

Live encounters

POETRY

Celebrating six years 2010 - 2015
Free online magazine from village earth
April 2016

GUEST EDITORIAL
RANDHIR KHARE
INDIAN POET, WRITER & PLAYWRIGHT



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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.

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Guest Editorial - Poetry is...

Randhir Khare

Khare is an award winning author of twenty one volumes of non-fiction, fiction, translation and poetry. Executive Editor of Heritage India, the International Culture Journal, a Director of The Rewachand Bhojwani Academy and Visiting Professor to the Dept Of English, Pune University. Recently he was given The Residency Award by The Sahitya Akademi (India's National Academy of Letters) for his contribution to Indian Literature and the Human Rights Award for his efforts to preserve and celebrate marginal and minority cultures. www.randhirkhare.in



New Unpublished Poems

Colette Nic Aodha

Nic Aodha is an award winning poet who resides in Galway in the West of Ireland. She writes in both Irish and English. She has 14 publications which include a volume of short stories, *Ádh Mór*; an academic study of the blind poet *Anthony Raftery*; one volume of English poetry, *Sundial*, published by *Arlen House Press*; two dual language collections of poetry by the same publisher; *Between Curses: Bainne Géar*, and *In Castlewood: An Ghaoth Aduaidh*. Her work is on the syllabus in Primary, Secondary and Third Level colleges. www.colettenicaodha.com



New Poems

Noel Monahan

Monahan has published five collections of poetry. His next collection: *Where The Wind Sleeps, New & Selected Poems*, will be published by Salmon in May 2014. Literary awards include: The SeaCat National Award organised by Poetry Ireland, The Hiberno-English Poetry Award, The Irish Writers' Union Poetry Award, The William Allingham Poetry Award and The Kilkenny Poetry Prize for Poetry. Most recent plays include: *"The Children of Lir"* performed by Livin' Dred Theatre and *"Lovely Husbands"*, a drama based on Henry James' work performed at the inaugural Henry James Literary Festival, 2010.



Selected Poems

Eileen Casey

Eileen Casey is based in South Dublin. Widely published, Dedalus Press, Faber and Faber, New Island, are among recent inclusions. Her debut poetry collection *Drinking the Colour Blue* was published by New Island in 2008. Literary Awards include: A Patrick and Katherine Kavanagh Poetry Fellowship, A Hennessy Award (Emerging Fiction), among others. A debut short story anthology *Snow Shoes* (Arlen House) appeared in 2012, followed by *A Fascination with Fabric* (Arlen House), 2014. She works as a creative writing facilitator, editor and publisher.



The Hands of Time

Doreen Duffy

Doreen Duffy's studied the various forms of creative writing, at Oxford University online, at UCD and at NUI Maynooth. Her publications include *The Ireland's Own Anthology*, *Circle and Square*, *The Woman's Way*, *The Irish Times*, *The Burning Bush 2* and *Brilliant Flash Fiction* online. She has received many awards including first place in the Jonathan Swift Poetry Competition and most recently she was awarded the Deirdre Purcell Cup at The Edgeworth Literary Festival. Doreen is working towards her first collection of poetry.



Then the Staircase Beckons

Mary Melvin Geoghegan

Mary has four collections of poetry published her last *Say it Like a Paragraph* with Bradshaw Books, Cork (2012). Her work has been widely published including *Poetry Ireland Review*, *The Stinging Fly*, *The Shop*, *The Moth*, *Cyphers*, *Studies*, *The Sunday Times*, *Skylight 47*, *Crannog*, *Boyne Berries*, *The Stony Thursday Book*, *The Oxfam Calendar* amongst others. In 2013 she won The Longford Festival Award for Poetry and in 2015 was shortlisted for the Cuirt New Writing Award. She has edited several anthologies of children's poetry and is a member of the Writers in Schools Scheme with Poetry Ireland. Her next collection *When Moon and Mother Collide* will be published with Salmon Poetry in 2017.



ECHOLOCATION - Few Poems for Young People from my latest poetry collection

Terry McDonagh

Irish poet and dramatist, Terry McDonagh, taught creative writing at the University of Hamburg and was Drama Director at the Int. School Hamburg for 15 years. He now works freelance; has been writer in residence in Europe, Asia, Australia; published 7 poetry collections, book of letters, prose and poetry for young people translated into Indonesian and German, distributed internationally by Syracuse Uni. Press; latest poetry collection *Ripple Effect/Arlen House*; children's story, *Michel the Merman*, illustrated by Marc Barnes (NZ). He lives in Hamburg and Ireland. www.terry-mcdonagh.com



Hit and Run - New Poems

Ian Watson

Ian Watson was born in Belfast but has now spent most of his life in Bremen, Northern Germany, where he worked as a senior lecturer in British and Irish Literature and Creative Writing. He has published poems, articles and literary translations widely and also worked for radio and television in Germany. From 1994 to 2012 he edited *newleaf* magazine and ran *newleaf* press. His recent publications include two books of poetry and short prose - *Kurzpassspiel* (German) and *Riverbank City | A Bremen Canvas*, and his collection *Granny's Interpreter* was published in March 2016 by Salmon Poetry in Ireland.



Text

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 Literary Bohemian*, *The Crannog Poetry Journal*, *The Stony Thursday Book*, *The Revival Poetry Journal*. He is a member of *The Irish Haiku Society* and is on the committee of the *Limerick Writers Centre*.



Selected Poems

Noel King

Noel King was born and lives in Tralee, Co Kerry. In this his 50th year, he has reached his 1000th publication of a poem, haiku or short story in magazines and journals in thirty-eight countries. His poetry collections are published by Salmon: *Prophecy of the Past*, (2010), *The Stern Wave* (2013) and *Sons* (2015). He has edited more than fifty books of work by others and was poetry editor of *Revival Literary Journal* (Limerick Writers' Centre) in 2012/13. A short story collection, *The Key Signature & Other Stories* will be published in 2016.



In Praise of Love

Ingrid Storholmen

Storholmen was born i Verdal, Norway in 1976. She has been studying Literature at the University of Bergen, and spent one year at a Creative writing school. She was for five years writer in residents at "Adrianstua", a writers house in Trondheim and started Trondheim International Literature Festival while living there, and also founded the Literature magazine LUJ together with two colleagues. She has published 6 books: *The low of the Poacher*, 2001. *Shamespeasch*. *Graceland* 2005. *Siri's book*, 2007. *The voices of Chernobyl* 2009, in English, 2012, Harper Collins, India, and in Hindi, 2014, Vani Prakashan, among others.

