

Live Encounters celebrates 7 years 2010-2016

# Live encounters

POETRY

**FEAST**

Free online magazine from village earth  
Volume Three December 2016

GUEST EDITORIAL  
**DANIEL LAWLESS**  
POET & WRITER

**Support Live Encounters.  
Donate Now and keep the Magazine alive in 2017!**

Live Encounters is a not-for-profit free online magazine that was founded in 2009 in Bali, Indonesia. It showcases some of the best writing from around the world. Civil and human rights activists, animal rights activists, poets, writers, journalists, social workers and more have contributed their time and knowledge for the benefit of the readers of the magazine.

We are appealing for donations to pay for the administrative and technical aspects of the publication. Please help spread the free distribution of knowledge with any amount that you feel you want to give for this just cause.

**BANK DETAILS**

**Sarita Kaul**

**A/C : 0148748640**

**Swift Code : BNINIDJAXXX**

**PT Bank Negara Indonesia ( Persero ) Tbk**

**Kantor Cabang Utama Denpasar**

**Jl. Gajah Mada**

**Denpasar, Bali, Indonesia**

Om Shanti Shanti Shanti Om

[markulyseas@liveencounters.net](mailto:markulyseas@liveencounters.net)

**All articles and photographs are the copyright of [www.liveencounters.net](http://www.liveencounters.net) and its contributors. No part of this publication may be reproduced without the explicit written permission of [www.liveencounters.net](http://www.liveencounters.net). Offenders will be criminally prosecuted to the full extent of the law prevailing in their home country and/or elsewhere.**

Cover photograph: Angkor Wat, Siem Reap, Cambodia by Mark Ulyseas.

Click on title of article to go to page



## Guest Editorial and poems, Natural Selection

**Daniel Lawless**

Daniel Lawless's book *The Gun My Sister Killed Herself With and Other Poems* is forthcoming from Salmon Poetry Press, February 2018. He has published or has poems forthcoming in *Cortland Review*, *Louisville Review*, *The Common*, *FIELD*, *Manhattan Review*, *Numero Cinq*, *Ploughshares*, *Prairie Schooner*, *B O D Y*, *Fulcrum*, *Asheville Review*, etc. He is the founder and editor of *Plume: A Journal of Contemporary Poetry*.



## Erasure & Other Poems

**Lynne Thompson**

Lynne Thompson is the author of two full-length poetry collections, *Beg No Pardon*, winner of the Perugia Press Prize and the Great Lakes Colleges Association's New Writers Award, and *Start With A Small Guitar* (What Books Press). Thompson's poems have recently appeared in the literary journals, *Ecotone*, *North American Review*, and *Solstice Literary Magazine* which selected one of her poems as winner of its Stephen Dunn Poetry Prize. Thompson is Reviews and Essays Editor of the literary journal, *Spillway*.



## Auguries

**Anton Floyd**

Anton Floyd was born in Egypt of Irish, Maltese, English and French Lebanese parentage. He studied English at Trinity College Dublin and University College Cork. He has lived and worked in the Eastern Mediterranean. He is now teaching in Cork city and lives in West Cork. Poems published in *The Stony Thursday Book* and haiku in *Shamrock*. He won the IHS International Competition (2014), honourable mention (2015) and was runner up in the Snapshot Press (UK) Haiku Calendar 2016 Competition. He is a member of Irish Haiku Society.



## The Blue Bikini

**Jim Burke**

Jim Burke lives in Limerick, Ireland. Co-founder with John Liddy of *The Stony Thursday Book*. Poems have appeared in *The Shamrock Haiku Journal*, *The Shot Glass Journal*, *The Literary Bohemian*, *The Crannog Poetry Journal*, *The Stony Thursday Book*, *The Revival Poetry Journal* and 'Between the Leaves' New Haiku Writing From Ireland, edited by Anatoly Kudryavitsky. He is a member of the Irish Haiku Society and is on the committee of the Limerick Writers Centre.



## Holding the Road

**Michael J. Whelan**

Michael J. Whelan lives in South Dublin. He served as a UN Peacekeeper in Lebanon and Kosovo with the Irish Army and is a historian and keeper of the Air Corps Military Museum. He was 2nd Place in the Patrick Kavanagh & 3rd in the Jonathan Swift Awards. He is widely published and read for the Poetry Ireland Introductions series and his debut collection 'Peacekeeper' was published in 2016 by Doire Press.



## Colours of Life

**Amy Barry**

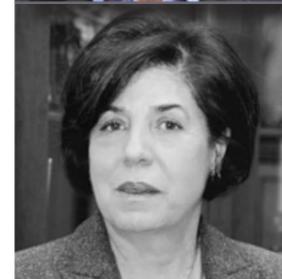
Amy Barry writes poems and short stories. She has worked in the media, hotel and Oil & Gas industries. Her poems have been published in anthologies, journals, and e-zines, in Ireland and abroad. Her poems have been featured in the radio and television in Italy, Australia, Canada and Ireland. Some of her poems have been translated into Italian. She loves traveling. Trips to India, Nepal, China, Bali, Paris, Berlin, Budapest, Fakenburg have all inspired her work. When not writing she plays Table Tennis. She loves sushi.



## Janus at Killaloe

**Michael Durack**

Durack grew up on a farm near Birdhill in County Tipperary. He was a founder member of *Killaloe Writers Group* and his poetry has been published in a wide range of literary journals in Ireland and abroad, as well as airing on local and national radio. He is the author of a chapbook, *Nothing To Write Home About* (Derg House), a comic narrative in verse, *A Hairy Tale Of Clare* (East Clare Telecottages) and a memoir in prose and poems, *Saved To Memory: Lost To View* (Limerick Writers Centre.) He has collaborated with his brother, Austin on a programme of poetry and music, and together they have produced two albums, *The Secret Chord* (2013) and *Going Gone* (2015.)



## Darkness and Light

**Maria Miraglia**

Maria Miraglia, graduated in Foreign Languages and Literatures, and has Master's degree in Evaluation and Assessment and in Teaching of Modern Languages. She has collaborated with the Italian Department of Education. Author of *Le Grandi Opere di Yayati Madan Gandhi*; author and editor of *Antologia Poetica*. She is the Literary Director of Pablo Neruda Italian Cultural Association, secretary general of Writers Capital International Foundation; contributor of many poetry pages both in Italian and English. Founder and chair-woman of World Foundation for peace. Some of her poems have been translated into Turkish, Spanish, Macedonian, Azerbaijani and Albanian.



## Debut

**Breda Wall Ryan**

Breda Wall Ryan's poetry is widely published in Irish and international journals and has won the iYeats Poetry Competition, Poets Meet Painters, Dromineer Poetry Competition, Over the Edge New Writer of the Year and The Gregory O'Donoghue International Poetry Prize. She has an M. Phil in Creative Writing from Trinity College, Dublin. She was selected for Poetry Ireland Introductions Series 2014. *In a Hare's Eye* (Doire Press 2015) won the Shine/Strong Award for a first collection.



## Glimpses of Hope and Fear

**David Morgan**

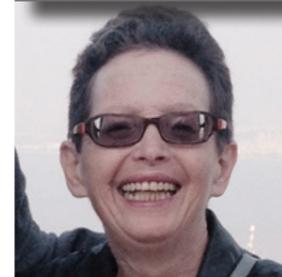
David Morgan is a London based journalist with interests in politics, human rights, international relations, history and cultural issues. He has been working in journalism as an editor and writer for three decades after he studied literature and history at university. He has edited several titles from the Socialist History Society (SHS) of which he is the Secretary. He writes regularly for the SHS Newsletter, occasionally for the Morning Star newspaper and for a range of other online and printed publications.



