds</i>	<i>rami</i>
<i>petits oiseaux</i>		<i>piccoli uccelli</i>
<i>tout l'hiver</i>	<i>all winter they wait for her</i>	<i>tutto l'inverno</i>
<i>attendre</i>		<i>aspettare</i>
<i>s'épanouir</i>	<i>to bloom into sail</i>	<i>florire</i>
<i>voiles</i>		<i>vele</i>

Christopher Konrad  
Clock

The minute hand of the old-school metal-red clock falls up, ready to rest at ten pm; *Endless love* on the radio, small talk about the kids and the movie *Calvary* which numbed us, and stirred feelings of absence still buried, hidden under the grevillea bowed over my parent's graves somewhere in Mundaring: six inches down, the urns that contain them; the gravel silent underfoot as the wind blows cold over the Bay all the way from frozen Southern seas here, now; look over from the couch, the hand falls up, pummels eleven pm and it's been a long time since we put the kids to bed or I've kissed my father's dying brow as he laid out his regrets like a confession all wasted away. The hand strikes the correct time always; even if the time's wrong, the clock never is.

Bronwyn Lang  
Untitled

*The heat of the taxi and this particularly hazed morning is one in which circumstance invites confession. We are on our way to see a gynaecologist. I am still high and not yet sober.*

*My eyes feel discombobulated, set loose and ragged in their sockets.*

*Silences are fattened with words, fill mouths like fists.*

*Things we never think of telling are told.*

*The red dust on our skin streaks with sweat, into watercolours on canvas. We have wound down the windows but the air that enters the car is foetid and tropic. There is dried blood on my heels. I am not wearing underwear.*

*Tara says now is the right time for stories.*

*Once she was an actress and met a lover on a game show. Her affairs have ended online or in obsessive analysis. She wants to predict next season's narrative.*

*Our skulls are hollowed and sit gaunt above our spines. She speaks of struggling.*

*Going in and out of frame.*

*Off set. Everything is echolalic.*

*Her hair is still damp. She has recently showered. We share a preference for drying our skin in draught. Today she has chosen a yellow dress from the many that feature in her bedroom, hooked on doors and shelves as if she lived in a boutique.*

*This morning there was a rape.*

*I notice that our hands flutter between our laps and mouths as if we are drawing from imaginary Marlboro lights.*

Ray Liversidge  
Mindfulness

And unlike Tarzan I'm not buffed  
or you a comely Hollywood Jane

And I'm trying not to swing from  
vine to vine (or if I do  
taking it one vine at a time)  
but learning how to find the  
clearing by simply being here

And I haven't learnt my lines  
for the next scene or  
if you and/or I are in it...

And I see no ending

Mark Liston  
Three Haiku  
*Campbell Town Tasmania*

The sky  
is at the river ~  
a blue wren drinks.

Suddenly  
a warmer afternoon ~  
the taste of apricots

Children  
in the sunshine ~ shadows  
play on the grass.

Rose Lucas  
Under the Wave

Slipping under the wave –  
that space where even sand  
might settle,  
    unswirled, where  
the turbulence that rakes at the roots of your hair  
    filling it with grit,  
        yanking it back toward the wildness of the surface,  
a kind of reverse gravity,  
might yet, like the hand of god, pass over you –

slip under the wave,  
you know its towering confluence of tide and wind,  
the crushing hammer of its foamy fist;  
watch, where the form of your flailing, human body,  
with all its intricacies of angle and organ,  
might turn its fins in this mottled light,  
negotiating an ancient element –

slip under the wave,  
make for the sky.

Rose Lucas  
Unexpected Fall

Barn doors are latched against the snow  
and a slash of red roof slants across winter's pale, oncoming frame:  
when a grouse,  
    flecked and surprisingly elegant  
        sails low through the yard, hitting  
doors with crunch of bone,  
the rupturing sac –  
so that an angularity of feathers slides  
slow toward the still exposed gravel of the drive,  
trailing bloodied tracks to answer  
gravity's dark urgings,  
the density of this clotted earth;

even as the honeyed light of lamps  
springs up in human windows –  
    the silken weave of feather and warm body,  
        the airiness of skeleton, acuity of eye,  
            flight's bold trajectory –

all fall askew,  
broken and  
cooling already as evening

floods the wide and darkening fields of death's wilderness –  
its blackening grasses,  
its blank interruption.

Robert Lumsden  
Not-Birds

I've had enough of trying to pin you down.  
We've all had enough of it. Nobody's succeeded,  
not even Hardy. (Thrushes *don't* 'darkle'.)  
You don't stay put long enough for the fastest quip to catch you.  
Even imagination grapples spaces you've vacated.

You'd think we'd take a point  
after all these centuries, but we don't.  
You're so *common*, that's what gets us.  
That some wee shard of something ancient,  
time's afterthought, could out-do  
the best we've got to throw  
at life's incidental challenges to grace —  
stabbing at a bit of biscuit like a champion fencer,  
a millimetre dance on rubber feet —  
it's appalling, frankly. We feel stupid  
just thinking of it.

Sublating to transcendent meta-smartness  
doesn't help much, either:

— You are, if any thing (nice one, Schoolman!)  
the sense of all we make you stand for  
in that moment when memory is all we know  
of what you were to us, chads of explanation  
fabricating recollection —

See? Not even a dogfight  
using indirection for ammunition  
keeps bullet holes from punching gotcha emoticons  
along our fuselage. How proud  
can we be,  
witness to your everywhere and nothing-special touch  
with ecstasy  
lifting into cloud,  
earth-bound, acrid, jostling, avid  
to lay out old  
truths neatly  
before we disappear, completely?

Earl Livings  
 Naming Instinct  
*Sligo, Ireland, August 2009*

Not knowing its name, my being  
 On a far-flung island, its creatures  
 Known only by reputation,

I have no choice but to listen:  
 High-pitched chioo, chioo, chioo, or  
 Queeka, queeka, queeka, almost the sound

Of worn brakes jabbed to slow down,  
 Or a thin bronze staff tapped against oak  
 To call ancestors to dark clearings.

Not knowing what it looks like—  
 Midnight, the bird bounding  
 From one branch to the next,

Behind a maze of branches, calling  
 To mate, to mark territory, to state  
 Its own being-bliss—I imagine it

Brindled, slim-bodied, tawny-flecked neck,  
 Oil-gloss eyes that scan always,  
 Its red beak open, with each note

Chiming leaves and balmy air, all ears,  
 Etymologies of breath behind its eyes.  
 It knows nothing of thresholds.

Not knowing what to do next, I stop  
 Wondering, stop straining to charm the bird  
 And its rustling, moon-riddled tree,

Open gaze and hearing to whatever waits  
 Beyond the imprints and echoes of words,  
 The swing of breath and song, the poise.