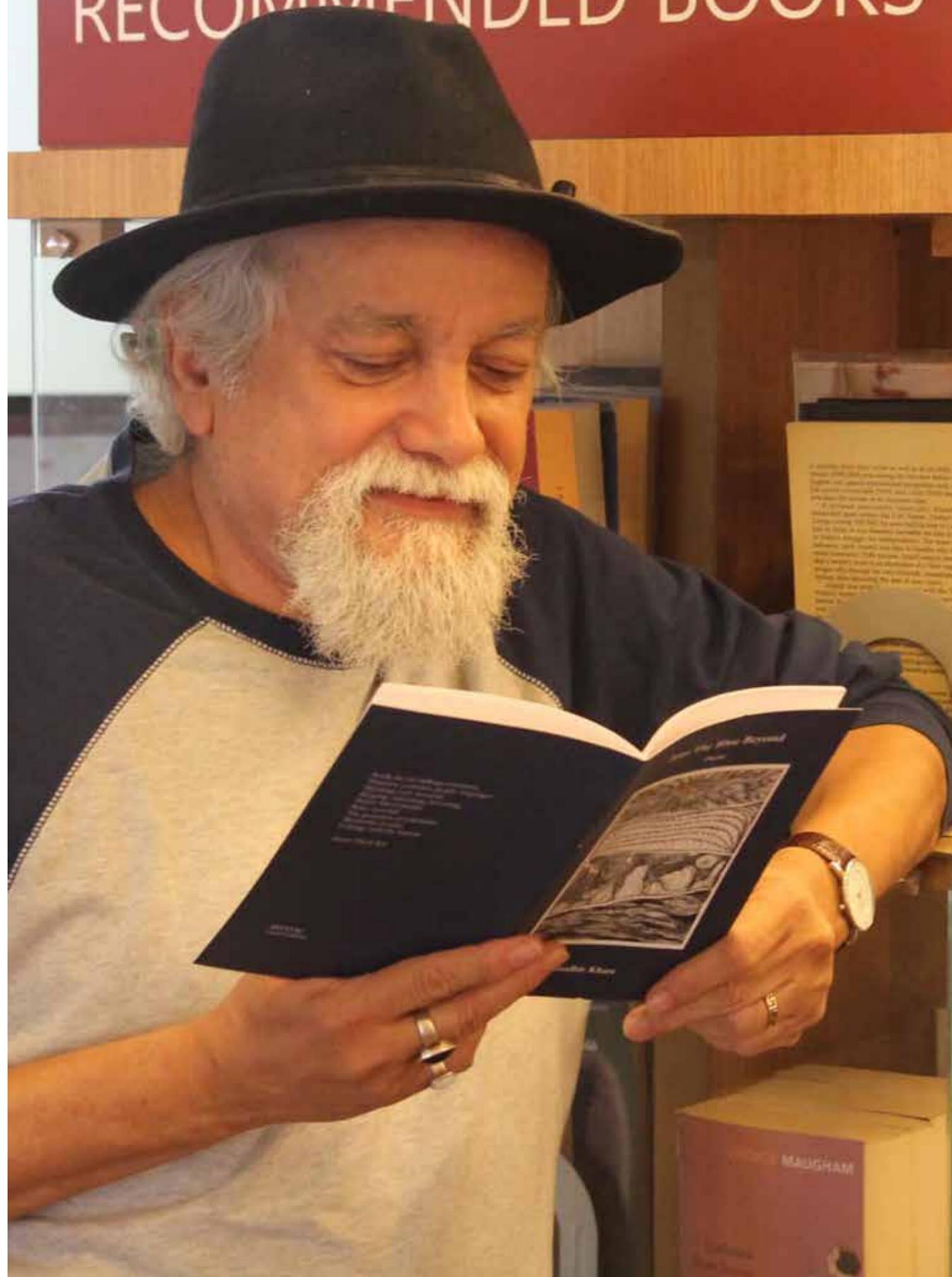


Instead being human is you

Elizabeth Harrop

Elizabeth is a freelance writer, poet and artist specialising in human rights advocacy, with a particular interest in the rights of women and children who has worked for many international organisations including Amnesty International and UNICEF, and has worked in a number of countries, where she has spoken with the victims of human trafficking. The subjects Elizabeth has worked and written on include inter-country adoption; legal reform; maternal and infant health; the sexualisation of children; and war propaganda. www.libertyandhumanity.com

RECOMMENDED BOOKS



FOUNDING CONTRIBUTOR OF LIVE ENCOUNTERS. 2010

RANDHIR KHARE

AWARD WINNING INDIAN POET, WRITER & PLAYWRIGHT,

POETRY IS

“Our best poets are dead poets,” said a Bulgarian poet expansively then quickly knocked back three shots of rakia. Around us lay cherry orchards and rolling farmlands with robust tillers of the soil hauling produce away in enormous baskets. Kebabs spluttered on skewers and the air was heavy with the aroma of vegetables and flowers. Life bloomed spontaneously around us. And the spirited and well-fed poet who stood there with his fourth rakia continued to smile and pronounce that the best Bulgarian poets were dead poets, unaware of his now.

What was he trying to say? That truly great poetry is appreciated only when the poet isn't around anymore to be a social embarrassment or a hindrance? That poetry needs time to be understood and be appreciated and that takes longer than the physical life of a poet? That all the great Bulgarian poets heroically went off to war and got themselves killed? Was he intoning another version of Goethe's 'life is short but art is long' and was he ignoring Blake's 'the world in a grain of sand and heaven in a wild flower'?

“Poetry makes nothing happen,” wrote Auden in his poem “In Memory Of W.B. Yeats”. I'm not too sure about that! What did Mr. Auden expect poetry to do? He called it “a way of saying, a mouth”. Poetry is more than that. Poetry heals, poetry 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. Anna Akhmatova wrote to poetry, 'fame swam like a swan through the golden mist – but you love, were always my despair'

Anyway, as the afternoon flowed into evening, the babbling settled down and poetry took over. Eight poets shared their poems and in the emerging fugue poetry was all that mattered, speaking in tongues it became a shared experience. It mattered to the living.

Poetry will continue to be written by the brave, the genius, the stupid, the hopelessly in love, the wayfarer, those who arrive, those who are about to depart, those who want to be regarded as poets. Whatever! Poetry is a need....

I think of the Bulgarian poet with a glass of rakia in his hand, surrounded by cherry trees declaiming that the best Bulgarian poets are the dead ones and wonder where he is – with us or gone away? I don't even remember his name.

Although that afternoon happened nearly three decades ago I still think about those words and the journeys they set me off on.

I have walked among strangers on alien shores
 And yet have felt their language on my tongue;
 Wandering, I reach my home where I meet myself
 Like a lost brother.

Catfish Afternoon

Beside the Thames

Monsoon sunlight swam in drops of rain
 Showering from trees
 Each time a wind-hand waved
 Scattering dragonflies and drenching grass,
 The drowsy river weaving between lantana.

Worm hook on a line yanked catfish out
 Bleeding and thrashing in a pail –
 My hunter's hands were greasy with their life
 Torn from the belly of the river
 Heavy with loam flesh, eel, crab and shrimp.

Four decades gone I walk a distant shore
 The aching blue arching above a river,
 Manicured trees and weekend crowds
 Line the waterway of ducks and swans.

I watch a boy cast line then snag a hook
 And swear, cursing the debris
 In the river's gut,
 Hands bruised by a splintered rod
 The silent river whirling mud and boats.

Unknown Soldier

In the crypt, St Paul's Cathedral

He went down
 In the killing fields of Mesopotamia
 Shredded by shrapnel,
 Food for trench-rats;

In Nam he fell
 Among paddy shoots
 Beside a child
 Clutching a wooden doll;

They didn't recognize him
 In Gaza
 When they scraped his remains
 Off a dusty street;

He died again and again
 In Colombo, Siachen, the Congo,
 Rangoon, Moscow, Lebanon,
 Lost among numbers.

He still leaves home
 With a gun, a sickle,
 Bow, arrow, spear
 Or just bare hands – to war

For his family, his land,
 Honour, glory, reward,
 Living to die, dying to live,
 His memory like ashes through a sieve.



Mint Tea

Far away from a monsoon home

All afternoon the drunken bees
Circle sound in petal beds,
A blackbird in a willow calls
Rain clouds up the river.

A dry wind strides empty streets
Hands brushing hedges,
Everywhere the treacle light
Drips down walls of stone.

Far away where I was born
Silver rain whips crowded streets
Thunder bursts the neon night
To scattered clouds of splinters.

Across flooded fields the wind
Wades thigh-deep to slushy shades
Beneath the roofs of broken homes
The last refuge of struggling lives.

I sip mint tea and watch the light
Evaporate on stony skin
And memory has closed its doors
I can't walk out, I can't walk in.

Mystery Stones

At Stonehenge

We've orbited them all afternoon
Held in daylight's crystal mesh
Till dark transforms their cold grey lines
Sculpting spirits from their flesh.