## International relations

**Nasrin Parvaz**

Nasrin Parvaz became a civil rights activist when the Islamic regime took power in 1979. She was arrested in 1982, tortured and spent eight years in prison. Shortly after her release she fled to England where she claimed asylum in 1993. Her prison memoir was published in Farsi in 2003 and in Italian in 2006. A novel, *Temptation*, based on the true stories of some male prisoners who survived the 1988 massacre of Iranian prisoners was published in Farsi in 2008. [www.nparvaz.wix.com](http://www.nparvaz.wix.com)



## A Living Will

**Natalie Wood**

Born in Birmingham, England, U.K., Natalie Wood began working in journalism a month before the outbreak of the 1973 Yom Kippur War. She emigrated from Manchester to Israel in March 2010 and lives in Karmiel, Galilee from where she writes several blogs, micro-fiction and free-verse. She features in *Smith Magazine's Six Word Memoirs On Jewish Life* and has contributed to *Technorati* and *Blogcritics* along with *Jewish Renaissance* and *Live Encounters magazines*.

Daniel Lawless's book *The Gun My Sister Killed Herself With and Other Poems* is forthcoming from Salmon Poetry Press, February 2018. He has published or has poems forthcoming in *Cortland Review*, *Louisville Review*, *The Common*, *FIELD*, *Manhattan Review*, *Numero Cinq*, *Ploughshares*, *Prairie Schooner*, *B O D Y*, *Fulcrum*, *Asheville Review*, etc. He is the founder and editor of *Plume: A Journal of Contemporary Poetry*. [www.plumepoetry.com](http://www.plumepoetry.com)



## DANIEL LAWLESS

Poet, Editor of *Plume: A Journal of Contemporary Poetry*

## WHAT IS NOT

As I think this evening of what I might say in the space Mark Ulyseas has so kindly offered me, and perusing those efforts that have occupied it before mine, it occurs to me that the subject of one's own poetics, but more generally one's writing's "origin myth" – where one stands in relationship to "where poetry comes from" -- and the nature of poetry's effect on the writer, have comprised a running theme. And, truthfully, I admire many elements of these fine poets' epistles: Geraldine Mill's moving reflections on her transitive sinisterism – her left-handedness, that set her apart literally and metaphorically, "marked her as awkward and a little different" but which proved no match for the pellucid conformities of school life that valued its opposite – right-handedness, right-thinking-ness, one can infer, and thus setting the stage for both her participatory withdrawal from that world and her literary engagement with it in the form of careful observation and budding craft. Likewise there is much to appreciate in Ian Watson's more practical assessment on, not where poetry comes from but "where it goes"; as an editor for five years myself, I can only marvel at his eighteen year editorial stint at the literary journal *newleaf*, and appreciate his apparently indefatigable and various generousities – but which, too, fell afoul of other commercial/*societal forces majeure*s.

And there is the lovely thought of Randhir Khare in that Rabelaisian idyll set in a Bulgarian cherry orchard, where we learn that poetry does not reside alone in the hagiographies of the departed, but is for the sentient and thus the wounded,



that thing which "heals" ... but more than that is "... our exultation, our praise our expression of love, our expression of anger, grief, it helps us excavate ourselves, gives us wings, scales and tails like fish, fangs like snakes, makes us children, takes us into a hall of mirrors where we lose ourselves in otherness." Yes, as well, there is Terry McDonagh's omnibus-ical response to the question of poetry: incorporeal celebrator of "everyday miracles" and commemorative plaque inscribed with the plights of refugees and childhood memories.

And yet. I want more. More about the *Das Ding an sich*, the-thing-itself, to use the Kantian phrase, or rather its phenomenology. Vast and varied are the archives of those ready with a definition of the art – Plutarch, Cocteau, Cage ("I have nothing to say, I am saying it, and that is poetry."), Marianne Moore and her imaginary garden and its real toads, Ginsberg, Frost, Basho, Meister Eckhart, Shelley, Paz, Milosz, Parra, Larkin, Mallarme...to cite several of the more famous exemplars.

But, I see my suggested word count is all but expired. And so, I'd like to offer, as is my nature, a way of looking at poetry through a negative lens – *apophatically*, to employ the theological term: a form of the sculptural – discovering the desired form by removing all that it is not – per Michelangelo's beautiful if now somewhat hackneyed "I saw the angel in the marble and carved until I set him free."

For this I turn to a poem from **Tom Sleigh\***, published in the print anthology **Plume Poetry 4** – a riff on Carlos Drummond’s work, in which the latter-day poet advises the reader (or erstwhile writer) in the manner of Rilke’s *Letters to a Young Poet*, but, for my money, happily less gentle, far more useful – and wicked-er, in the Bostonian sense.

## Cruising for Poetry

after Carlos Drummond De Andrade

If poetry comes up to you to stare you down,  
you’ll freeze like the winter sun  
unmoving in the sky, neither bright or warm.  
So don’t write poetry about what people tell you  
are life’s greatest events.  
Nothing gets born, nothing dies in poems.

Forget your affinities, birthdays, your life’s little occasions—  
none of that counts. And don’t write poetry  
with your body, that too complete, comfortable,  
self-sufficient body so hostile  
to the poem overflowing its bright banks.  
Your drop of bile, your smile or frown  
of pleasure or grief in someone’s darkened room—who gives a shit?  
So don’t blather on and on about your feelings—  
all they’ll do is mislead you with ambiguous understandings,  
they’ll con you and take you for a ride.  
And whatever your brain, distracted, tells itself it thinks,  
forget it—that’s still not poetry.

Don’t celebrate the city, leave all that concrete in peace.  
Song shrugs off the cars moving in the streets,  
it turns its back on the paltry secrets inside houses.  
No matter what you think, it’s not music overheard  
flowing down from an open window,  
and it sure as hell isn’t the surf beating its forehead on the sand.  
Song isn’t natural or anything to do with nature,  
and as for people getting along and calling themselves citizens,  
song doesn’t give a damn.  
For it, rain and darkness, exhaustion and hope,  
don’t mean a thing. And don’t think that poetry  
wants anything to do with objects  
though it’s been known to make subjects and objects one.

Don’t waste time lying. Don’t give in to exasperation.  
Your yacht of ivory, your diamond-studded shoes,  
your peasant dances and superstitions, your family skeletons  
will only disappear into the way time curves,  
they’re worse than useless.

Don’t shove at us your buried and oh-so-pathetic childhood.  
Don’t confuse what you’ve seen in the mirror  
with what you think you can recall.  
Look, if it’s faded, it wasn’t poetry.  
And if it broke, it wasn’t crystal.

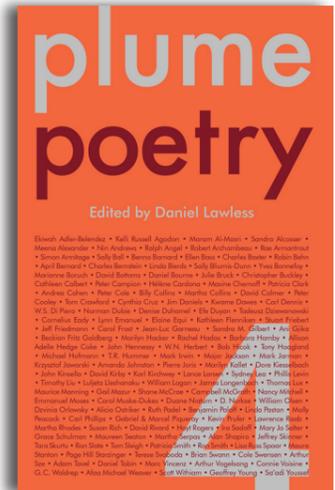
Enter as quietly as you can into the realm of words.  
That’s where poems are waiting to be written.  
They may lie there paralyzed, but they aren’t in despair,  
they’re refreshed in the calm of unbroken surfaces.  
Look at them, isolate and silent, pure beings of the dictionary.