Julie Maclean

Ventenac Nightingale and the Bereaved

You might wonder why  
he chooses to spend every  
evening in the churchyard

The wind is bending  
his tree. It's freezing for June,  
getting dark too early

He waits for her  
Jeune girl  
with the tapestry bag

She doesn't care  
for his pumped chest,  
full throat open to the moon,  
reputation for dazzling  
arrangements

She is shaking the dead  
with her whispering,  
the silent way  
she opens the gate

Mark Mahemoff  
A new premises

I arrive with lunch  
to find you clearing out

years of junk and dust.  
You say the man next door

has gone bust  
and now buys stuff from the tip,

polishes it up  
and flogs it off to make ends meet.

I point to what's left of your workshop  
crammed with half-useful things

and contemplate how dreams  
often end up in mothballs.

We pull down the old roller door  
and visit your new premises.

It's still a huge expanse  
of empty cubic metres.

Side by side we stand in the middle of nothing.  
I'm finally learning how to be a son.

Colin Montfort  
Happenstance

the knackery is out of sight  
surrounded once by christmas trees  
now factories  
flourish  
in the spirit of our ways

the flower man invests his stock  
in cellophane  
dichroic speckles  
punctuate the gamy air  
with paradox and charm

around the back the knacker trucks  
divest their deadstock quietly

while dedicated day-trippers  
scutter by to get away  
from yesterday  
missing more than meets the eye  
sundays on the by-pass

others fly the other way  
homeward bound  
in habit's spell  
or stealing back  
from who knows what

some stop fleetingly to stretch a leg  
or smell the rosy irony

the flower man has crazy eyes  
mesmer eyes  
unfathomed by the romeos  
and celebrants of happenstance  
sundays at the roadside fair

Philip Neilsen  
Men of a Certain Age

*for Bronwyn Lea*

They wake on the fringe of a dream  
after sharp islands and ironic monsters  
Penelope greets them near the shore  
her waist carved slim by waiting and war.

They hope the last pulse of waves  
brings them home without secrets  
cleansed of betrayal, protected by law  
that small pale child who danced for applause  
then lingered on the stairs craving more.

No chance now to gather in grace  
the rumpled rooms, the impatient worm,  
wrapped flowers, moon tumbling  
along the beach, the unknown door.

Voices are muffled in the house  
windows lit for a stranger.

The molten spark  
of women of a certain age.

Norm Neill

dominion

*(Late winter, sunny afternoon)*

The front veranda's warm. A cushion pads the wicker armchair and the view is clear. A noisy miner forages, consuming insects in an orange-marmalade grevillea. A squawk of cockatoos watch overhead, and the house where old Alberto Costa died two days ago still has its curtains drawn. I really must convey my sympathy. The border collie from around the corner, off-leash, pauses yet again beside the tree by Number 35 to sniff the news – official warnings seem like wasted words. A homeless woman in a greatcoat sits at the bus-stop singing *Mashed Potato* over and over, her worldly goods compressed inside two plastic bags, their tops attached by plaited string to carry on her shoulder. It's still a little early to have her moved along. I sip my coffee – percolated, with a dash of cream. Later, I will stroll across the park, pause briefly by the harbour wall, observe the sailboats swaying at the buoys, and check for barnacles below their waterlines.

Kerrie Nelson  
Memento Mori

*for Helen*

after the lawn sale  
the rest of her things  
are given away to clear  
the house for the buyer

the seller/inheritor

the tjanpi basket comes my way  
its rim decorated with wisps  
of blue wool threaded  
through once-red ininti beans

now brown/decaying

it holds six smooth patterned river rocks  
that pleased the artist's palm, the artist's eye  
and pleases mine; an almost oval piece of wood  
blade-shaped, a dot painting

of bird/echidna

a torn and faded silk daffodil sits  
beside a small piece of denim hemmed  
on two sides; two sides curled and frayed.  
A simple two by two inch square

(old measurements/older memories)

cut and twinned with the daffodil. Yellow leopard  
skin pattern - crutch of my old jeans -  
memento of our long week end, the way  
they unpeeled in her double swag

under stars/moon

a five cent piece, purple paper clip  
 silver staple, a bent and rusty nail, dust  
 confirms how the meaning of gifts can unravel -  
 how love itself moves between

keepsake/relic

I wash the river rocks until they sing  
 polish the dotted echidna or bird  
 bin the daffodil and denim  
 put aside till later the cast off

coin/metallica

years ago, someone told me  
 tjanpi baskets decorated with wool  
 become fodder for moths. I know this  
 to be true as I remove the frail yarn with

fingernails/darning needle

I thread the eye with loud pink raffia.  
 Red beans, already hotwired, await a lifeline.  
 I begin the slow work of attachment  
 recall her last soft morphine drift . . .

tjanpi basket/wooden casket.

Mark O'Flynn  
Hit Dog

There is a woman staggering in circles  
on the front lawn. This happens moments  
after the tyres squeal and a faint thump  
interrupts the afternoon's quiet lassitude.

The woman has her hands to her mouth,  
her jaw agape in nauseous shock.  
'I've just hit a dog,' she says.  
On the road a small grey twitching bundle.

I want to pat her on the back, calm her down,  
but see there are other things to happen first.  
The dog is breathing, then it stops. Its eyes glaze  
over, staring at nothing. The woman sobs.

A man who has a pair of gardening gloves  
lifts the dog off the road. The dog's shit is green.  
We wrap an old towel around it.  
More people come, a youth with tattoos.

The phone number on the tag on the collar  
doesn't work. Then it does. Another man  
who owns the dog comes running  
from a nearby house still talking on the phone.

The look on his face awry with what storm  
he knows is coming. New to the neighbourhood,  
I didn't even know he owned a dog. He puts  
his face to the dog's, an act too intimate for us.

There is palpable tension between the man  
cradling his dead dog and the sobbing woman.  
I say, 'That's the second time that's happened,'  
but no one hears me. All the people stand about

helplessly: a scene from Brechtian theatre.  
It's like the day has been stripped back  
to its raw suburban elements. Then another  
woman comes running from the neighbours'

house, screaming and running, '*Are you sure?*  
*Are you sure?*' They hold the bundle between  
them and there is more screaming and sobbing.  
Then the neighbours take away their dog

while we bring the shocked woman, who clearly  
cannot drive, inside with us. Everyone else moves  
off into the alarming clarity of the afternoon.  
I say again, 'That's the second time that's happened.'

Patricia O’Heare  
A Pip, a Secret and a Lucky Coin

*Men knit*, my old father says carefully  
caressing his small dog with shovel hands  
*Men knit. One day Country Cousin Nick said,*  
*‘Come into the good room, City John,*  
*I’ll tell you a secret. It’s about knitting.’*

He’s unswaddling the story as he once,  
with the showmanship of a parish priest,  
unknotted the corner of his handkerchief  
to show me the fossilized tooth he’d found  
*‘Here’s the true history of the world,’* he’d said

He says now Nick put his secret out like  
a treasure from the box beneath his bed:  
the peach pip shriveled like a shrunken head;  
the coin that took a man to war and back.  
*Men knit. In all these years, I’ve never told.*

That night I get out the album – there’s Nick  
one ear chewed off by sixty years of sun,  
looking backwards over his ribbed paddocks,  
grinning *It doesn’t matter* at the new pup  
running across the furrows like a dropped stitch.