Does it matter when these rocks arrived
From where or how by whom and why -
For these blue lungs exhale a force
That ripples to a burning sky.

All I know is that this force
Coursing through them lives in me,
Binding us with ancient breath
Fragrant with time and mystery.

Tramp Laugh Beside The Thames

Out of a bag of rags it came -
Hesitant, stumbling into the morning,
Spreading its arms like wings
It flew, becoming a stone
Thrown by a school boy,
Water skimming,
Rippling lines of geese;
Rising it dissolved, became itself -
Scattering in the wind -
Raining on rooftops.



© Randhir Khare

Travelling Light

Childhood thoughts in a faraway land

Spawned in a factory town up north
One monsoon evening smelling green
Rain roots trailed the fecund dark
Sky flowering lightning sheen.

The old man of the house stood out
Beneath a mango tree,
Listening to his grandson's cries
Wind-riding to be free.

From town to dusty town and city
We travelled searching for a home,
Shallow roots clinging to gravel
Wrenched and forced to roam.

We lived in mansions, lived in shacks
And learnt to celebrate
Hope like stripped fish bones that lay
In piles upon a plate.

Five decades and a half gone by
I look back to that day,
Tossed in rain and fecund green
And my cry that was blown away.

I'm grateful for the hurt, the loss,
The homelessness and pain,
It's helped me travel lighter now,
Singing in the rain.

Dali

Clock face melts into a pool of time,
Furniture fuses into branches of driftwood
And the walls give way to ferns and reeds.

Your voice searches for ears
To settle in, reverberates and trickles meaning
Down to the heart of mud.

Creature of change, mutating death and dreams
Into beasts of light rising from the pool –
Fur damp with memories.

Flying over the Irish sea

Cloud shadows run fingers
Across the sea's pearl belly,
Glowing tips waken foam crests;
I long for swan feathers
To bloom from my pores
And I be blest with flight.

Another year has passed,
Another stolen flame
From the fire of the gods.

www.randhirkhare.in



Colette Nic Aodha is an award winning poet who resides in Galway in the West of Ireland. She writes in both Irish and English. She has fourteen publications which include a volume of short stories, *Ádh Mór*, as well as an academic study of the blind poet Anthony Raftery, an 18th century bard whose songs and poems are still recited and sung today. She has one volume of English poetry, *Sundial*, which was published by Arlen House Press, She also has two dual language collections of poetry by the same publisher; *Between Curses: Baine Géar*, and *In Castlewood: An Ghaoth Aduaidh*. Her work is on the syllabus in Primary, Secondary and Third Level colleges. Colette's latest collection (bilingual) is titled *Baine Géar: Sour Milk*, which is available in hardback and softback, published by Arlen House, 2016. <http://www.colettenicaodha.com/>



Romance

I, midway between the angels and animals,
 your beautiful face,
 golden youth,
 heart soars for that moment
 when you held me in your arms,
 everything unrequited obliterated
 by a single touch, a smile, a dance.

Absence

Drowning
 in kisses he drew
 nearer to the fire

 stoked embers,
 called out between stacks,
 stood tall between love and a full moon
 as hoary frost
 settled on shrubs outside.

 It patterned flowers on glass,
 bulbs, covered in darkness,
 also drown in the absence of light,
 yearn for the kiss of the sun,
 behind windows with closed blinds .

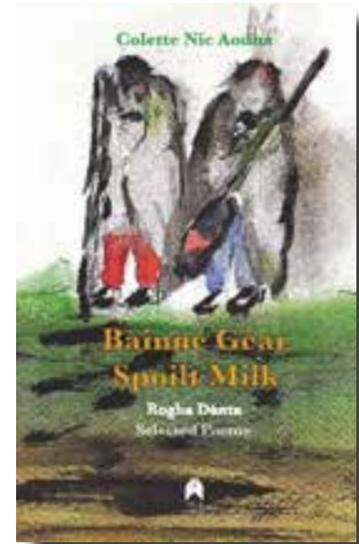
New Workshop

They made and remade,
 up-cycled downtrodden goods,
 put pedestrians back on bicycles,
 fixed rubber tubes,

 and if beyond repair,
 transformed them to haberdashery,
 watered weeds in high window boxes,
 wore Italian beards,

 played games with cups of tea,
 talked incessantly.

www.litriocht.com/shop/product_info.php?products_id=7867



Restoring Forces

New marks on old ground
I see him across the field
rebuilding stone walls.

I view months, years ahead-
recall my youth,
sipping tea poured from a scalded pot

as he crisscross the far field,
wash and backwash of tractor tyre tracks,
strong black tea
embedded on range top,
essence of peat.

Our kettle's blow hole emits a new tune
as he returns via the low field
and nears the house,
wellington boots take long strides over grass, little constructive waves,

going back over ancient meanders,
barren ground, I find my rock and hold fast.

Translate your heart

Translate your heart
to Dantes line if you please
Siren Suzzi in pieces on the table,
delicate porcelain features
hacked into your artist palette,

you attempt to swaddle strangers
in Pressed linen and cashmere,
always a light in your window
and, we, moths to your Murano.
I mind the day you placed an intricate

unique glass piece around my neck,
my heart went into palpitate,
you caressed as you took
your hands from me,
lonely females easy prey;

I open your Facebook page and gaze

www.amazon.com/Noel-Monahan/e/B001K7WQ8G



I have written this poem: Countess Markievicz in Irish and given an English translation of the same. Countess Markievicz was Constance Gore Booth before she married the Polish Count Markievicz. You remember Yeats' famous poem: "In Memory Of Eva Gore Booth and Con Markievicz ... "two girls in silk kimonos, both beautiful, one a gazelle"... they lived at Lissadell House, Co. Sligo. Countess Markievicz became an Irish revolutionary and was stationed in St. Stephen's Green, Dublin during the Easter Rising 1916.

This year we are celebrating the centenary of the Easter Rising 1916 and both Yeats, Countess Markievicz and many others are very much in the news.

CUNTAOIS MARKIEVICZ 1916

COUNTESS MARKIEVICZ 1916

Toitín ina béal	A cigarette in her mouth
Piostal ina láimh	Pistol in her hand
Bean uasal in éide glas	A lady in green uniform
Bríste chomh teann	Her trousers tight
Le mála an pháibaire	As a full bagpipe
Hata cromdhuilleach	A slouch-hat on her head
Is cleití ag fás as	With feathers growing out of it
Ag cur orduithe ar na fir	Ordering the men about
I bhFáiche Stiabhna.	In St. Stephen's Green

Note on poem: After World War 2, W.B. Yeats' body was returned to Ireland to be buried in Drumcliff Churchyard, Co. Sligo. Michael O'Beirne, a neighbour of mine was at Yeats' funeral. He was a young schoolboy then and his fascination was with the novelty of motor cars.

YEATS' REPATRIATION 1948

for Michael O'Beirne

When EI was a number plate
For Sligo cars, IT for Leitrim,
You told me you turned up
At Yeats' funeral in Drumcliff churchyard.

You said your thoughts
Were far removed from all the gossip going round,
Of Roquebrune cemetery and the headlines
About: ***One Dead Man Wearing A Corset,***
Another ***Dead Man Wearing A Truss ...***

The rooks cawed, the rain came down,
Dark clouds came in from Ben Bulbin
A crowd gathered round
To watch the coffin lowered.

No tears welled up from you Michael,
You were somewhere else,
Out on the road, counting motor cars,
Checking the number plates
Waiting for the engines to purr into song.