Live inside your poems before you write them.  
Don’t get annoyed if they’re obscure.  
If they poke and prod you, don’t lose your cool.  
In the silence inside words, each word  
waits to show itself before it disappears.

Don’t force the poem to tear itself from limbo.  
Don’t go picking up lost poems off the floor.  
Don’t flatter the poem with high-flown bullshit.  
Accept it in the same way that it will have to accept its form  
defining and concentrating the space around it.

Get down on all fours and take a good look at the words.  
Each one has a thousand faces hidden under that blank expression,  
and each one is asking you—and could care less what you reply—  
something humble, something terrible: Did you bring the key?

Look, look: barren of melody or conception, these words  
burrowed deep into the night.  
Still damp and pregnant with sleep, they roll like rocks  
down the harsh river and turn to scorn.



The following poems, written over the course of perhaps six months, represent something of a break for me: or a return, rather, to the sort of writing I used to do in my youth: short, spare in imagery, a discreet call to the white space around them. Readers of a certain age and predilection will no doubt spot their immediate ancestors -- Simic, especially, Merwin, Follain. The poems will appear in my book, *The Gun My Sister Killed Herself With and Other Poems*, out from Salmon in February 2018.

## Sign Above a Discount Mattress Store

*Strip Mall, Forktown, Alabama*

"The Rest of Your Life" —  
 And the sudden thought as we roll through the STOP sign  
 Starred with bullet holes,  
*Necessita c'induce, e non diletto.*  
 Yes, says the dog gnawing it tail outside,  
 The lone clerk wearing some sort of paper crown.  
 Too late. Too late.  
 You have lived your life the wrong way around.

## Flense

*from Definitions*

A pleasant numbness settles in my bones.  
 It dances inside my head.  
 You bring the same dedication  
 to your seduction  
 as you do to your music.  
 Eyes shut,  
 I smell the leather of your coat,  
 the cigarettes on your lips.  
 Almost fearful,  
 I kiss you.  
 Risking my life  
 with that kiss.  
 Like a fool.  
 Like an animal-  
 desperately in love,  
 shaken by a current  
 of untamed ecstasy-  
 Dangerous,  
 but strangely-  
 Pure.



## Natural Selection

In the frozen food aisle  
Each section lights up as I pass.  
Blueberry mini-muffins, stout pierogis, little  
Pouches of mauve fondant –  
Like hearing one birdcall at a time.  
All the vanished species  
Of the earth rising up out of the fog  
Again to sing into the clear untouchable air.  
Darkness ahead, darkness behind

## Shquiver

A word I made up for the thing I did  
After I did what I did to the squirrel  
Half in light half in darkness  
In the ditch with its dry rivulets of gravel  
Where I crouched & looking up  
Read the flared letters of my own name  
Ensnared in spiked graffiti  
On the Reverend Sherman J. Minton Bridge.



© Daniel Lawless

## This morning, a Facebook diorama

Consisting entirely of a rough water-colored cardboard box loggia  
With sketched in tiles and columns where

A bored-looking blue-robed Calico curls up beneath  
A Christmas tree's white angel, poised on fishing line just above her head:

Gabriel, of course, translucent, flared-winged, announcing you-know-what  
To his red-eyed feline Mary. The shadow of the Maker's hand.

## Note from a Sparrow

"...not one of them falls to the ground apart  
from your Father's will" (Matt. 10:29)

*"This was I, a sparrow. I did my best; farewell."*  
—William Carlos Williams

Dear William,

Since you presume to speak for me,  
Let me just say *farewell* is not a word  
I would have chosen if I chose with words.  
Nor did I do my best unless you mean I tried  
To get some food in me, avoid the cats,  
And make another sparrow.  
This was you. All you, William. And He consented.



© Daniel Lawless

Lynne Thompson is the author of two full-length poetry collections, *Beg No Pardon*, winner of the Perugia Press Prize and the Great Lakes Colleges Association's New Writers Award, and *Start With A Small Guitar* (What Books Press). Thompson's poems have recently appeared in the literary journals, *Ecotone*, *North American Review*, and *Solstice Literary Magazine* which selected one of her poems as winner of its Stephen Dunn Poetry Prize. Thompson is Reviews and Essays Editor of the literary journal, *Spillway*. [www.spillway.org](http://www.spillway.org)



## Erasure

The woman who gave me breath  
erased my father, his whistle, his pain.  
She never said if his eyes were brown.

She didn't remember how he moved  
the night they made me. She omitted  
details of geography and religion was

excised. Music never played or she  
would have played it. She revealed my  
father's name. I cannot pronounce it.

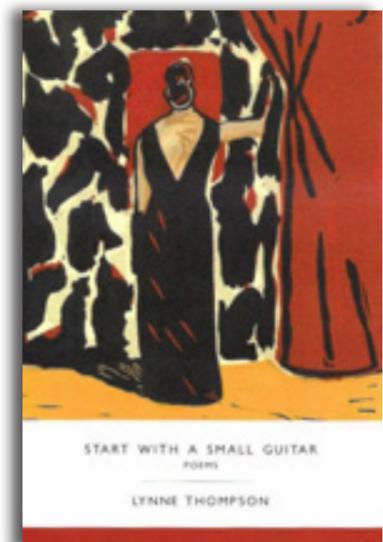
## My Life According to Susan Howe

either late or soon what I am I must remain  
silk moth fly mulberry tree

World resting on nothing  
gilding nothing  
coming back fugitive

I see you and you see I see you

Now show me anything  
sound and stillness astir  
quiet in your corner.



## Blue Mussel

*Allow yourself  
to be spelled differently.  
It will feel like falling  
It has waiting attached.*

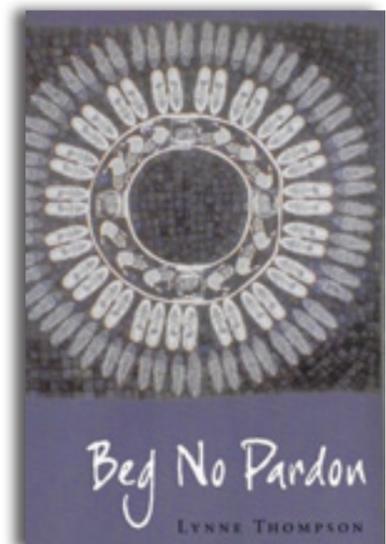
Emma Melton  
"Waking Instructions"

Allow yourself  
everything, especially those things  
you have stored on a shelf,  
saying *that's not for me* or *I am not  
able*. Flesh out your serpent  
and your waterlily. They are similar;  
they're the floor and steeple of that self  
you never imagined existed.  
Take a chance to stand in the shower  
of your personalities. It's ok for your name

to be spelled differently  
so that when you're called, you're called  
*agate*, or by those who know, *tapestry*,  
or by those who are unsure *blue  
mussel* because they hope you are  
something more than you've seemed,  
something more than just *indubitably*.  
Clairvoyant, perhaps. Or something  
like unfettered gladness or a body  
of such pure and utter release

it will feel like falling.  
As though the mere assignment  
of a new name is a drawstring  
pulling you through the playdough buried  
deep inside you, could be the planetary  
shift that turns one woman into hardware  
while turning you into a cello's bowstring.  
It's as simple as child's play—  
so *recherché!*—  
with a design so singular that

it has waiting attached—  
an intermission that frustrates, then propels  
us to scratch to blood the itch  
(that irrefutable hanker) to be  
named and re-named, that desire  
to be known as *seed* or *tower* or *winter  
weather*; cool but hardly detached  
or unwilling. The impulse that gives us  
permission to swim with a seahorse,  
to admit the joy in life is *labyrinth*.