Patricia O’Heare  
The City of Lost Animals

The harsh wood has retracted its buds  
like claws. Everything is a bunch of sticks.  
Lost animals speak to passers by  
from paper images of themselves  
on wooden telephone posts.  
The rain is kneading their faces.

Eye-high, they plead domesticity;  
owners know how unlovely  
others people’s mess can seem.  
They are eloquent through lost eyes;  
the dog curling like a smile on a leash,  
the cat with a smile that ends  
before the photograph.

In spring, when birds come back  
to perch on the chatting wires  
the old cat will be there still  
as if an anaesthetic hasn’t worked,  
mute when new dogs go by.  
The city gives itself to strangers;  
it’s what cities do best.

Uyen Nguyen  
Mary-An Jane

It was the week before the holidays  
as I sat in the principal's office,  
recalling what a mistake  
Mary-An Jane had been.

She had come into the world  
screaming like a chorus of banshees,  
looking like the hybrid of a dog and a human,  
I had feared she'd been a changeling.

It had gotten worse as she grew up,  
her laugh was between a snort and a meow,  
she walked as if her feet were touching lava,  
she had a collection of her own snot.

But what drove her father and me  
with urges to return her to the devil  
was her obsession with Tommy Stark,  
the supposed love of her life.

Mary-An Jane would watch him nap at school,  
place her clammy hands on his thighs,  
follow him when he goes to the bathroom,  
and describe the size of his penis and tits.

She'd punch girls, who dared look twice his way,  
imagine touching, licking, kissing his face,  
bite and chew Tommy Stark's clothes,  
then keep a collection of the fallen buttons.

Sitting in the office, the principal tells her  
she has to stop. Immediately the banshee returns,  
sobbing like a raccoon, screaming to the principal,  
her mum and dad too, did it all the time.

Tony Page  
My Brother Cannot Sleep

Barely thirteen months separate us,  
Brothers gangling teenage limbs  
In the bedroom of our shared past.

You, the Olympic athlete, forever  
Running ahead of yourself  
But never first over the line.

The fitness I envied in you,  
Forty years later seems skeletal  
Beside my pudgy self-acceptance.

It's only on the phone you tell me  
How you wake sweating from  
Panic, how you wake

In that million dollar house  
Your anger manages to maintain,  
Empty rooms on every floor.

Jeremy Page  
Go, But Take These Maps

## I.

Overeducated  
Left out \* Right on  
Underachievers

Instant Outdated

Overcharged  
Left wing \* Right wing  
Underpaid

Instagram Out now!

Overtime  
Left work \* Right hand man  
Under the pump

Interest free Outbid

Overpopulated  
Left for dead \* Right near the coast  
Under surveillance

Indigenous “Outrageous”

Overworked  
Left lane ends \* Right after the break  
Underwhelming

Inherent OUTSTANDING

## II.

x	spatial	carry yourself
y	hierarchical	move up
z	social	move in

III.

o  
v  
e  
r  
b  
o  
a  
r  
d  
l e f t o v e r s     r i g h t e o u s  
d  
o  
w  
n  
u  
n  
d  
e  
r

IV.

Insiders  
Included  
Invited

Outspoken  
Out of bounds  
Out, out, out.

over and over  
overt undertones

navigating is easy, just  
know your place.

Vanessa Page  
Signs of life

Below the port-facing ribs of the old town  
the body of the St Lawrence River is laid out

October clears the decks, blows the last of the tourists  
down the creases of the Vieux Montreal

In stone-walled urban pockets, spot fires burn  
with the suddenness of maple leaves,

an ox-blood undertow, turning slowly to face the fall

I am glowing from the inside too, but  
with a migrational pull that is much less seasonal

barely noticeable under grey-marbled sky,  
a gentle drift of ashes with no shaft of light for reveal

How strange that I keep finding myself here,  
lost in a crush of North American monuments

navigating unexpected points of cultural difference  
and icebox doors weighted against winter's shoulder

Small, unfamiliar birds are fleeing this place  
and each flight pattern catches like something intimate

When I return to my body, the city continues, as all cities do  
the towering heartlands of vacant gods growing closer

Even here, inside the Basilica on Rue St Sulpice  
comfort is temporary, a sub judice resting place

for my own turning chrysalis

Inside the emptiness of noise, the acoustics are perfect  
for a new heartbeat, I can't hear yet.

Janette Pieloor  
Before

It was before/ you told me the books I'd taken  
from the shelves were those I could get on  
kindle/ told me my pacing along our orange  
gravel path was mimicking Stevie Smith's  
Raven *anger freed* and all I would see would be  
the pink bottle brushes without an exit/ told  
me that old ginger cat's squeaky meow each  
time I passed wasn't a sign/ that no one knows  
the mathematics of the pyramids/ and anti-  
gravity technology has not yet been  
discovered/ told me that sky's colour will  
change one day/ and you and I and all of us are  
part of the universe experiencing itself/ that it  
was before the last time you and I were  
together/ when I asked you did you know  
where the children's books were and you said  
no/ when I found the cowry shell and put it to  
my ear to listen to the tides/ when I left and  
took the sea with me/ that I knew I had loved  
you/ before:

Robyn Rowland  
Poppy Picking

*for Meral, Bozcaada island/Tenedos*

Not the soft wrinkled skin of old men –  
papery, easily torn – or the crumpled blooms in our town plots.  
Upright as tulips, Turkish Red Poppies are firm and sure  
they need just four petals, bright scarlet,  
red as red can get, each with its eye black khol.

We are laughing like children  
racing through fields-full, higher than our knees.  
They crowd the narrow roads of your island  
spilling across runnels, under fences  
as if they were once water, spreading in a flood.

We are poppy hunters, poppy-picking.  
We run ahead of the other women,  
driving to lane's end, friends' building sites  
competing for the best field to harvest.  
You hold them hostage with talk, while I grab and gather.

We pluck the four petals. Pollen-loaded stems are  
shocked, naked, worrying how to attract bees.  
Velvet along our fingers we recall our babies' skin,  
filling bucket after basket, harvesting 'til your small pale-green  
car is loaded with the lightness of their feather-weight.

At the house we wash them outside in basins.  
Small creatures emerge to be purged,  
bits of grass, poppy seeds, perhaps enough  
to charm a winged monkey, put a lion to sleep  
on their trudge behind the rainbow.

Over and over we rinse them, spring heat on our backs,  
flowers ruffling and crinkling in our cool hands.  
It's like washing silk shirts. The pot in the kitchen is  
boiling its sugary clouds. Your secret ingredient I am to  
take with me to the grave is wafting old morocco in.

When the jam is ready it cools into dark-claret shades  
ready to sit in my bags with poppy lokum, red-poppy syrup  
travelling back to a country where red poppies only ever meant  
grief over fields full of bodies of young men,  
a generation of women left unmarried, lonely.