Eileen Casey is based in South Dublin. Widely published, Dedalus Press, Faber and Faber, New Island, are among recent inclusions. Her debut poetry collection *Drinking the Colour Blue* was published by New Island in 2008. Literary Awards include: A Patrick and Katherine Kavanagh Poetry Fellowship, A Hennessy Award (Emerging Fiction), among others. A debut short story anthology *Snow Shoes* (Arlen House) appeared in 2012, followed by *A Fascination with Fabric* (Arlen House), 2014. She works as a creative writing facilitator, editor and publisher. The following poems appear in Eileen Casey's collaborative collection (with visual artist Emma Barone's pen and ink drawings) *From Bone to Blossom*. www.amazon.com



From Bone to Blossom

*"What did the tree learn from the earth
to be able to talk with the sky?" -Pablo Neruda*

Like the trees of youth, wisdom grows tall.
There's much to make of this journey's
push towards the light yet, rooted in clay.
Without shade, there would be no truths,
no beauty borne by tender shoots,
woods to cross or clearings
reached in spaces between earth and sky.

There's not much talk between Wild Cherry –
Noble Fir. Still, trees, like humans, seek to know
who or what comes crunching through the forest.

Contrary mates – one won't flower
until September, the other quickening
early spring. Leaves appear only to be
dropped again. Woodland companions
grow cones, upright pillars.
Edible yet bitter fruits scattered by birds
become scented needles
piercing sharp.

Winter's bending bough
reminds us how small we really are.
We spindle back to earth
like falling stars.

Woman wearing her home around her shoulders

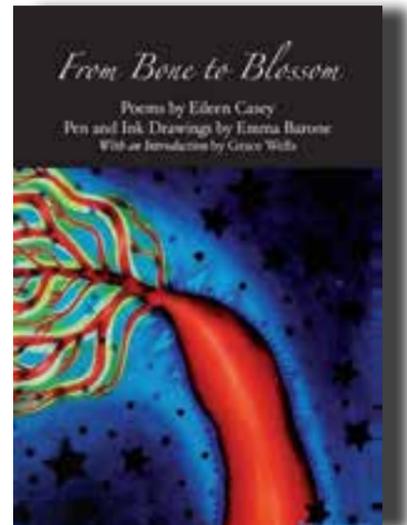
Where you live means 'end of the world'.
A mammoth calf, thousands of years old,
found on this peninsula was one winter young
at time of death – the same age as your baby son.

No tree-lines shield. Tundra winds unpick
your way of life, loosen stitching on your Yamel home –
a tent made from dried reindeer.
Your husband drank its still warm blood,

coming to you all those months ago
raw flesh in his mouth, smells of slaughter
sown into each crease and crevice of his skin.
Below the mark where steel struck bone,

together at night you lie. Steel slit the reindeer's throat
wide as the opening where you head pokes out.
You gaze upon these rolling miles and it seems
as if your home is wrapped around your shoulders.

You gauge the time to rise like birds, make your way
from north to summer pastures in the south;
waiting for the river Ob to freeze (already late)
while all along Siberia's northwest coast
thousands of barrels are emptying out your world.



White fences make good neighbours

I'm painting the fences white, shed too,
white as a gumdrop or a wedding shoe.

When that's done I'll float in a summer palace
canopied by pale-leaved whitebeam trees,
lie on a blanket with my ice coloured cat,
eat cake, be cooled by spigots of light.

I'll read about Antarctica while butterflies
ripen like berries, ignore warning telegrams
pipped by a blackbird
three tiers up at least.

I'll be whitening out lawnmowers, chainsaws,
barking feuds, a neighbourhood's graffiti of sound.

Spit and Clay

In times of drought plants drop their leaves
conserving water, even the honeysuckle –
such bell shaped beauty – is willing as a novice
shaves her hair to the bone, to shed all vanity.
Fallen leaves, the generous scattering of petals
give rest and shelter to the soil
as a wattle made from earth and water
acts as preservation.

Shoulder to wheel, nose to grindstone,
swallows too follow nature's deciduous ways,
build their nests from spit and clay.

Cenote

Doorways to magical worlds, natural as pauses in conversations
stooped or crawled towards or swung down to through mouth and eye.
What can be worse than the lonely fall, a pine tree cone
becoming the grenade of silence?

On root and branch, limb articulates to limb
forming solitary ridges or the antlers of a rutting stag.
A bird's beak is bone yet builds nests in bowl and leaf.

We find green shoots. Postcards through letterboxes
sent back by children flung like seed over whole
Continents. Travelling back on heavy inked wings.
We pitchfork the skies, bring home turf-barks
stacked to make canoes or sturdy ropes,

lobed winged dreaming maps.
Year after year we feel the rush of air, swallows
returning to summer meadows.

Doreen Duffy studied the various forms of creative writing, at Oxford University online, at UCD and at NUI Maynooth. Her publications include The Ireland's Own Anthology, Circle and Square, The Woman's Way, The Irish Times, The Burning Bush 2 and Brilliant Flash Fiction online. She has received many awards including first place in the Jonathan Swift Poetry Competition and most recently she was awarded the Deirdre Purcell Cup at The Edgeworth Literary Festival. Doreen is working towards her first collection of poetry. www.doreenduffy.blogspot.com



Image

Your jacket hung on the back of the chair
 I could feel the roughness in the wool,
 Without looking, I could see
 little squares of dark red in the grey
 I could smell the work off you
 when you moved.
 I traced my fingers along
 thick veins that ran like rivers
 along your forearms
 felt the black roughness
 on your face when I kissed you goodnight
 I ran on small feet
 when the tone of your voice changed
 to outrun the anger that flared up
 searched for somewhere else to be
 I remember your face afterwards
 as you turned away
 more annoyed with yourself
 I remember your gentleness
 the softness in how you held the
 mouse that terrified me
 and how you promised
 to let him go in the park
 I remember your strength
 the day you came to my house
 and told my little girl
 she looked beautiful
 I remember your face
 and the pain you tried to hide
 while you stood the other side
 of the hospital bed and lifted
 my child

Repair Winter Hands

Watch as they turn the hands of the clock
 forward,
 to welcome in the Spring

See their tired paleness, nails split and uneven
 older now than the last time when
 they gently creaked the hands of time
 backwards
 when we entered this bleak Winter
 not knowing what was in store

A few more lines and veins,
 a little more pronounced,
 a little more like my mothers.

That's okay, if my Winter hands can be as
 strong as hers and carry as many burdens
 but still know how to reach out
 and touch and pass the cup of tea
 that warms out the coldness of fear
 and placed upon an arm lend
 the lightest pressure that lets me know
 she's always there

If my hands have learned this skill then I am happy
 Winter or Summer.

Gone Fishing

In the open doorway
I watched my son
working furiously
digging hard with
the blue handled shovel
Sifting carefully through
dark clay underneath

it was colder
giving way easily
through his small hands
His fingertips found worms
long and wriggling
winding around
He fed each one carefully
into the jar
held it up to the sun
warming the glass
stared at them closely
he counted each one
with five hearts
still hungry for air
He waited
until all settled
down good and deep

left a card
on his Grandad's coffin
later that day
it just said,
'Gone Fishing'.

Duck feathers

I ran my fingers over
the blue and white
pattern of life
lifted the lid
wished I could keep
her memory inside,
return it to her
when she needs it most
She picks at the sleeve of my coat
it's almost dry
the heat in her room
it's too much to bear
but I don't want to move
in case she stops
She's running her fingers
over the fabric
in one small spot
I can feel the warmth of her hand
her face working hard
over silent words
until she finds a tiny piece of white
scratching until she releases it
"Now" she whispers
watching while
a small duck feather
floats free from
the lining of my coat

Final Journey

As we leave the side
over bronzed silt and sand,
gentle swishing of oars
the red Indian holds in his firm grip

Water so calm just whispering waves
no talk, an expressionless rest.
Boat rocking gently cradling its load
the Indian's white feather wont slip

the golden light shines that the time is right
this great more than lake surrounded
by lush green leaves that cling to trees
the red Indian rows on and I sense

as we reach the other side together one last time
an overwhelming feeling of peace
we know we'll return one less in this boat
the red Indian and I in silence.