© Lynne Thompson

## Life

For some, a short road.

\*

For a child, a fascination with  
moths, excrement, mother-tit.

\*

For the earbud-wearing, green-  
haired, some tatted pimple-face.

\*

For the woman—see the Ketel  
One, *up*, in her hand (every day)

or see her lover who she suspects  
she has driven to transgendering.

\*

Later, it becomes tedious:

the route home to the dry  
cleaners, then back—

the stand up-sit down-kneel  
down-pray for ?—

the constant pluck of the last  
hairs straying across the body—

\*

How long the long way round—

## Whether or Not Planned Parenthood

Who is the Robot with a bomb in one hand and a text  
of religious goo in the other? She stands on a cookbook  
thinking of the child nestled in her belly these past months,  
kicking every piece of *I promise to betray you* into her side—  
and yet? Angry she has to share, Robot has devised a bomb  
of language to detonate at the greatest moment of dispassion  
for her offspring. But when, where? And will anyone who  
survives (the deaf, perhaps) even care. The deaf are too few of  
the lucky ones who know everything is echo, disappointment.



© Lynne Thompson

**Anton Floyd** was born in Egypt of Irish, Maltese, English and French Lebanese parentage. Raised in Cyprus he lived through the Cypriot struggle for independence. With the outbreak of intercommunal hostilities in 1963, the family was evicted at gunpoint from their Nicosia home by Turkish Cypriot militiamen, making them refugees in a divided capital. He studied English at Trinity College Dublin and University College Cork. He has lived and worked in the Eastern Mediterranean. He is now teaching in Cork city and lives in West Cork. Poems published in *The Stony Thursday Book*, *The Ghent Review* and haiku in *Shamrock*. He won the IHS International Competition (2014), honourable mention (2015) and was runner up in the Snapshot Press (UK) Haiku Calendar 2016 Competition. He is a member of Irish Haiku Society. A selection of his haiku is included in 'Between the Leaves', an anthology of new haiku writing from Ireland (Arlen House). His longer poems are looking for a home.

Photograph of Anton by Carole Anne Floyd



## this is the country

*for William and Liz Wall*

the first time we really talked  
was on the early train to dublin  
time offered us the chance  
the free seats at your table  
was a welcomed play  
of happenstance  
before then only a genial glance  
in the playground of the project school  
suggested common cause

we leave kent station right on time  
its frosted skylights and latticed girders  
the parallel sweep of railway lines

the carriage clatters as it passes  
the painted walls of northside houses  
the wind bends the bankside grasses

in the slant of driven rain  
looping phone lines glide and glisten  
match the pace of our racing train

the window is a rolling screen  
a moving framework of country scenes

a worn breen and the five barred gate  
a bright red tractor and skies of slate

quilted fields hemmed in by hedges  
rivers spanned by old stone bridges

sloping hills and farmhouse gables  
cobble yards and barns and stables

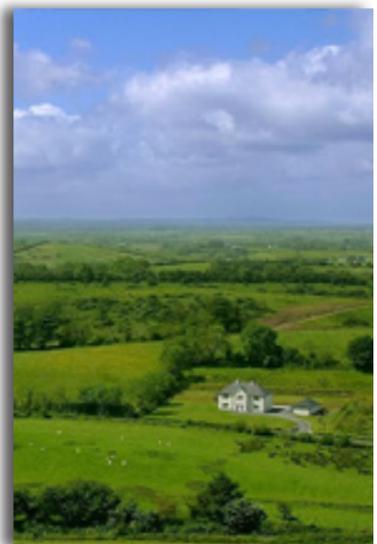
valley streams and tree-fringed ditches  
frame by frame the picture switches

and so the train drives on and on  
the perfect rhythm for a children's song

in the foreground cattle grazing  
one horse gallops another's lazing

here's a church and here's steeple  
there's a glimpse of country people

the scenes unfurl a green republic  
a nostalgic colour tinted image  
this is the country  
your fabled place  
where alice  
with a freckled face  
and her ribboned tresses  
fell from grace  
into the poisoned innocence  
of a ghost estate



## haiku

the window  
frost melts  
departing ghosts

daybreak  
the river slips  
under the mist

the exile's hand  
on the rusted gate  
the keening hinge

passing  
the roadside wall  
travellers' shadows

picking once  
hailstones  
the coldest grains

a single tree  
on the coastal cliff  
weather vane

departing  
ferry lights  
melt into the sea

seabirds  
on the horizon  
an audible blur

## departures

*for Chris Weaver*

the airport monitors  
listed destinations  
sun holidays mostly  
after a week with us  
in the rare sunshine  
*west cork* he said  
*could happily vie*  
*with all those places*

we became for a while  
part of the buzz and throb  
a throng of revellers  
full of midsummer fun  
all sun hats and shades  
queuing to check-in  
packed into a square corral  
like goodies in a hamper

later at the departure doors  
parting with a see you anon  
I saw a mother and her son  
they stood face to face gazing  
as if they had run out of words  
when the automatic doors closed  
she looked at me and said *australia*  
I nodded and she knew I understood

we turned together to the exit  
we were like a defeated tribe  
mindful of our loss of pride  
withdrawing into our private exiles



## harcourt street

*singeðsumeres weard  
sorge beodeð  
bitter in breosthord*

*(the guardian of summer sings  
bodes a sorrow  
grievous in the soul)  
from The Seafarer an Anglo-Saxon poem Exeter Book 10th century*

my life has changed since  
then that attic bedsit  
up five flights of creaky stairs  
my room in harcourt street  
next to the plush hotel  
georgian home once to shaw

a short walk to grafton street  
bewleys café and trinity  
a student budget overruled  
all other considerations  
the halitosis of the shared toilet  
that gargled like a sore throat

it was a building of ghosts  
the sound of doors closing  
the wash of constant traffic  
like restless waves  
the faint blue of the gas fire  
its heat faint as a distant star

I never met the man next door  
but imagined him sad faced  
who had lost the urge to speak  
who coughed all night  
fixing the sound in my mind  
of endured loneliness

## loss

last winter's storms  
brought down the laurel  
as if some warlike god  
maddened by man's hubris  
lost patience with the world  
exhaled his febrile breath  
and lifted it out of the ground  
roots once sinewy  
moist with fertility  
have shriveled  
stiffened with shock  
blackened with loss

picking over leathery leaves  
blackbirds scavenge for worms



© Anton Floyd

Jim Burke lives in Limerick, Ireland. Co-founder with John Liddy of *The Stony Thursday Book*. Poems have appeared in *The Shamrock Haiku Journal*, *The Shot Glass Journal*, *The Literary Bohemian*, *The Crannog Poetry Journal*, *The Stony Thursday Book*, *The Revival Poetry Journal* and 'Between the Leaves' *New Haiku Writing From Ireland*, edited by Anatoly Kudryavitsky. He is a member of the Irish Haiku Society and is on the committee of the Limerick Writers Centre.