Now – you say to me – when you see red poppies you will think of this:  
friendship in spring, wild beauty and its fruit;  
'gelincik', that means lovely young brides in their ladybird beauty,  
black eyes shining with happiness, the touch of velvet, sunshine,  
wet silk, and sweetness of jam on the tongue.

Christopher Race  
It is Quite Difficult

Sometimes it is quite difficult  
to hold hands with anyone.  
The music fades, it's easy  
to lose the beat.

Tap it out in the silence  
when the sky doesn't look right  
when you know all your gestures  
are wrong.

Hard to find a hand  
that knows what to do.  
Take dishes from the rack.  
Touch sharp blades to a tight face.

I hold my breath, it's  
all I have; wait out the beat,  
the clap of hands. There it is,  
the sky ridged and grey,  
calls to me to look up.

Ian C. Smith  
The Seduction of Maps

King tide ebbing, the submerged wreck is bared  
like my stark ex-life whenever I am here.  
Brief childhood, rain on windows, budgeted love,  
bottled beer in front of black and white TV,  
canned laughter or boxers from the slums.  
The urge to leave for anywhere pulling me,  
annual leave expands to three weeks, a windfall  
but stubborn scrimpings fall short of a holiday.  
Now those stilled voices dwell here in my blood.

These island summers, marine light between  
mountain and harbour, theories about weather,  
a yacht from the big race shares our haven  
as Pacific gulls hover in a Force Eight gale  
eyeballing me on my verandah with a view.  
We gossip or scrabble for clever small words  
waiting out the wind, then walk or bathe,  
braving whitecaps ever eroding these dunes.  
I count what I have won in my dwindling days.

Pam Schindler  
Man sleeping

it curls beside me at night  
flanks just touching  
it is sunk deep in sleep

it is a man, or  
rather it is an ocean  
sleeping along the sand

under its reflective sky  
the tribes who breathe water  
are finning their unseen trails –

rapt, under the moon,  
their marvellous seasons  
of seeding and rebirth –

I would draw your hips to me  
their silvery catch  
but you have gone deep

far under the swell and sparkle,  
with the slow breath of waves  
and you would not know me there

Pam Schindler  
Rain

I went out  
in the slow bloom of rain,  
wet petals on my skin

the sleeping ibis  
were folded white packages  
lodged in the high branches

I went out into the white air,  
into the misty quiet

the river slipping fast,  
striped darkness and silver

I swam under a cataract  
of hectic lorikeet chatter

then out into the calm, the eddy  
the slow warm bloom

in the riverbank trees  
the slow warm bloom of rain

Laura Shore  
What I want to know

It's the only four-letter word  
no one utters in our house.

I dare ask her once,  
face flushed with fever, head in her lap,

staring up at her peach pit chin,  
smoke of her cigarette curling from her nose.

Her considered reply, *What do you think?*

I think not when she refuses to sign me up  
for dance class, *too clumsy*.

Not, after school when we find her napping on the couch,  
dirty laundry strewn from baskets, dinner unmade.

Not when she yanks at the tangles in my hair  
and threatens to chop it all off.

Yes, when she feeds me pink aspirin  
and mends my hem.

Yes, when we share an air mattress  
and ride waves to the shore.

Yes, when we walk in the forest  
and she teaches me the names of trees.

Not, when she slaps me for wearing lipstick  
and calls me a whore.

Not when she says there is only one good man  
in this world and I've got him, so you're out of luck.

Not when she invites my husband to move in  
after we've separated.

Yes, when she throws a party to launch  
my first book.

Yes, when she says, *If I had a voice like yours  
I'd never stop singing.*

No, when she no longer remembers my name.

No, when she thinks I'm her older sister, the one she hates.

No, when she tells my dying father to send me home.

Yes, when she lets me kiss her cheek  
and begs me to come back soon.

Alex Skovron  
The Glovebox Dispensary

Up at the Old Jefferson they're chuckling  
over their cabernets, arguing over small beers—  
the dental nurse whose boss will caress her  
cheek for another month; the weepy genarian,  
octo, nona, who has just discovered a cure  
for cancer, his latest amazing MRI; the cabman  
with the falling flag alert for a hail, a glovebox  
his dispensary, the big V ('never lets me down');  
the professor's protégée with her Sexton thesis  
first-classed already by the poet she loves, alive  
only in his departmental clasp. That's just  
a taster—there's the CEO, Estelle, whose partner  
roams the playing-field weekends, Thursdays  
companions her and her mum to gallery affairs,  
he knew Whiteley once (personally: they were like  
this!) back in the sixties; and old McHale, he took  
Mr Eternity's hand when Stacey (he calls him)  
went astray one day casing the Cross; nobody  
really believes him, or little Max who claims  
he jammed with Satchmo, Cleveland, '48.  
But this is Friday night, the claymen's *kiddush*,  
all the cloned girls' benediction. Candlelight  
and tipsy brazen their coin, singe their perukes,  
commerce ricochets round the temple pediments;  
the Doric columns lean in, listening for clues.

Alex Skovron  
Zugswang

*Soon only the past will know what we know.*

—C. K. Williams

His thoughts leapt, flew outward, fell inward,  
layered as the rings of Saturn,  
trenched like the circles of Hell.  
Dogs below his window marauded his dreams  
but ambled away the moment he awoke, replaced  
by the dissonant slipstream of the arrogant:  
shrill cars, crippled lorries, crass motorcycles—whatever  
he tracked with his hapless gaze would exchange  
its quotidian form for a thing shapeless  
and sidereal, but bereft of light's warming mirages.  
A neighbour stumbling drunk up the clattery stairs  
with a hefted paramour unsettled him rather than annoyed,  
or a fellow-lodger who poked his sallow chin  
round his doorjamb, carelessly, uncharacteristically  
ajar, prompted from his cumbrous lids a lava  
of unsuspected tears that trembled him.  
If he submerged to a needed convenience mart  
of an evening, he felt tailed by grinding whispers of unease,  
his head pounding out of heart's kilter, his pulse  
in his throat. An arthritic medico once  
had advised yoga, meditation, antidepressants—  
an affront to his travails. Did he *enjoy*, in some fevered niche  
of his martyrdom, this unceasing cataract of recoil, this  
deafening hum of atrocity hounding him,  
snuffling around him like the mongrel dogs below—  
circling his sullen confinement,  
saturnine, infernal, layered as the stone strata of thought.

Patricia Sykes  
En Route

It becomes possible to envy  
a train, its metal rockety-rock  
transforming into soothe, sway.  
Between dream and alert  
between crash and sabotage  
the mind a travelling landscape  
through city, suburb, to paddock  
where what grazes behind wire  
appears an untroubled feeding.  
Until and then and when  
between one stop and the next  
the skeleton of a derelict house  
rises from abandoned ground  
and sings of empty beds  
and of the cold hearth of a sun  
that refuses to shine  
on another day of killings.  
By way of postscript  
a yellow leaf is wind-flung  
against speeding glass  
but is not an explosive  
except for the way its beauty  
tears a hole through the heart.