Mary Melvin Geoghegan has four collections of poetry published her last *Say it Like a Paragraph* with Bradshaw Books, Cork (2012). Her work has been widely published including Poetry Ireland Review, The Stinging Fly, The Shop, The Moth, Cyphers, Studies, The Sunday Times, Skylight 47, Crannog, Boyne Berries, The Stony Thursday Book, The Oxfam Calendar amongst others. In 2013 she The Longford Festival Award for Poetry and in 2015 was shortlisted for the Cuirt New Writing Award. She has edited several anthologies of children's poetry and is a member of the Writers in Schools Scheme with Poetry Ireland. Her next collection *When Moon and Mother Collide* will be published with Salmon Poetry in 2017. www.amazon.com



To Cross Floodwater

i.m. John Clarke

A rural community -
 carry a man
 across a flooded causeway
 for his burial -
 the tractors like a funeral cortege.
 He died on Christmas Day.
 And will be laid to rest
 in a grave dug by neighbours
 in the home place.

On a Visit to Cabra Castle

in Kingscourt -
 we push through the front door
 finding a corner
 a respite from January.
 Then the staircase beckons
 to an empty dining room
 tables set, almost, expecting -
 And out on the corridor
 stopped in our curiosity
 mottled behind a huge glass frame
 and Irish tricolour, perhaps a century old.
 Still reeling from the strain
 of those bullet holes.

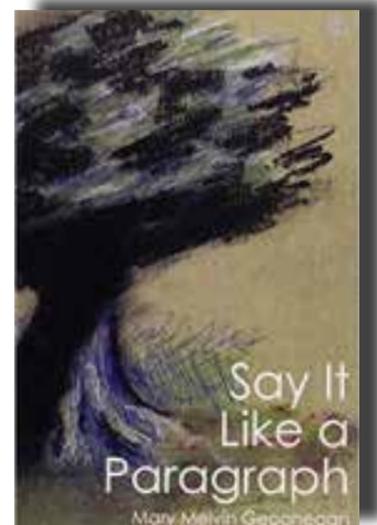
Over

i.m. Tom Gaffney

In Ballaghaderreen Cathedral
 John Carty's clear, high notes
 bind us closer -
 making it easier
 to escort Tom over.

Cordoba Today

dropped through the letterbox.
 In a fridge magnet with stars
 falling from the ceiling of Mezquite Cathedral
 and a greeting -
 that stuck straight to my heart.



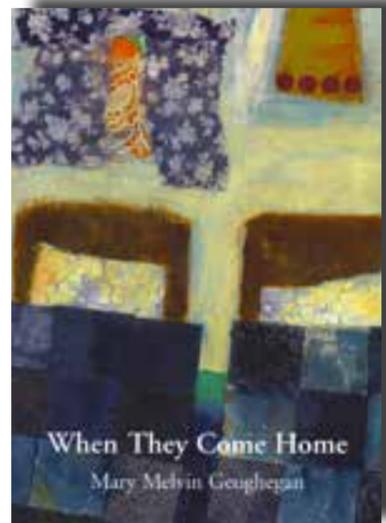
Out of the Ordinary

I heard -
actor Stephen Rea on the radio
tell how his mother was difficult.
She barely spoke to him
and in later years
before he'd visit
would drop in on a neighbour.
Once, she reassured him
promising to pray for both.
As usual his mother never spoke
suddenly, he began to feel a heat
coming through from the wall next door.
Then his mother said out loud
'take a seat son, your hands are cold'.

I read -
about the painter Eugene Delacroix
how, the water drops on the bodies
of the damned souls in The Barque of Dante
are formed in separate touches
of green, yellow and red that blend
not on the canvas
but, in the eye of the viewer.

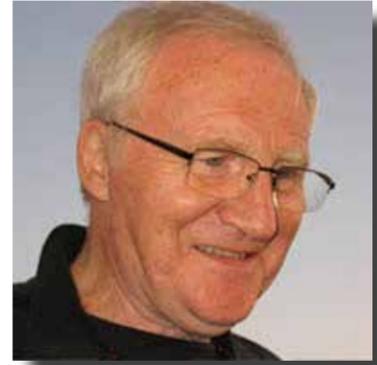
The Pile of Bricks

in Florence slumped against the wall
is the work of artist Anthony Gormley.
And the person I'm passing now
sleeping in the doorway.



© Mary Melvin Geoghegan

A Few Poems for Young People – taken from my latest poetry collection, ECHOLOCATION:
I work a lot with young people on creative writing programmes and drama programmes and am very conscious of the the dramatic technological changes that have been taking place. Sometimes I have to pinch myself to stop 'going on' about the drawbacks and 'damage' being inflicted on these sensitive young minds. Life is what it is, but we are all influenced by our own experiences. As the Irish playwright, Brendan Behan, once, said: 'You can't help but have a favourable attitude to your own point of view.' www.blaupause-books.com



Founding Contributor of Live Encounters. 2010
www.terry-mcdonagh.com

Real Life on Telly

The woods near us
have been shut down
for instant repair:
the trees are too wild,
hedges need trimming,
paths must be levelled
in case people trip,
seats need colouring,
wildlife must be tagged
and signs are to be replaced.

If they'd only leave the woods
as they should be
I wouldn't have to watch
nature programmes on telly.

Zapping in my Head

Zapping has gone to my head.
When I'm not zapping
in front of the telly,
I'm at it in my head.

Every programme
is short-lived.
Every unpleasant thought
is short-lived.

Zap, zap, zap I say
when person Teacher
suggests I read more.

Zap, zap, zap I say,
when Mum, Dad & Co.
suggest I help at home.

I zap girls, monsters I fear
and a bunch of smart-asses
who pinched my halo
on my way home from
being better than everyone else.



www dot

When I look at a web,
I think of busy spiders
weaving in corners.

There are webs
on hedges,
on gates,
on bicycle wheels,
on old wire fences,
even one in my bedroom.

I'm often afraid
to sneeze
in case I upset
my spider at work
or at play.

The spider's web
is a real net.
It catches food.

www dot is virtual,
without head nor tail
and it needs a button-pusher
to make it go.

Writing by Hand

At our new school, we don't have pens,
paper or books – we don't have to think
– a computer chip does it for us.

My dad says he wrote his name in the sand
and when tide erased and rubbished it
he'd write it again between ebb and flow.

Mum wrote her tests by hand.
I could read stars and could spell.
Writing by hand is spiritual, she says.

In social studies class, we tried shaping letters
with some old pens and paper our teacher
had kept locked away in a dusty cabinet, but

we gave up when our hands got weary. We
couldn't make the strange letter shapes – pages
got messy and it was impossible to stay between lines.

The good thing about the computer is that you don't
have to think or spell correctly – it does it for you, but
does it listen to a heart, smell the promises of spring

or the plight of a starling? Dad says his dad and dads
going back for generations had written their names
in the sand – they cherished the moment in the way

a wise person understands

the magic in water
the magic in paper
the magic in life

I can't turn back the tide
but I am learning to write.

Have Computers got Plans?

Have computers got plans
for us – do they gloat when
we upgrade them – are they
surprised – even overjoyed
when we invite them to

organise our day-to-day, or
do they wonder when we proudly state
that one day
a chip will replace thinking

which would give us people
even more time to eat, sit around
and become obese, while
they get on with our robotic lives?

Where there's Muck...