## The Blue Bikini

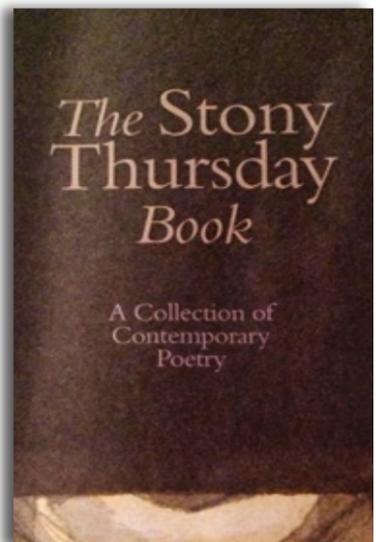
When they settled down  
 He disliked the front room carpet  
 She did too,  
 A rocky grey and phosphorescent green  
 They spent little of their time with.  
 But before that  
 He loved her blue bikini  
 With white flowers across the waist,  
 Flowers that crept up top, too.  
 When she stepped from it  
 The first time:  
 He ran his fingers against the sand,  
 Those blowy grains;  
 That glistened everywhere.

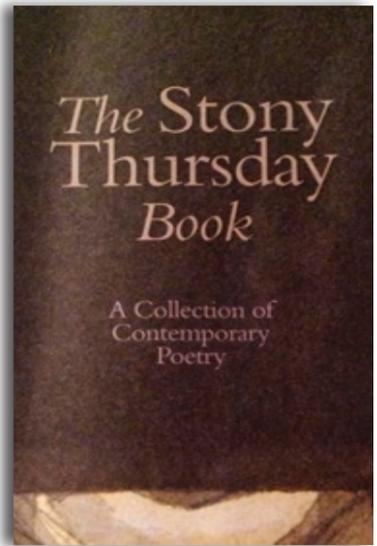
## Haiku

\*  
 gloomy morning  
 damp irises spark  
 in the garden

\*  
 weeding  
 some sort of order  
 in the winding path

\*  
 out from the ditch  
 and into the ditch  
 a fox's tail





## The Meadow

The winding weight of  
Sprawl  
Paved its way  
To invade you;  
In my boyhood memory  
You are clear to me;  
Great green ghost-land!  
When I close my eyes  
Your crickets  
Sing inside me.

## Home Sunday

Quietly at first he chose  
the strings

for *'May you never,'*  
on the guitar

and raised it, 'til everyone joined in  
with him, singing.

In the evening,  
after we'd scattered

she hugged him on the bed,  
sobbing, pushing the way

through those early chemo days  
of spring.

## Funeral

'On Christmas Eve, we drank Wicked from a blue bottle'  
'He was such a talented footballer'  
'The club sent fresh flowers today'  
'I'm not bad, thanks, and you?'  
'They have tracked the priest he'll be five more minutes'  
'I'll go up and say something to his mother'  
'This awful business, what a start to the new year'  
'In those days we were going places'  
'If it rained, you could throw yourself into a ditch'  
'Mike's in America, Pat has gone to Switzerland'  
'If he did or didn't, well, we don't know'  
'Teresa, I love your umbrella'  
'A very keen gardener, was a surprise to me'  
'I drove up there and I bought a pair of knee high boots'  
'His passport was in his jacket at the flat'  
'He wasn't always easy but he was hardly ever wrong'  
'They had a three for two'  
'Life is disappointing'  
'It was there for everyone to see'  
'Newspapers print it and you drown'  
'We must spend an evening together, soon'  
'John came from Australia and Tim came from Cork'  
'Alice, it's a bastard!'  
'I need a drink'  
'Goodbye'  
'Hold on a minute, wait for me'

Michael J. Whelan lives in South Dublin. He served as a UN Peacekeeper in Lebanon and Kosovo with the Irish Army and is a historian and keeper of the Air Corps Military Museum. He was 2nd Place in the Patrick Kavanagh & 3rd in the Jonathan Swift Awards. He is widely published and read for the Poetry Ireland Introductions series and his debut collection 'Peacekeeper' was published in 2016 by Doire Press.



## Marhaba

For peacekeepers  
in South Lebanon  
the friendly stage  
sometimes came  
after confrontation  
and before conflict.  
*"Marhaba my friend"*  
was the first thing said  
to a resistance fighter  
pointing a gun at you.

## From a Dead Peacekeeper

If a target is what you seek, a mere body  
to your greatness, in token meek,  
or warm blood and flesh made sudden still,  
gestured through the venom of your gun,  
then here is a good heart, stout in breasted honour,  
held by soul and courage.

If vengeance is what you want, for wrongs  
done to your homeland, take me,  
for I come in peace to stifle the hatred  
of lost generations. I promise there will be  
no purchase. Take this body, for I am  
the peacekeeper and here is where  
the world is saved every time.



© Michael J Whelan

## Reconnaissance by Fire

*(Observations in Irish UN Operations area S. Lebanon - 1990s)*

Just before the night  
 white plumes on hillsides  
 mark the end of journeys  
 as artillery bombs sweep the ground  
 and machinegun bullets  
 rip through wadis  
 in a reconnaissance by fire  
 along known approaches,  
 tearing up usual routes  
 just in case  
 they're already there  
 preparing,  
 priming themselves  
 and then,  
 through darkness-spilled  
 shadows,  
 the silence is torn again  
 by the shrieks of screaming metal  
 cursing with hate.

Sometimes the best defence  
 is to attack  
 even when  
 there are no targets.

Wadi = Dried up riverbed/valley

## Battlefield

*(Observations in Irish UN Operations area S. Lebanon - 1990s)*

Early morning.  
 A steely mist waited  
 through the night  
 to storm the hilltop hiding  
 the warriors approach  
 in resistance and stealthy guile.  
 They paused at pre-ranged paces,  
 unleashed hate from guns,  
 then retreated  
 to whence they came  
 before the mist released  
 a battlefield, and enemies  
 were seen.



© Michael J Whelan

## Holding the Road

The peacekeeper,  
flak-jacket buttoned to the neck,  
blue helmet fastened tight  
under the chin,  
rifle slung across the chest,  
muzzle pointing at the distant ground,  
trigger finger tensed  
along the trigger guard  
switched to automatic.

Alone he stands there,  
holding the road  
in front of wire entanglements  
and tank-stops  
in the narrow chicane  
of a sun trapped checkpoint,  
left arm raised high,  
the palm of his hand  
facing the threat.

## Spectre

There are nights when you have had enough.  
Disappearing into the shadow corners of your room,  
watching the fabric of grey days unfold again,  
move about in strange colours on the walls,  
the window open to the world,  
white curtain hanging half in  
half out like a trapped ghost  
fighting hard to escape,  
to find its former self,  
go home,  
sink into its own bones and flesh  
and the smiles of a lover.  
Then, somehow, you shut the window on those dreams  
and wait for a moment while the spectre hangs by its neck  
till stilled, goes silent, limp.  
You switch on the light and the shadows disappear,  
courage fills you up for one more day.

There are nights still when I remember the grey days  
but in my house the windows have blinds.



Amy Barry writes poems and short stories. She has worked in the media, hotel and Oil & Gas industries. Her poems have been published in anthologies, journals, and e-zines, in Ireland and abroad. Her poems have been featured in the radio and television in Italy, Australia, Canada and Ireland. Some of her poems have been translated into Italian. She loves traveling. Trips to India, Nepal, China, Bali, Paris, Berlin, Budapest, Fakenburg have all inspired her work. When not writing she plays Table Tennis. She loves sushi.



## Hope

I smell the sourness of mother's sweat,  
the fear in her blood.  
Occasionally, sorrow pours  
from every heaving breath,  
from every lacerating tear.