Gillian Telford  
a weight of hair

On hot days, you see girls doing it everywhere — by a fountain, at a desk,  
sitting on a bus or under a tree. In languid sequence, they lean forward, close

their eyes, raise their arms, lift and hold a load of hair from the neck  
then wait — maybe wait some more — before they let it fall, heavy

on the shoulders. Or they lift and twist, fiddle with clips and bands, secure  
the coil high on their heads so air can reach and cool.

You saw it too when she sat up in bed, drenched with fever; thumped  
and turned the pillow, arced back to lift the sweat-dark hair from her face

and cried *that's enough*. Younger still, a hot tired child running towards you —  
how your fingers eased beneath the collar to free the clinging strands.

You see a woman, sometimes serene, sometimes weary but still there, head  
held high, and all you want to do is reach out and lift, like a memory,

the weight of her hair from the nape of her neck.

John Upton  
4711

You dabbed it on like goodness, and the scent  
intoxicated me. Once, to impress,  
I looked it up, found a Cologne address  
during Napoleon's wars. You didn't care –  
history was now, and now must be mis-spent  
with pheromones like music in the air.

But pheromones confuse. I'm readdressing  
your letters in the kitchen, and your favourite  
scarf's in my pocket. Though I'm over it  
I can inhale and in an instant go there.  
Insane. For there I was, and you confessing  
you'd followed other pheromones elsewhere.

Rose van Son  
Almost Blind

She holds the basket like a cup  
hollowed and napkin-lined  
cradled white, and in that hollow  
three guavas reticent to show themselves

she walks as if she carries  
a treasure chest against her own  
her pale skin deep, a vest warming what  
has been eight decades, more than that

she walks on patterned floor so long  
each wandering step just long enough  
to show a confidence to those who watch

then at last, the door she reaches most –  
lifts handle, turns, her body follows close  
as if it is something new she's learnt

and all the while the guavas in that hollow  
guard her as she folds.

Rob Walker  
a clarity of smog

nine days in japan and already you're a megalomaniac  
drunk on the fame of being slightly apart.  
*backhome* there are bushfires and The Test on tv but here  
you're in the manic phase of a bipolar New Year.

even getting off the train at the wrong station when you can't read  
the signage and no-one speaks your mothertongue doesn't phase you.  
a divine messenger disguised as a middlelevel clerk tells you that the  
train to Mega is *nexto-nexto*.

You're completely alone in your ipod universe as Antony sings  
*everything is new* in the space between your ears and you walk the  
winter greyconcrete streets of Mega / Shikama houses & steel  
smokestacks beside a river tamed with cement.

refinery pipes, mega-pylons supporting arcs of cable  
inscribed from somepoint above and  
triangulations of scaffolding infrastructure  
your artificial horizon.

you know in your bones that the sun rising red through smog is rising  
just for you and despite photochemical haze there's a clarity like  
individual rainbow ice crystals refulgent  
on dead rice stalks beneath your feet.

the day is new. those birds you pass have migrated from siberia to  
forage for insects between the backstreet cabbages at this precise  
second for your entertainment alone. you love each moment.  
like now. and this one now.

the entire day is unfolding. you don't need a god  
when the Universe is so perfect and selforganised.  
each day dripping into the vast pool  
of dayspent.

occasionally we find ourselves  
at an intersection where  
any choice will be  
the right one.

Rob Walker  
yama reflecting



[Launch Video ↗](#)

James Walton  
Autumn Break

Spooky day. Mist so low and custard thick  
The river noiseless, a longboat prow  
Could come across the veranda.  
Cats have embraced all of yoga, curled  
As mollusc shells where spines shouldn't bend.  
The orchard stripping crows are finally speechless,  
Stooped in their overcoats, raggedly on guard  
For something with the password.  
The air's gone tidal, receding to the call  
Now of a forming universe in the melting:  
A calf's foghorn announces loss of presence,  
Chickens rattle for release from the night keep.  
Radio silence while this anabiotic lid  
Occupies the space that was daylight saving.

Jen Webb

For a painting in a rented beach house

Such a mistake to mix  
aqua with pink; and  
it's all so banal: a  
beach; a boat. Those  
harmonics don't ring true.

The sea sounds its note,  
a suffocated tone. The air  
drains its vessels, blows it dry. That  
same note sounds  
beneath the bed,  
from trails of beach sand,  
memories of moths,  
those misremembered  
thoughts.

Close the door. People  
will always mill  
outside  
and strangers will watch.

Time moves too slowly  
now. And me, I'm  
adrift in memories. Close the door,  
scoop up  
the wounded thought;  
wind the clocks, reset  
the hands.

Matt Wills  
Driving Home

The afternoon's self-assuredness  
Presses on through mile-upon-mile  
Of wind over the wheat-fields' arc and flow,  
Where approaching crest promises,  
Then sudden horizon runs, its laughter mocking  
The miles and weary soul and the longing for familiar

Faces and furniture that make furrows like lanes  
In the wheat's memory, the road sole in its scarring,  
Black-blood trail as grey evening looms  
Eastward, homeward.  
Ahead the speck of a crow escapes from road-kill  
To sky, heralding the first car in half a day,

The slipstream buffeting and abrupt amidst  
The low-sun's languor through the back window.  
In another hour the wheat is gone and last light  
Shows aimless cows with straining udders  
That same path I strain to see against  
The paint-flecked darkness unfinished ahead.

Jena Woodhouse

Why I am loath to discard glass

A friend sends me a message to thank me for the jars  
I left for her to fill with jam or lemon curd or marmalade.  
Why is it I cannot discard containers made of glass –  
the kind you buy with honey or tahini, pasta sauce or cherries –  
dark Morello cherries with cheeks pressed against the sides?

Behind this hard, smooth, light-reflecting clarity lies alchemy.  
Imagine the first fusion more than three millennia ago, in Syria  
or Egypt – the awe that something so refined could issue from  
the elements of silica and soda ash, and fire: engendering  
desire to replicate this feat, explore the forms implicit in  
the malleable mass; reveal the secrets in the oxides codified  
by heat, imbuing glutinous material with lucent elegance  
in delicate small flasks for unguents, in perfume vials;  
tinting the annealing magma ruby, topaz, emerald –  
the undreamt-of counterfeit of gems in vitreous array  
that lured the affluent to buy; to covet or bestow, display.

These plain jars, mass produced, hark back to those arcane  
experiments, heirs to a noble lineage *nouveau* plastic cannot  
emulate; their genealogy replete with farmhouse pantries  
marshalling the ranks of storage jars for scented, mouth-  
tempting comestibles: conserving blushing saffron peaches,  
ruddy plums, pale pears, ripe berries; figs and hazelnuts  
and raisins; spices in small, precious phials. Apothecary jars  
in grocery stores, stuffed full with striped bull's eyes.