When I was little, maybe two
and barely walking,
I picked up as much muck
as my hands could hold
in handfuls. Some I put
into my mouth; some
I flung as far as it would go
not knowing the value
of mud
of clay
of earth
of soil
of sludge
of muck
not knowing the treasures
hidden in a mucky handful.



© Terry McDonagh

Ian Watson was born in Belfast but has now spent most of his life in Bremen, Northern Germany, where he worked as a senior lecturer in British and Irish Literature and Creative Writing. He has published poems, articles and literary translations widely and also worked for radio and television in Germany. From 1994 to 2012 he edited **newleaf** magazine and ran **newleaf** press. His recent publications include two books of poetry and short prose - *Kurzpassspiel* (German) and *Riverbank City | A Bremen Canvas*, and his collection *Granny's Interpreter* was published in March 2016 by Salmon Poetry in Ireland.

<http://www.irishwriters-online.com/watson-ian/>



Ear Sonnet

Blessèd be the listeners,
 for in their paradise
 they will be granted a choice
 of twenty-six cable radio channels,
 three of which alone will carry
 different shades of silence.
 One will be dedicated exclusively
 to the echoes of cat's feet on snow.
 There will be one for an absence of grunge
 and one for the whispering of Arvo Pärt
 and one with distant whale-speech,
 one with amplified petal-fall
 one with just slowed-down bat-squeak
 and one they can speak back to.

Hit And Run

Post-mortem – half an hour
 before the end of shift; he and
 the casserole would have to wait.

The tears before the blow
 would never show
 on the medical report.

In a recurring loop,
 the driver sees the dance
 unfold in action replay

before her car.

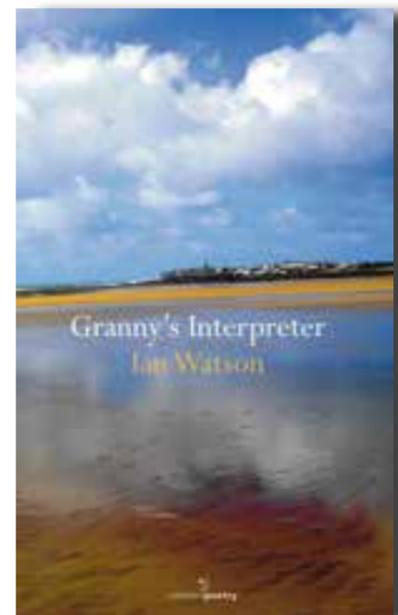
*I didn't have a chance
 to stop; she was pedalling blind,
 wiping her eyes with a hand.*

The collision brought on labour
 and a second lovely son
 to staunch the trauma's flow.

But what brought tears to
 the pregnant pathologist
 measured only half an inch:

the red bruise from an impact
 that told of two lives tangled
 more than any wheel or frame

or handlebar.



The Spaniel's Whistle

She lies like a silk hot-water bottle, then
a twitch of thigh; she is dreaming. The white-eyed
hare careers in zigzag strokes across her sleep.
Her whistle slices through an ancient hunt,
a memory that never makes it to the waking.

The gobbling kettle settles to a grumble,
shifts to a whisper, a whistle, then a click.
Now she is alert to the procedures of tea.
She has stored its constituent parts:
the measured spooning, the pouring-on, the wait,
the colour of the tray. She has no interest
in milk and sugar; she is not interested in tea.

But she will cock her black head at the other tin,
then turn and try hypnosis with a lifted ear
and thought-transfer her pleasure-sketch
to your feeble human screen. And, if you will risk it,
she will outstare you, unblinking, for a biscuit.

Her secret weapon is eye contact. She is a subtle glancer.
She has a digital twenty-four-hour clock
that never goes forward and never goes back.

Out walking, she is a striking prancer;
she carries her tail like a pirate flag.
Her every step is: Take me as I am or leave it.
She turns her face to every human leg,
offers a spaniel smile and tail;
but casts her mild disdain on other dogs.

What does she know? Her paradigms are limited.
She lives in a different box of time:
whole rainbows of emotion will get splashed in minutes -
pain and fear of fireworks, joy, craving and apprehension
all discarded in a flash for a cube of cake.

She smells unease, she picks up caution and
our every worry on her radar, each concern we breathe.
Head a-tilt, ears cocked, and staring like a child at a funeral,
she tries to understand, extending her antennae -
knowing nothing but grasping everything.

And this is what she grasps:

the rustle of squirrels in the beech tree
the scent of cat at a hundred steps
the song of the west wind and the scrape of the cake tin
the cry of the opening can
the flash of the magpie intruder
the safe valley between two humans
the uncertainty of a response
the silence after a phone call
the call of the wild and the whistle of return
the haven of a scented blanket.

Always on guard, she'll be sucked to the window
by the devilish laugh of a crow.

She attends to the whistle, she barks.
She bolts to bolt her food and, fed, she sleeps;
the hunt begins anew.

Retriever

with apologies to Carol Ann Duffy and Kirsten Steppat for different reasons

This is the word Smell. Now imagine
me hearing it spoken clearly from twenty yards.
I follow the echo in my nose.
On the neighbours' windowsill is the word
Temptation, but I do not know any abstract nouns;
so I see the word Pizza.
I taste a corner of the syllable Crust
which breaks off in my soft mouth;
my tail prepares the word Wag.
From inside, someone looks up the word Shout
and because I know no abstract nouns
there is no escape.

Picking Up The Pieces

It was my last memento:
a warm round belly to hold
in the breaks between the
soothing away the stiffness
and comforting the block.
But I never remembered
in sharper focus or truer
colour than between that
slow-motion spiral fall
and the bombsplash on tiles.

Pararhymes

... and love
no longer only
rhymed with dove
and glove and shove
but with believe
and live.

Problem Child

Oh, that Icarus again:
no sooner said than done,
no sooner sun than dead.



Jim Burke lives in Limerick, Ireland. He cofounder with John Liddy of *The Stony Thursday Book*, one of the longest running literary journals in Ireland. 2015 was the 40th anniversary. His poems have appeared in *The Shamrock Haiku Journal*, *The Literary Bohemian*, *The Crannog Poetry Journal*, *The Stony Thursday Book*, *The Revival Poetry Journal*. He is a member of *The Irish Haiku Society* and is on the committee of the *Limerick Writers Centre*.

BILLY COLLINS AT THE POETRY FESTIVAL

greet a line of fans
 who file slowly past
 with a stack of questions.
 He's taking his time,
 courteous, as if he's got
 a constant supply
 hidden somewhere
 beneath his pullover,
 or down inside his pockets.
 He's so relaxed, it's like he's
 seated in a chair in the Oyster Bar
 Restaurant, at Grand Central Station
 observing the afternoon rush-hour
 as he runs a silver spoon
 in a bowl of sea-food chowder.
 So pleasing, when he moves
 his lips and my daughter listens
 to his polite reply for what
 she might do on her maiden trip
 to New York city.

ON – ON – AND OUT OF SIGHT

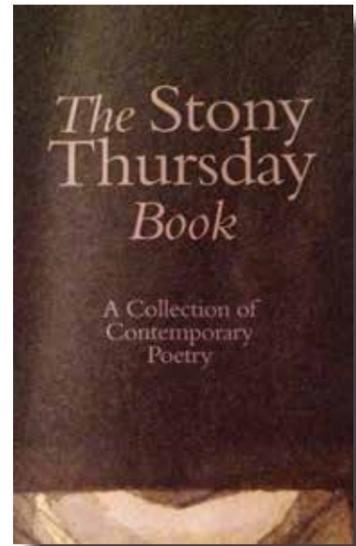
High – summer, the field is cold
 without you. The wildflowers know-
 they spin in the wind like busy-bodies.

A butter-cup yearns to prop itself up
 as if you are coming. The meadow-sweet
 remembers your nose touching it.