We walk haphazard,  
blisters on our feet-  
in the cold, in the sun.  
We sail in crippled boats  
and aging rust-buckets.

At the border,  
voices blare from speakers.  
Crowds surge around us.

On the bus,  
mother sticks her head out the window,  
her shawl flung over her face.  
For the first time in a long time,  
I see her smile.

## Beautiful Chaos

A pleasant numbness settles in my bones.  
It dances inside my head.  
You bring the same dedication  
to your seduction  
as you do to your music.  
Eyes shut,  
I smell the leather of your coat,  
the cigarettes on your lips.  
Almost fearful,  
I kiss you.  
Risking my life  
with that kiss.  
Like a fool.  
Like an animal-  
desperately in love,  
shaken by a current  
of untamed ecstasy-  
Dangerous,  
but strangely-  
Pure.



## Unspoken

Feral hearts speak  
without words encumbrance,  
the same tenderness,  
the same yearnings.

A mystifying power fills, huge,  
engulfing,  
a male presence,  
spine-tremors, vibrate her nerves,  
senses swell,  
senses explode.

Clouds condense as stormy showers,  
frenzy dance, overlapping waves,  
echoes of joyous rainbow  
linger in her blood.

## Dust dreams

She walks under summer foliage.  
White hair,  
soft as the clouds.  
Her features caught  
in time's net of wrinkles.  
Memories roam:  
Love as a lover.  
And loved still.  
His features,  
finely traced.

A blue tit logs all it sees,  
and knows all.

Her search,  
real or unreal is not known.  
In the passing breeze:  
the strains of a melody,  
fills her head.  
Perhaps, it is here –  
in the thick softness  
of greens, flowers and soil,  
like the end of a warm dream-  
in the garden that breathes –  
She wishes to enter and disappear.



Michael Durack grew up on a farm near Birdhill in County Tipperary. He was a founder member of Killaloe Writers Group and his poetry has been published in a wide range of literary journals in Ireland and abroad, as well as airing on local and national radio. He is the author of a chapbook, *Nothing To Write Home About* (Derg House), a comic narrative in verse, *A Hairy Tale Of Clare* (East Clare Telecottage) and a memoir in prose and poems, *Saved To Memory: Lost To View* (Limerick Writers Centre.) He has collaborated with his brother, Austin on a programme of poetry and music, and together they have produced two albums, *The Secret Chord* (2013) and *Going Gone* (2015.)

<https://www.facebook.com/michael.durack>



## Janus at Killaloe

1

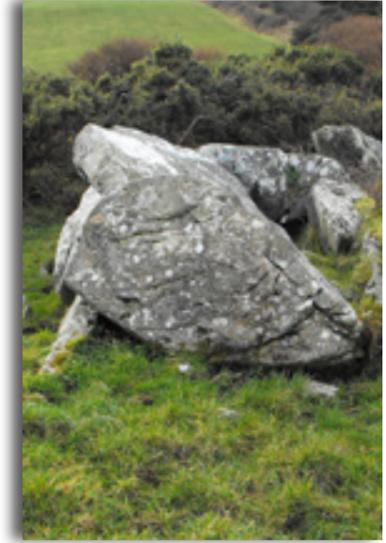
A Ryanair plummets  
towards Tountinna and the standing stones  
that mark the ancient Leinstermen's bones,  
booms above the peaty summits  
of Moylussa, Feenlea, Gortmagy,  
over galláns, fulachta fia  
where Fir Bolg yielded to Déis  
Tuaiscirt, and Dál gCais  
bossed the ring fort at Béal Ború,  
drew water from Tobermurragh  
and reigned from proud Kincora  
in far-famed Cill Dá Lua.

2

A dodgy chess move, a scrape;  
the proud Maelmórdha off in a huff,  
Cuggeran slain, and sure enough  
repercussions bound to shape  
our history: the Norse at Clontarf,  
Brian without helmet or headscarf  
triumphant, all hunky-dory,  
then cut down in his hour of glory,  
his fate divined by Craglea's Aoibheal,  
whose legend hangs somewhere between  
wailing banshee and fairy queen,  
her cries presaging decades of upheaval.



© Michael Durack



3

Levelled Kincora mutates to The Green  
 where farmers mustered to trade cattle  
 and faction fighters to do battle,  
 Corbans and Hourigans venting their spleen.  
 A downhill charge, the mob follows,  
 towards Cheesehouse and Fern Hollow.  
 Cudgels crack on heads,  
 shots fired, three men dead  
 after attack and police counter-attacks  
 in the place where modern revellers pour  
 into the bracing air from Molly's Bar  
 and Saturday night discos in Sergeant Jack's.

4

Through the Ford of the Tributes  
 the tide of the red-eyed lough  
 funnels by Cullenagh and Knock-  
 yclovaun, takes aim and shoots  
 headlong through thirteen stone arches,  
 below Marble Mill and pealing churches.  
 Fathoms deep the murky waters hide  
 the ghosts of Friar's Island, drowned boys,  
 and the backed-up jetsam of the Shannon Scheme,  
 sluice gates and salmon falls  
 succumbing to head race and the blank walls  
 of Ardnacrusha's hydro dam.

5

To build Ard Coillte we cut down trees,  
 for Ash Grove Meadows lumbered ash,  
 converted woods and paddocks to cash  
 and eating house to Indian, Chinese;  
 our corner shops replaced  
 by forecourt, SuperValu, Mace,  
 McKeogh's and Jimmy Whelan's in step  
 with Tuscany Bistro and Polskisklep.  
 But though Kincora's gone, all is not ruin and rack.  
 Demesne and clachán may be past,  
 Railway and Fountain Stone not meant to last  
 but Janus looked ahead, as well as back.



6

Our washerwomen need no foot bridge now;  
 they stuff their trendy duds  
 into a Hot Point's churning suds.  
 No lower orders bow or kowtow;  
 our living heroes, Keith Wood,  
 Foley, Breen surely as good  
 as any Raparee or Dál gCais  
 laoch, or Setanta wielding ash.  
 Slieve Bernagh trekkers zig-zag  
 on woodland paths of gravel  
 and see no devil, hear no Aoibheal  
 in Ballycuggeran and Cragg.  
 The morbid cholera fires give way  
 to festival fireworks display;  
 the guns of militia, agitators,  
 Irregulars, Free Staters  
 transposed to curios, souvenirs.  
 Hedge schools blossom to community college  
 where frisky teenagers court knowledge  
 in classrooms purged of fear.

7

*Ryninch, Cloonfadda, Inchamore, Drumbane,  
 Grange, Inchadrinagh, Ballycorney, Aillebaun,  
 Killestry, Ardcloney, Legane, Templechalla,  
 Roolagh, Creeveroe, Lackareagh, Kilmastulla.*

The engineers, merchants, bargemen, dreamers;  
 revenue police and poteen makers;  
 the stone cutters, weavers, bakers;  
 and royalty embarking on steamers;  
 ship's cargo and human freight,  
*The Lady Lansdowne, The Francis Spaight.*  
 Where Duffy's Circus pitched its tents  
 on Shantraud; where Astor Cinema stood;  
 where famine migrants lined the Pier Head;  
 where Volunteers drilled and went  
 to fight in Picardy and Flanders,  
 returning to rejections, slanders;  
 where smithy's anvil rang  
 and Sean Ryan's dulcet tenor sang;  
 where seed drill sowed, scythe and sickle mowed;  
 where Sarsfield's stealthy cavalry rode;  
 where Thorgrim carved his name in runes and ogham,  
 we gaze about us, proud to call it home.