Once, in a Greek museum I saw slender birds of Roman glass,  
translucent cerulean as Delphic skies in early spring, so very finely  
formed that if the plate-glass case were opened, they would fly  
as high as larks, though those blue avians would never sing.  
Pressed beneath earth and masonry for centuries, recently  
they surfaced from their trajectory through time intact –  
vessels empty but for breath of someone's lungs immured in them,  
embodying the principle of flight, the hue of boundlessness.

Kimberley Zeneth  
Stepmother Country

I come to a sunless, nameless beach  
Its few shifting sands inlet to the percolating brine

below the cliff rugged waters tug at me  
pull at the sleeve of who I might have been  
if I had stayed

above the cliff, a mug on stone  
plastic bags knotted to a rope  
a hole in the rock, a sodden mat

a shallow cave offers respite  
from the ravages of wind  
and the attention of tourists

here on the edge someone has built  
a humble place for sleep, for food  
for looking outwards, searching inwards

a slow meanderer who returns  
on days her feelings match this place  
to step past weathered rags tied to sticks  
the random shells and stones of years  
collected, thrown down, piled in meditation  
on a still afternoon far gone

a trail of broken bottle glass scattered  
outwards in a wide arc  
green and brown glinting in weak sunlight  
a path that might have been a way out

the gulls' cries echo out over  
the breaking of a billion tiny things  
she wails too, her mouth long ago  
forgotten by the shapes of words

I imagine her staring out from the salt-scrub  
- wind and silence her familiars

at the tripod meeting of earth, sea, sky  
she makes the fourth; fire, boils water for tea  
a yeti exiled, weathered hands lift the can

it's going to be wild later tonight  
this is stepmother country

the enamel cup burns her thumbs  
she sits solidly and she blinks  
sipping brine-tainted water  
on the brink of a drowning land

# Contributors

**Susan Adams PhD** is an Australian poet published widely. She was awarded 'Commended' in the 2012 O'Donoghue International Poetry Competition (Ire), 'Highly Commended' in the Val Vallis Award 2012, (Au), 'Highly Commended' in the Adrienne Abbott Poetry Prize 2012.(Au) and short listed for the inaugural Axel Clark Poetry Prize 2014. She has been read numerously on ABC Radio National. Her first book *Beside Rivers* released by Island Press. (2013) was awarded 'Commended' in the FAW Anne Elder National Literary Award.

**David Adès** lives in Pittsburgh. A member of Friendly Street Poets since 1979, his poems have appeared widely in Australia and the U.S. He won the inaugural University of Canberra Vice-Chancellor's International Poetry Prize 2014 and was shortlisted for the Newcastle Poetry Prize 2014.

**Kaye Aldenhoven** lives in the wet-dry tropics. She is passionate about family, her garden, NT plants and birds, NT history and poetry. Kaye has three published collections; *In my husband's country*, *SKIN* and *Botanica erotica*, from Chris Mansell's PressPress. The poem in this anthology is about the death of Kaye's son.

**Richard James Allen's** recent collection of poems, *Fixing the Broken Nightingale* (Flying Island Books) is his tenth book as a poet, fiction, performance writer and editor: [fixingthebrokennightingale.com](http://fixingthebrokennightingale.com). Widely published in anthologies, journals and online since winning the 'under-21 section' of the English Teachers Association of NSW National Writing Competition in 1980, Allen has been the recipient of numerous awards, nominations, grants, as well as opportunities for presentations, screenings and broadcasts, in a unique international career as an acclaimed writer, director, choreographer, filmmaker, performer, new media artist, and scholar. Further information at The Physical TV Company website: [www.physicaltv.com.au](http://www.physicaltv.com.au). Richard James Allen's ten books of poetry, fiction and performance texts include *Fixing the Broken Nightingale* (Flying Island Books), *The Kamikaze Mind* (Brandl & Schlesinger) and *Thursday's*

*Fictions* (Five Islands Press), shortlisted for the Kenneth Slessor Prize for Poetry. He won the Chancellor's Award for most outstanding PhD thesis at UTS. [physicaltv.com.au](http://physicaltv.com.au)

**John Bennett** is a poet and photographer who has left the Sydney's Inner West for greener views. His video-poetry (with John Laidler) has been shown on TVS and at various festivals, including the Sydney Writers Festival and the Newtown Underground Film Festival.

**Margaret Bradstock** has six published collections of poetry, including *The Pomelo Tree* (winner of the Wesley Michel Wright Prize) and *Barnacle Rock* (winner of the Woollahra Festival Award, 2014). Editor of *Antipodes: poetic responses to 'settlement'*, Margaret recently won the national Earth Hour poetry competition and the Banjo Paterson Award.

**Lisa Brockwell** lives near Mullumbimby with her husband and son. She has been shortlisted for the Newcastle, the University of Canberra, the Australian Catholic University and the Montreal International poetry prizes and highly commended in the Bridport Prize (UK). Her poems have appeared in *The Spectator*, *Australian Love Poems*, *Eureka Street* and *Best Australian Poems* (2014).

**Jennifer Compton** lives in Melbourne and is a poet and playwright who also writes prose. *Now You Shall Know* has just been published by Five Islands Press and *Mr Clean And The Junkie* is due out soon with Makaro Press.

**B. R. Dionysius** was founding Director of the Queensland Poetry Festival. His poetry has been widely published in literary journals, anthologies, newspapers and online. His eighth poetry collection, *Weranga* was released in 2013. He lives in Ipswich, Queensland, where he runs, watches birds, teaches English and writes contemporary sonnets

**Anne Elvey** is author of *Kin* (Five Islands, 2014) and three poetry chapbooks. She is managing editor of *Plumwood Mountain: An Australian Journal of Ecopoetry and Ecopoetics* and holds

honorary appointments at Monash University and University of Divinity, Melbourne.

**Angela Gardner's** most recent collections are *The Told World* (selected poetry) from Shearsman Books UK and *Thing&Unthing*, from Vagabond Press, Sydney Australia, both published in 2014. She is an editor at foame.org and is also a visual artist.

**Ian Gibbins** has been a neuroscientist and Professor of Anatomy at Flinders University. He is now a widely published poet and electronic musician. *Urban Biology* (Wakefield Press, 2012) was his first full collection and in 2014 he produced *The Microscope Project: How Things Work*. [iangibbins.com.au](http://iangibbins.com.au)

**Kevin Gillam** is a West Australian poet with three books of poetry published, *other gravities* (2003) and *permitted to fall* (2007) both by Sunline Press and *songs sul G in Two Poets* (2011) by Fremantle Press. He works as Director of Music at Christ Church Grammar School in Perth.

**Ron Heard** enjoys life in the inner suburbs of Brisbane with the heat, rain and backyard chooks. He helps care for his disabled son and edits *The Mozzie* an inclusive poetry magazine that publishes over 400 poems per year. His most recent publication is the verse novel *The Shadow of Troy*.