The honeysuckle rich in nectar
 searches for a bee, and I
 try to find you again,

to be filled with such delight that
 I might suddenly break out singing,
 my voice rising, my heart drunk.

Everyone has been here
 where the moments travel
 into vacancy.



TEXT

im not been smart sayn dis so plz dnt
 pick me up da wrong way i didn't have
 dat attitude becoz i loked at tings
 diff taught i wntd dis dat n da od
 -ra but i dnt taught i needed dis dat
 and da odra bt i dnt i no now
 i hope i do who and wat i need n
 my life never a mistake jacob al-
 ways a lesson but im telln u in
 case something happens im very sick at
 the mo id to light the fire enal some
 -thing n my body aint pumpn ryt ya-
 no wen u just no but yea i think nev
 -er a mistake always a lesson its
 life i cant sweep things under da carpet
 but grow da fuk up and get on wid it

HAIKU

*

kingfisher
 gathering the mid-day sun
 on its wet feathers

AUNTIE MARY AGAIN

My eighty-six year old aunt married her
 eighty four-year old fiancé, Martin.
 Do you want my opinion? It won't last!

Noel King was born and lives in Tralee, Co Kerry. In this his 50th year, he has reached his 1000th publication of a poem, haiku or short story in magazines and journals in thirty-eight countries. His poetry collections are published by Salmon: *Prophesying the Past*, (2010), *The Stern Wave* (2013) and *Sons* (2015). He has edited more than fifty books of work by others and was poetry editor of *Revival Literary Journal* (Limerick Writers' Centre) in 2012/13. A short story collection, *The Key Signature & Other Stories* will be published in 2017.



Joining the Herd

We washed our wellingtons under an outside tap,
turning our feet to the left, to the right,
watching the flow take away the dung,
careful not to let the water wash in and wet our socks.

I only watched you once and I knew what to do.

Earlier, we brought the cows in for milking,
tied their bucking hind legs together
and placing the bucket between our knees, milked,
(you let me, the child, milk the more placid of the herd).

I only watched you once and I knew what to do.

Peeping through the crack
in the partition wall I saw for the first time
the weight of a man on top of a milk maid.

I only watched you once and I knew what to do.

When your wife, my aunt, didn't have your dinner
ready after coming home from a Munster Football Final
you punched her ribs, smacked her across the head.

I only watched you once and I knew what to do.

My Árd na Sidhe Home

Take me to my childhood of Árd na Sidhe,
the Caragh Lake haven of serenity.

Take me to the ring of the fort,
to play again but never get too near, for fear.

Take me to my room, the four-poster bed
from where each new morning will excite my blood.

Sated with my breakfast, I will stroll through cobweb-bejewelled
fern, wildflower and fauna, sit in a boat and paddle,

finding rhyme and rhythm to incite a rainbow.
Ashore again, I will dip my toes in the water's renewal.

Let me lie on the grass, have a doze-over
to a serenade of Nature's chorus

and until the sun fades on the duck-egg blue colours that oversee
this peacefulness, I will let my eyes laze on Heaven's bonus.

In reverie by the lake, nothing will disturb my nocturne.
Take me there and never let me get away,
Árd na Sidhe, my haven, my home from home.

Polly the Poet

On the sister blog, she tells us
that as she wrote the sets of sequences
of poems that the blog kept her going
till she reached the end;
tells us we can buy the book direct
from her, she'll post it postage free
to anywhere we are;

says she is working on another one now,
is trying to figure how to get it
on Amazon, blogging on
about her flatmate leaving,
that she needs to make money (from the poetry)
to pay the rent, hopes she won't
need a new roommate who would only cramp her style.

After the Car Crash

We print two Mortuary cards
for a single envelope
that we post all over the country
and the world;

the husband smiling
as the Captain gave him
another useless piece of crystal
for winning the golf,

the wife smiling
as she took top prize
for flowers at a fete.

Many pictures could have been used
from their forty-nine years married
but these, the separate pics, were
what our family decided together
worked best to encapsulate them.

Ingrid Storholmen was born in Verdal, Norway, on 22 May 1976. She studied literature at the University of Bergen, and spent one year at a creative writing school. She was the literature editor of *Morgenbladet*, a culture newspaper in Norway. For five years, she was the writer-in-residence at 'Adrianstua', a writer's house in Trondheim. She started the Trondheim International Literature Festival during her stay there, and also founded the literary magazine *LUJ* with two colleagues. She has published six books: 2014 *Here Lies Tirpitz*, 2012 *The Mother who Forgot it was Night Time*, 2011 *The Price of Love*, 2009 *Chernobyl Stories*, 2005 *Shameful Discourse. Graceland*, 2001 *The Poacher's Law*.

www.aschehougagency.no/Authors/Aschehoug/Aschehoug-Fiction/Storholmen-Ingrid



In Praise of Love, 2011

English translation by Marietta Taralrud Maddrell

A long time ago and quite soon could, can this happen:
To be reached by love

Can you fold
me out
in
yes like flower
like summer

The flowers are so different
You call me stories
there are great possibilities, I tell you

For all words are like you:
quivering
In our bodies truth

You stir in me
We shift the ground
the lair we lie in

When we cannot know whose stomach is rumbling
it is closeness

I hold the face against my eye
with warm fingers
where is the simple hand
The lonely hand
The nerves in the hand are full-grown
My hand hurts, only you can heal it

When you are in your hand
The darkness of the palm
My hand is tired today
between the eye your arm

hands gather water-drops
like gifts
the hands hold my name
the newborn name

The hands inside me, fingers fill me out

Holding hands
it is steep and wet
and we hold hands
with gloves and without

until the hands throw the gloves
skin
of lips thoughts touched

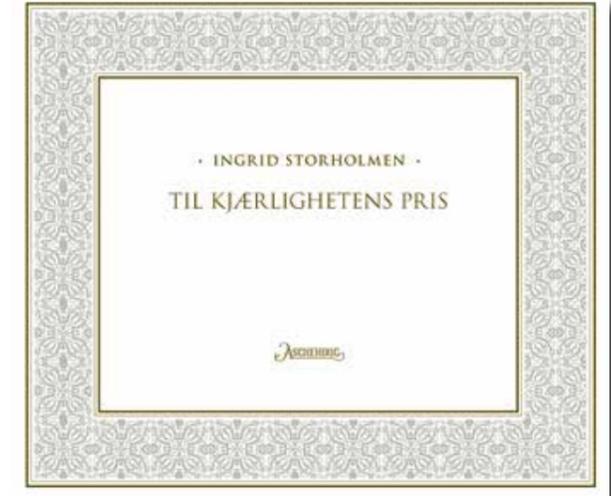
I take you let you

be ablaze Fire
we might have said
but we grew utterly still
how still we become
when we talk, love
one heart in two

The rhythm of the morning heart
against a hand
you didn't wake from this put me down there
so I can imagine the city alone

We delay the time
I wait by your side in the water
what is left of the night then
I should have left it a long time ago

www.aschehoug.no/Forfattere/Vaare-forfattere/Ingrid_Storholmen



until love
is able to touch
us
who cannot be touched

Something lets you know
Something which won't let go
You are not magic to me
We are everyday and don't like it
Friday, and it rains
It rains all day
An orange rain

I want to walk alone
It is spring, and it rains

I flee. Have already fled
You don't touch me, at least don't kiss me, I collapse
There is a bullet in the pistol, the roulette always wins
I collapse
from relief

All ages live in your face
the boy, the infant, the old, the strong, young
I watch you bend forwards
But you don't kiss me
1 out of 6 times you kiss me
Will you happen to kiss me now

I wait here
until you don't see me any longer
cut you up in such tiny pieces
that you exist everywhere
I can lose you like that
can I lose you

You exist side by side
and you

Suspend the letters one by one
until the word is left emptied
Jerk the knife out of the sentence

A name only the wind can pronounce
you suffered me
I didn't lose my whole appetite
life-preventative I remember what is good
nothing to see, snow
and put in lights against the luminous

Already existing a basketful of sorrow
One may crave more, shall crave more!
I like the scar, not the wound
What does the next world look like?
Can it be so kind and start soon?