Born in Italy, **Maria Miraglia**, graduated in Foreign Languages and Literatures, got a Master's degree in Evaluation and Assessment and in Teaching of Modern Languages. She taught in public high secondary schools, was lecturer for post-graduated students and foreign languages teachers. She has collaborated with the Italian Department of Education. Author of *Le Grandi Opere di Yayati Madan Gandhi*; author and editor of *Antologia Poetica*. She is the Literary Director of Pablo Neruda Italian Cultural Association, secretary general of Writers Capital International Foundation; contributor of many poetry pages both in Italian and English. Founder and chair-woman of World Foundation for Peace. Some of her poems have been translated into Turkish, Spanish, Macedonian, Azerbaijani and Albanian. Two anthologies containing some of her poems will soon be published.



## A Rose

Intense the scent  
of the red rose  
you brought me  
last night

You went  
it is still here  
on the table  
where your hand  
laid it

Together with its perfume  
yours is there too  
and I won't move it from there

## Darkness and Light

The full moon  
through the open window  
has drawn a white beam of light  
in the darkness of my bedroom  
tonight  
that light ray  
coming from so far away  
like an open eye allows me  
to see just some  
of the familiar objects  
since long there  
all the others stay unseen  
unreachable  
well as when  
I try to perceive  
the hidden emotions  
in the hearts of the people  
around me or  
going through the world  
or scrutinize  
with my inner eye their souls  
to understand the reasons  
of their certainties and fears  
so well concealed  
in the hazy caves of their hearts  
but just some grains of truth  
I can seize  
like distant planets  
in the cosmic void  
the motions of their souls  
Great my ambition  
to know the unfathomable  
slight the chance  
to cover long distances



## Falling Raindrops

A rainy summer morning  
so unusual here  
and me at the window  
looking at the falling drops  
beating on the roofs of  
a still sleeping town

Only few people  
down in the street

With me my thoughts  
I so often keep  
as in a well closed cage  
to hold sway over them

But unruly  
they go on their own now  
freely more than the winds

I can see them go afar  
as feathers filling the air  
with imaginary figures  
happily hovering  
for their conquered freedom

And hear them cry loud  
asking the emotions and feelings  
to come they too to the open

Get yourselves free  
they say  
and fly high  
with us

And I stay silently watching  
while my face opens up  
to a smile

## Lost Lives

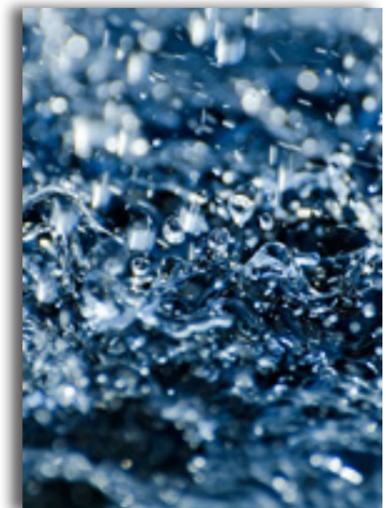
Lives lost in dark waters  
nameless bodies  
lined up on the shore  
unlike the colors of their skins  
their faiths their beliefs  
united, now  
in a common doom

Grimaces of pain  
among the bystanders  
vanishing away  
like the dark colors of night  
at the first light of dawn

Men and women  
in far lands  
still wait for boats  
still will face remote seas  
still will die  
along their harrowing calvary  
towards hope

And, the concentrations camps  
are still there  
spectral places where  
you can still heard the moans  
of thousands people,  
victims of the human folly  
the bombs on Hiroshima or Nagasaki  
are not far memories  
the fumes of the burned bodies  
can still be smelt in the air

And you and me  
and we still  
blind and deaf in front of  
the human miseries



## Smoke Circles

A cigarette lighted  
in the dark and  
the memories of  
some others smoked  
surface  
A puff after puff  
and I let me go  
looking at the circles  
of smoke rising up  
listless  
in the evening air  
to soon after vanish away  
Not the memories  
flowing in the mind  
fresh and clear  
as the waters  
of a mountain stream  
albeit distant  
in space and time  
Faces of beloved  
their shapes  
their pleased glances  
are there with me

And smiles  
sometimes sad  
sometimes sweet  
appear on my face  
in the silence of  
the quiet night  
And I feel the then emotions  
and can hear  
as from a distant echo  
the exchanged words  
everything returning  
as the sequences  
of an old movie  
I thought forgotten.

## Uncaring

You that celebrate peace  
and invoke spirituality  
blind you stay  
in front of the human misery  
deaf as a bell  
to the cries of sorrow  
uncaring keep going on  
when his hand open  
a child  
his hair ruffle dirty his cheeks  
barely lit by the large eyes  
asks you for charity  
bread his meager body needs  
a drop of your love his soul  
your smile  
dim a light of hope  
a sun ray  
in a winter morning  
to warm his little heart

But your head down  
you hurry home  
perhaps on human values  
to write an essay  
and if your mind by chance  
to that child goes back for a while  
soon you start thinking  
of the ineluctability of the human fate

Is it to feel in peace with your Self  
or is it because you believe  
that also misery  
is for a God's will



**Breda Wall Ryan's** poetry is widely published in Irish and international journals and has won the iYeats Poetry Competition, Poets Meet Painters, Dromineer Poetry Competition, Over the Edge New Writer of the Year and The Gregory O'Donoghue International Poetry Prize. She has an M. Phil in Creative Writing from Trinity College, Dublin. She was selected for Poetry Ireland Introductions Series 2014. *In a Hare's Eye* (Doire Press 2015) won the Shine/Strong Award for a first collection.



## Sevenling: he is ruled...

He is ruled by geometry.  
He shelves his books by height and width  
in careful symmetry.

Theme rules my library;  
The Ancient Mariner and Jacques Cousteau  
stand by The Perfect Storm on The Sea, The Sea.

Yet we are perfect-bound

## Debut

He shredded my rose, showed  
his teeth, nipped my tits,  
pinned me down with a paw,  
bared his claws.

I wriggled and screamed,  
bit his tongue, squirmed  
out of my frock, punched  
his grin,

sprouted fur, laid my ears  
to my skull, flexed  
my gluteus maximus, ran  
through a gap

with the slaver of hound  
at my heels. Now he's stuck  
in the hedge spitting thorns,  
calls me tease, trollop, bitch.

I jink to the car, drive home,  
scrub my stain with dock root  
and sage, pretend self-heal  
can mend my torn rose,

assuage my guilt.  
Diamanté button glitters  
in the cut-glass jar--  
Grandmother's eye.



David Morgan is a London based journalist with interests in politics, human rights, international relations, history and cultural issues. He has been working in journalism as an editor and writer for three decades after he studied literature and history at university. He has edited several titles from the Socialist History Society (SHS) of which he is the Secretary. He writes regularly for the SHS Newsletter, occasionally for the Morning Star newspaper and for a range of other online and printed publications.