**Siobhan Hodge** is a doctoral candidate at the University of Western Australia from the discipline of English, studying Sappho's poetry and its translation. She has published one chapbook, *Picking Up the Pieces*, and has had poetry published in several places, including *Cordite*, *Peril*, *Kitaab*, *Verge*, *Yellow Field*, and *Page Seventeen*.

**John Jenkins** lives on Melbourne's rural fringe: his most recent poetry title is *Growing Up With Mr Menzies* (John Leonard Press, 2008). His poems have been widely anthologized and broadcast; and he has written, co-written or edited 24 books; mainly poetry, but also on travel, music and some short fiction.

**Helga Jermy** is an English/Estonia poet born in the UK and now living in Tasmania. Her work has appeared in various publications including

*Cordite*, *Regime*, *Rabbit Journal* and online at *Australian Poetry*.

**Barbara Kamler** is a Melbourne poet and consultant on academic writing and publishing for doctoral and early career researchers. She is completing two collections of poetry, *Family Scraps* and *Leaving New Jersey*. She recently published *Helping doctoral students write: Pedagogies for supervision*, Second edition (with P. Thomson 2014, Routledge).

**Joan Kerr** is a widely-published poet with numerous awards. She is also, with Gabrielle Daly, the comic novelist Gert Loveday (*Writing is Easy* and *Crane Mansions*). They blog on books and writing at *Gert Loveday - Fun With Books*.

**Christopher Konrad** is a Western Australian writer. He has co-authored a recent book of poetry with two other WA poets, *Sandfire* (2012) published by Sunline Press and has poems and short stories published in many journals and on line. His book *Letters to Mark* is published by Regime Books.

**Bronwyn Lang** has had several poems published in print and online journals both in Australia and overseas. She is currently writing and residing in Tasmania.

**Rose Lucas** is a Melbourne poet whose collection *Even in the Dark* was published by UWAP in 2013. She is the winner of the Mary Gilmour award for poetry 2012-2014. She is also a freelance academic, currently working at Victoria University.

**Mark Liston** lives in Tasmania and has published widely, including the *Roland Robinson* and *Newcastle Prize* anthologies, won the 2013 All Poetry Prize and was the Australian Poetry Café Poet in Residence in Newcastle. His collection *Fragile Diamonds* is published by Picaro Press.

**Ray Liversidge's** latest book is *No suspicious circumstances: portraits of poets (dead)* published this year by Littlefox Press with illustrations by Kathryn Bowden. His other books are: *Obeying the Call*; *The Barrier Range* and *Triptych Poets: Issue One*; *The Divorce Papers*. Ray has his own website at [poetry.wordpress.com](http://poetry.wordpress.com).

**Earl Livings** has published poetry and fiction in Australia and also Britain, Canada, the USA, and Germany. He taught in the Professional Writing & Editing course for 17 years and is currently working on a novel and his next poetry collection. His writing focuses on nature, mythology and the sacred.

**Robert Lumsden** lives an hour north of Adelaide by rail, and has recently been published in the *Australian Poetry Journal* and *Cordite Poetry Review*. Robert has published a novel as ebook *Sojourn*, and literary criticism *Reading Literature after Deconstruction*. He is currently completing several novels.

**Julie Maclean** has had poetry shortlisted for the Crashaw Prize (Salt), Whitmore and Press Press prizes, and was a joint winner of the Geoff Stevens Poetry Prize (UK). She is the author of *When I saw Jimi* (Indigo Dreams) and *Kiss of the Viking* (Poetry Salzburg). Poetry and short fiction features in international journals and *The Best Australian Poetry* (UQP) and *Forthcoming in Poetry* (US). Blogging at juliemacleanwriter.com

**Mark Mahemoff** is a full-time Couple Therapist. He has published three collections of poetry, most recently *Traps and Sanctuaries* (Puncher & Wattmann, 2008)

**Colin Montfort** lives in a mobile home, touring Australia and writing. His poems reference sometimes real, often illusory needs and perceptions that prop up mainstream beliefs. He was published in *Writing Ventures Best Poems of 2013* Anthology and is a finalist in the Aesthetica Writing Award for Poetry 2014.

**Norm Neill's** poetry has appeared in journals, anthologies and *The Sun-Herald*. He read at the 2012 Sydney Writers' and Newtown festivals. His poems have twice been placed in the Inner City Life competition. He convenes a poetry workshop and publishes a newsletter listing NSW poetry events.

**Philip Neilsen's** most recent collection is *Without an Alibi* (Salt, 2008). His work has since been included in the anthologies *Australian Poetry Since 1788* and *The Penguin Anthology of Australian Poetry*, among others. He is a poetry tutor at the University of Queensland and adjunct professor at QUT.

**K.A. Nelson** was born and raised in Mudgee, NSW, and studied English Literature/Drama at the University of New England. She's won three poetry prizes since 2010 when she left full time work. She feels equally at home in the Tanami Desert, Tuscan or Canberra, where she and her daughter have lived since 1995.

**Uyen Nguyen** is a Professional and Creative Writing student at the Queensland University of Technology. Ever since a young age, she has had a keen interest in writing short stories and fell in love with writing poetry after studying it at University.

**Diane Fahey** is the author of twelve poetry collections, most recently *The Wing Collection: New & Selected Poems* and *The Stone Garden: Poems from Clare*, both shortlisted for major poetry awards. She has won various poetry prizes, and in 2014 received a literary grant from the Australia Council to support the writing of a poetry collection set in the West of Ireland.

**Mark O'Flynn** has published four collections of poetry, most recently *Untested Cures*, (2011). His poetry and short fiction have appeared in many Australian journals. His novels include *Grassdogs* (2006), and *The Forgotten World*, (Harper Collins, 2013). He has also published the comic memoir *False Start*. A collection of short fiction, *White Light*, was published by Spineless Wonders 2013.

**Patricia O'Heare** has had work published in Australia and Ireland. Her first collection *Tender Hammers* was published by Five Islands Press. O'Heare has co-authored two books on teaching poetry. A chap book *Fear of Umbrellas* was published by Mark Time Books in 2013.

**Jeremy Page** has just finished a Masters of Creative Writing at The University of Sydney, and is set to begin an English PhD in 2015. He is currently in the process of collecting his poetry to seek publication.

**Tony Page's** third book, *Gateway to the Sphinx* (Five Islands) appeared in 2004. For 20 years, he worked in Thailand and Malaysia; but now lives in Australia. Has written for the stage, with *Who Killed Caravaggio?* completed in 2009. Recently published in *Eureka Street*, *The Australian Poetry Journal*, *Right On*, and *The*

*Canberra Times*. Tony is now finalising a fourth collection of poetry.

**Vanessa Page** is a Cashmere-based poet who hails from Toowoomba in Queensland. She has published two collections of poetry: *Feeding Paper Tigers* (ALS Press, 2012) and *Confessional Box* (Walleah Press, 2013). *Confessional Box* was the winner of the 2013 Anne Elder Award.