Carry the bed into the day, I shall feel more air
a letter hidden in a stone crack
the fingers that kissed the letter

be sleep, rest water life

where the skin lies back to back and light that demands crops
the name gets stuck in the end
tight, manifest
shall the name be the name of what happened
dreamt skin, hand, hold it a little longer, then go

the name after the name

to the price of love

Elizabeth is a freelance writer, poet and artist specialising in human rights advocacy, with a particular interest in the rights of women and children who has worked for many international organisations including Amnesty International and UNICEF, and has worked in a number of countries, where she has spoken with the victims of human trafficking. The subjects Elizabeth has worked and written on include inter-country adoption; legal reform; maternal and infant health; the sexualisation of children; and war propaganda. www.libertyandhumanity.com



Instead being human is you

After seven weeks, you announced your presence through headaches and nausea
But I didn't hear you
A double blue line told me what you couldn't
"I'm here, I'm on my way!"

The sickness continued until week thirteen
I felt so ill, I could not connect to you
I feared a miscarriage
So left you as an unacknowledged whisper

Slowly, I embraced your coming
As I walked the dogs for miles, did yoga to keep us fit
Browsed second hand shops for pristine newborn clothes
My thoughts were always with you

Yet you remained abstract
Like pastel smudges on smooth white paper
I squinted, but could not make out your form
I knew I must love you, but could not feel or touch it

I feared I'd be a bad mother
That the world was too dreadful a place for you
I sat alone at Lyttelton farmers' market, full of worry
A busker finished her coffee, picked up her guitar

It was then I heard you speak to me
Telling me it would be OK
"I hope you don't mind that I put down in words
"How wonderful life is while you're in the world"

Forty one weeks
Doctors feared you were distressed
Gave me drugs to kick-start my idling body
Charging me with an intense and fiery agony

I refused an epidural
My gift to you
So you could enter this world in nature's embrace
My whole world changed that moment

12.49am, 24 November 2007
You expelled yourself from my body
I laughed and laughed
Contorted in pain just moments before, I was free

I saw you wriggle, writhe and cry, your eyes bright
They laid your perfect little body on my breast
Porcelain pink and slippery, painted in the colours of birth
A mass of brown hair on your damp little head

In that moment of our meeting, I felt the release of you
The release of everything that had gone before
I was changed forever
Into something better

I shall never again see being human
As merely a pitiful lurch from one struggle to the next
As a hopeless, hapless fight
Against the tragedies our species plays out

continued...



Instead being human is being you Poppy
The most perfect little creature
Determination, peace and fire
Etched into your freshly carved face

In the days that follow I stare at you for hours
I watch your sleeping form
Your small round belly rising
Falling with each hushed breath

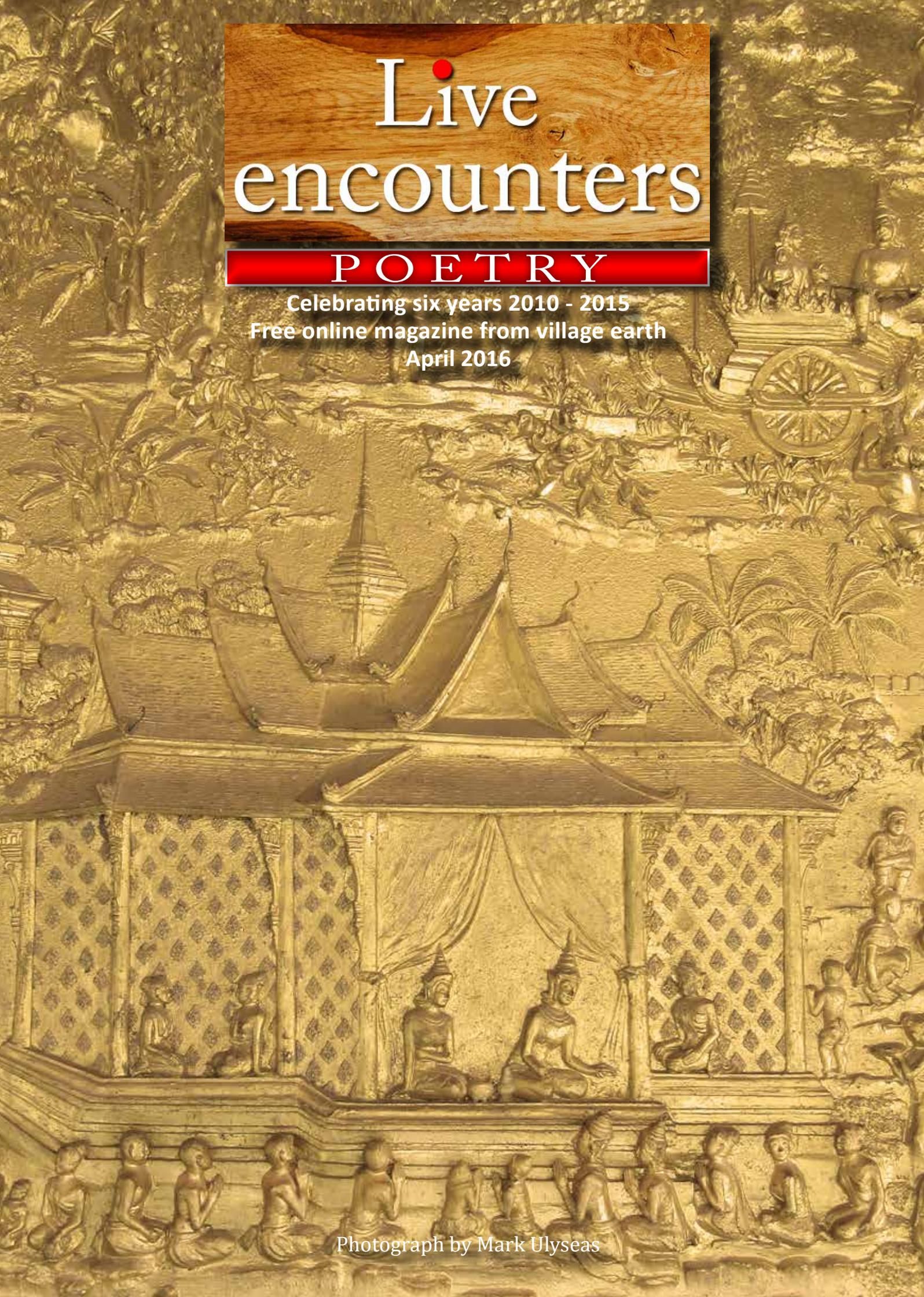
I watch for every grimace, every twitch
For every whimper, stretch and yawn
Your fingers, arms and legs furling and unfurling
In tranquil yogic stretches

Each day I watch you grow
The most trivial changes rise like monoliths
Your thighs grow chubby from my milk, your grip becomes tighter
Your smile moves from a reflex into something I imagine is more purposeful

Now, you are just two weeks old
Your hunched little body rests under my chin
You look like an acorn
All round and neat and full of new life

The rhythms we share
Of feeding and sleeping
Our tears when we don't get it right
Have become my new tiny everything

I am so full of love and awe for you
My life has shrunk
To just our two heartbeats
Yet my heart could house the world.



Live encounters

POETRY

Celebrating six years 2010 - 2015
Free online magazine from village earth
April 2016

Photograph by Mark Ulyseas