## People Passing

Each and every one of them  
 When they look into their mirror -  
 Presumably they possess a mirror -  
 To prepare for the day ahead  
 To put on their face to face the critics  
 To shape their mask and style their hair  
 Must believe that they are somehow beautiful  
 Alluring, beguiling, in their way quite unique.  
 How utterly deluded we are  
 How flawed the human judgement  
 Entrapped in our webs of self-deception

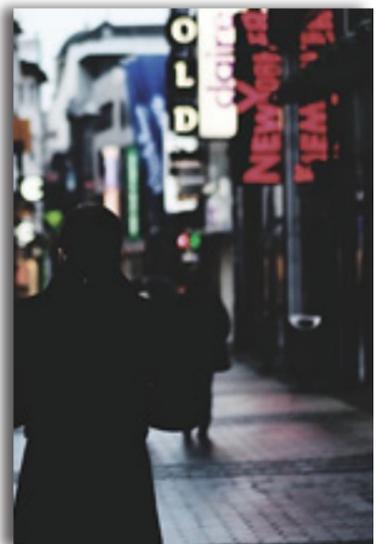
## Not Very New Unmusical Distress

I'm once more browsing the NME\*  
 The first time since about 1983  
 This time I'm handed it for free  
 Outside the Tube station, don't you see?  
 When I first read it less than avidly  
 I felt really quite old at just gone 20  
 The rebellious youth hardly appealed to me  
 I certainly didn't feel at all carefree  
 Now, three decades on, it's just the same  
 Excepting that it all seems lame and tame.  
 The NME has stopped dead for me  
 In fact it never really started

*\*New Musical Express*

## Something Borrowed

One day on a train, in a carriage,  
 I found myself seated directly opposite a girl,  
 A girl who looked just like you  
 But she wasn't you, although she might have borrowed your face  
 Your expression, your charm  
 I looked at her for a while  
 I smiled discreetly but inwardly I was sad  
 She wasn't you  
 But she reminded me of you  
 I was sad but happy too  
 And immensely grateful to the anonymous girl  
 For granting me that fleeting glimpse of you.



© David Morgan

## The Destruction of London

The Romans in their legions  
 They came, they saw and conquered  
 They made their mark but left us quite unscathed  
 London's the great survivor  
 The plague that infested and infected  
 The Great Fire's fierce inferno  
 All the tumults, risings and revolts  
 All left London still standing  
 A city that braced the Blitz and rose again  
 But now real estate developers take their toll  
 With blow, after blow, after merciless blow  
 The destruction of London is at last complete  
 Shifting the very ground beneath our feet  
 From Brick Lane to Park Lane  
 We know who's to blame  
 Street by street and brick by brick  
 Invasion of corporate finance has done the trick  
 The destruction of London every brick

## Boris in Turkey

*Lines written on the occasion of the British Foreign Secretary's visit to Ankara*

Washing the Truth Out  
 Old Boris is in Turkey  
 Looking only to spin  
 Half-truths, patent untruths  
 Absurd asides, a boyish grin  
 Shaped and fashioned at Eton  
 Polished malice with wicked intent  
 The best we can produce?  
 From our class-cursed pettiness  
 Lacking any prettiness  
 Ugly side, under side  
 Upside, every side  
 A truck load of piffle  
 A no-holds barred morality  
 Crafting its crass conclusions  
 As shambolical as it is diabolical  
 Pale face, bare faced special pleading  
 Extreme audacity, offensive capacity  
 Comic turns to engineer the spin  
 Bit of fun concealing black heart within  
 A routine, a multitude of sin  
 Diplomacy is lying for your country  
 Deceit, conceit, sealed with a snigger  
 Veering into its comic cul-de-sac  
 A nation's reputation hanging in the balance  
 Sagging, teetering on the brink  
 Recourse to jokes to please the host  
 But they just don't translate  
 And no-one's now laughing



© David Morgan

Nasrin Parvaz became a civil rights activist when the Islamic regime took power in 1979. She was arrested in 1982, tortured and spent eight years in prison. In 1993, she fled to England. Her prison memoir was published in Farsi in 2002, and it was published in Italian in 2006 by Effedue Edizioni. A novel, *Temptation*, based on the true stories of some male prisoners who survived the 1988 massacre of Iranian prisoners was published in Farsi in 2008. Her stories appeared in Exiled Writers Ink. Since 2005, together with poet Hubert Moore, Nasrin has translated poems, prohibited in Iran, from Farsi into English. They appear in the Modern Poetry in Translation series. Her article, Writing in the 'Host' Language, published in The Great Flight, MPT 2016 Number 1, and is on the MPT website. <http://nasrinparvaz.org/>



## To: The General Director Of Doctors Without Borders

You say you know  
the hospital was  
attacked on purpose  
but you don't know why!  
Why don't you know?  
It's obvious.  
The doctors were interfering  
with the genocide.  
The bombing was a warning  
to these doctors without borders.  
Don't go to the Middle East.  
Don't help the doomed.

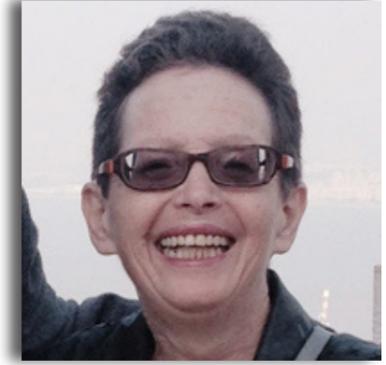
## Burkini

To convince their own people  
that they oppose radical Islam  
and had nothing to do with its creation  
they force a Moslem woman on a beach  
to take off her burkini.

Yet when the Queen of England, Thatcher or Merkel  
go to any Islamic state, Iran or Saudi Arabia  
where the women are imprisoned in hijabs  
these "free" and "important" Western women  
bow down before Islam and put on long skirts and cover their hair.



Born in Birmingham, England, U.K., Natalie Wood began working in journalism a month before the outbreak of the 1973 Yom Kippur War. She emigrated from Manchester to Israel in March 2010 and lives in Karmiel, Galilee from where she writes several blogs, micro-fiction and free-verse. She features in Smith Magazine's *Six Word Memoirs On Jewish Life* and has contributed to Technorati and Blogcritics along with *Jewish Renaissance* and *Live Encounters* magazines. [www.perfectlywritepoetry.blogspot.co.il](http://www.perfectlywritepoetry.blogspot.co.il)



## A Living Will

After I'm gone, say  
the God I barely recognised  
was indivisible.  
Just One.

After I've gone, don't  
recite *Kaddish*. The  
dying is for me.  
Not Him.  
Make the funeral short.  
Let my body burn.

Should these requests be  
judged thoughtless, most  
perverse, let it be known  
that I deserve no prayers,  
praise, lies or crocodile tears.

What I did was wrong.  
You'll know this -  
after I've gone.

Buy less milk and butter.  
Turn the heating low.  
Feed the cat. Cut  
the kids' hair monthly,  
check their homework's done.  
Remind them they are Jewish -  
after I'm gone.

When you make  
Jack's barmitzvah,  
do invite my mum.  
It'll be good for  
her to see him  
wear Dad's prayer shawl.

After I'm gone, carry  
on as normal. Have  
Janie round for tea.  
I find your loving  
comfortable.

Let's not pretend.  
It's clear. She's  
a better mother  
than I'd ever be.

After I'm gone,  
pin a notice on our door.  
"This woman,"  
it should read,  
"seemed honourable,  
kind, fair; steadfast,  
generous, taught her  
children well.

"But as the final drips  
of life seeped from her,  
measured by the agonised  
ticking of the clock, the  
truth poured out.

"In a dream she  
killed her father,  
made mad her daughter,  
then watched agape  
as oblivion snatched  
her, too."



Live Encounters celebrates 7 years 2010-2016

# Live encounters

POETRY

FEAST

Free online magazine from village earth  
Volume Three December 2016

Photograph by Mark Ulyseas