**Janette Pieloor** lives in Canberra and has been published in anthologies and journals since 1991, including in *The Best Australian Poems 2011* (Tranter, Black Inc). Her collection of poetry *Ripples under the skin* will be published by Walleah Press early in 2015.

**Christopher Race's** poems have appeared in *The Paradise Anthology 5* (2011) and the MPU publication *The Attitude of Cups* (2011), his work has also appeared in the *Australian Poetry Members' Anthology* (2013). He was a prize winner in the inaugural Glen Phillips Poetry Prize (2012).

**Robyn Rowland** has six books of poetry, and two forthcoming in 2015: *Line of drift* (Doire Press, Ireland) and *intimate war. Gallipoli/Canakkale 1915* (Melbourne, Turkey). *Seasons of doubt & burning. New & Selected Poems* (2010) represented 40 years of work. Her poetry appears in national and international journals and anthologies.

**Pam Schindler** is a Brisbane poet. Her first book of poems, *A sky you could fall into*, was published in 2010 by Post Pressed. In 2013 she went to live and write for a month in a Scottish castle, as recipient of a Hawthornden fellowship.

**Laura Jan Shore** is the author of *Breathworks* and *Water over Stone*, winner of IP Picks Best Poetry 2011, Interactive Press. Winner of 2012 Martha Richardson Poetry Prize, 2009 FAW John Shaw Nielson Award and 2006 CJ Dennis Open Poetry Award, her poetry's been published on four continents.

**Alex Skovron** is the author of six collections of poetry, most recently *Towards the Equator: New & Selected Poems* (Puncher & Wattmann). He was born in Poland, arrived in Australia aged

nine, grew up in Sydney, lives in Melbourne, and works as a freelance book editor.

**Ian C Smith's** work has appeared in *The Best Australian Poetry*, *London Grip*, *New Contrast*, *Poetry Salzburg Review*, *Quarterly Literary Review Singapore*, *The Weekend Australian* and *Westerly*. His latest book is *Here Where I Work* Ginninderra Press (Adelaide). He lives in the Gippsland Lakes area of Victoria, Australia.

**Rose van Son** is a Perth-based writer and poet whose work has appeared in *Westerly*, *Landscapes*, *Cordite*, *Indigo*, *JukeBox*, and more; she has won places in the Tom Collins Prize, Peter Cowan, Karen W. Treanor, Fremantle Press Tanka, and haiku. Her collections are in *Sandfire* and *Three in the Campagna*.

**Patricia Sykes** is a poet and librettist. Her collaborations with composer Liza Lim have been performed in Australia, Paris, Germany, Russia, New York and the UK. She was Asialink Writer in Residence, Malaysia, 2006. Her most recent work is *The Abbotsford Mysteries* (Spinifex Press, 2011).

**Gillian Telford** is a NSW Central Coast poet. Her first collection, *Moments of Perfect Poise*, (Ginninderra) was published in 2008. She is working on a second collection, *An Indrawn Breath*, with the assistance of a Varuna/Picaro Press 2014 Publisher Introduction Program Fellowship.

**John Upton's** poetry has been published in *Best Australian Poems 2014*, *SMH*, *The Australian*, *Canberra Times*, and in many literary magazines. He has had five stage plays produced and has written for television drama series. His political comedy *Machiavelli* won the Australian Writers Guild's award for Best New Play.

**Rob Walker** writes poetry, music, essays, short stories, reviews, occasional Christmas cards and shopping lists. Some of these have been published all over the world. His newest collection *Tropeland* will be published by Five Islands in June. He lives in the beautiful Adelaide Hills (Australia's best-kept secret). [robwalkerpoet.com](http://robwalkerpoet.com)

**James Walton** lives in the Strzelecki Mountains. His work has appeared in many journals,

*The Age*, and several anthologies. He was shortlisted for the ACU National Literature Prize 2013, and Specially Commended in The Welsh Poetry Competition 2014. He was once a librarian, mushroom pallet maker, and elected union officer.

**Jen Webb** is Director of the Centre for Creative and Cultural Research at the University of Canberra. She is author of a small collection, *Proverbs from Sierra Leone* (FIP 2004), and a number of other books including, most recently, *Foucault: A Critical Introduction* (Sage 2012).

**Matt Wills** is a blogger, travel writer, poet, writer for TV, and professional voice-actor. Though a writer of poetry for many years, his first book of poems, *Asleep in the Russian Museum*, was only published in 2011. He is about to publish his second book of poems.

**Jena Woodhouse's** poems were shortlisted in the Montreal International Poetry Prize 2013 and the ACU Prize for Literature 2013; longlisted in the University of Canberra Vice-Chancellor's International Poetry Prize 2014. Her translations from Russian of poems by Vera Pavlova and Olga Sedakova, commissioned by CAL in collaboration with The Red Room Company and Lyrikline, appear on the *Red Room* site and also on [lyrikline.org](http://lyrikline.org) (Berlin). She was a Hawthornden Fellow (2011) and on retreat at La Muse (France) in 2014. She has been awarded a residency and a bursary at CAMAC Centre d'Art, Marnay-sur-Seine (France) in 2015.

**Kimberley Zeneth's** first book is *Awake During Anaesthetic* (National New Poets Program 2009). In addition to a Poetry Masterclass (Ron Pretty) and a Fiction Fellowship at Varuna, projects include poetry installation for Adelaide Fringe and Wirranendi Sculpture Trail commissioned by Adelaide City Council. She lives in the desert with her wife.



ap  
Australian Poetry The power  
of words

*Our poetry culture needs to be heard  
Australian voices enriching the world*

Dear Friends of Poetry,

Australian Poetry recently issued a statement of regret in response to the ABC's decision to cease production of *Poetica*. We asked that lovers of poetry write to the papers, the ABC board, the Minister for Communications and their local federal member to register their disappointment at this deeply unfortunate consequence of reduced federal government funding of the ABC.

We were not alone in our disappointment; various Australian voices took up our call to arms and were united in expressing their dismay.

"With the execution of *Poetica*, Australian culture is diminished."  
—*Sunday Age*, 30 November 2014

Barry Hill's article was a passionate lament to the loss of a radio program dedicated to poetry and broadcast to an estimated 60,000 listeners per week.

Like Barry, you may have objected to "the execution of poetry" or despaired at your capacity to make a difference, "as I gird myself to make a case for poetry, I can see the piss going into the wind."

Australian Poetry will not stand idly by. We are determined to keep alive our poetry culture by raising funds to continue the tradition of *Poetica* through a new podcast series. A dollar per week for a year from 60,000 listeners would be a great start!

Help us to maintain the spirit of *Poetica*, please donate online at:  
[australianpoetry.org/support/donate-to-ap](http://australianpoetry.org/support/donate-to-ap)

Or send a donation by cheque to:  
Australian Poetry  
The Wheeler Centre  
176 Little Lonsdale St  
Melbourne VIC 3000

All donations over \$2 are tax deductible. Every contribution, no matter how small, assists us in our mission to encourage the appreciation of poetry and to celebrate the diverse poetry cultures of Australia.

Thank you.



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