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Live encounters

YOUNG POETS & WRITERS

FREE ONLINE MAGAZINE FROM VILLAGE EARTH
AUGUST 2019

MARY MELVIN GEOGHEGAN
And That's The Thing

COVER ARTWORK BY IRISH ARTIST EMMA BARONE

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Om Shanti Shanti Shanti Om

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Reflection in a pond.

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Mary Melvin Geoghegan has five collections of poetry published. Her most recent *When Moon and Mother Collide* (2018) Salmon Poetry. Her work has been published widely including *Poetry Ireland Review*, *Hodges Figgis 250th Anthology*, *Poem on the DART 2018*, *The Sunday Times*, *Crannog*, *Skylight 47*, *THE SHOp*, *Cyphers*, *The Moth*, *The Stinging Fly*, *The Stony Thursday Book* amongst others. In 2013 she won the Longford Festival Award, and shortlisted in 2015 for the Cuirt New Writing Award, in 2017 for the Fish Poetry Award, the Rush Poetry Award and the Padraic Colum Gathering 2018 Poetry Competition. She's a member of the Writers' in Schools Scheme with Poetry Ireland and has edited several anthologies of children's poetry including the *Eurochild* anthology of children's poetry and artwork. Her forthcoming collection *There Are Only a Few Things* will be published by Salmon Poetry in 2022.



MARY MELVIN GEOGHEGAN

And That's The Thing

I'm so pleased for the opportunity given to me by Mark Ulyseas to acknowledge how much I owe all the children and teachers I've worked with over the years. And especially to see published poems in this edition from where I live in County Longford - The Hidden Heartlands!

When I first started out it was just an idea scribbled down somewhere that perhaps I could inspire young minds and hearts in the way others had me when I first began writing poetry. And that's the thing – I've learnt though it may come through us there's always a catalyst: in an image, word, look, impression, thought, feeling, idea etc. that takes root and longs to find expression. Children just newly arrived are wide open and to be close to that space is a privilege. They have equally helped me to remain loyal to the potential and life giving presence that is constantly within and without waiting to be shaped.

'Free The Butterfly' began as a flyer – Children's Poetry Workshops helping release the muse so young poets could flourish. I had loads printed up with the image of a butterfly on a buttercup. That flyer became my calling card, and would be picked up bringing me into contact with the future, like the retired Principal of Stonepark N.S. Eamonn Brennan, who was so devoted to poetry himself that he initiated a collection, *A Hand in the Future*, including a poem by every child in the school. That work was supported by Poetry Ireland's Education Officer Jane O'Hanlon who launched the collection.

Later I met Maura Bradshaw from Bradshaw Books in Cork who invited me to be involved with *Eurochild* the anthology of Children's Art and Poetry across the European Union. Being part of that team opened opportunities - visiting all the national schools in the surrounding counties especially in Co. Roscommon – where my parents were born. It was so special to visit the school in Lisacul in North Roscommon where they both went to school.

But, I have to say this journey really began with my friend, again a retired principal, Carmel Fallon who kindly invited me to Lanesboro to conduct a poetry workshop for students. And how that first leap of faith on her part would bring me into contact with enthusiastic teachers and talented children everywhere.

I'd like to remember my own father and sons, who always understood and supported the muse in me.

© Mary Melvin Geoghegan

Mary Melvin Geoghegan

'In the Old Strong Magic' won 1st prize in a local competition.
Giles Mc Cormack, Age 11, St. John's N.S., Edgeworthstown.



IN THE OLD STRONG MAGIC

In the old strong magic
Spring returns as promised
And the earth is relieved
When the buds start to open
And the flowers start to bloom
The sun splits the stones with heat
As Maria plants a bed of daffodils
She wanders down a lane
With a river flowing by her side

Photograph Pixabay.com

Oriel Waters is 13 years old. She attends Wilson's Hospital School.



WAR

Fighting, pain, death
the brutalities of war
fear of the unknown.

Loss of love,
betrayed by friends
who fought
on the other side.

Reminders of home
family full of fear...
of the unknown.

Sadness and anger,
frustration and aggravation,
the anticipation
at home.

Loyalty and respect,
bonding of friendships,
fear of the unknown.

Photograph Pixabay.com

Abbie Mc Nally, age 9, Stonepark N.S., Co. Longford.



INSIDE OUR NEW CLASSROOM

Inside our new classroom
The sky comes to help
It brightens up the classroom
It brings happiness in summer
And disguises the winter.

Photograph Pixabay.com

Gemma Mc Hugh, age 9, Stonepark N.S., Co. Longford.

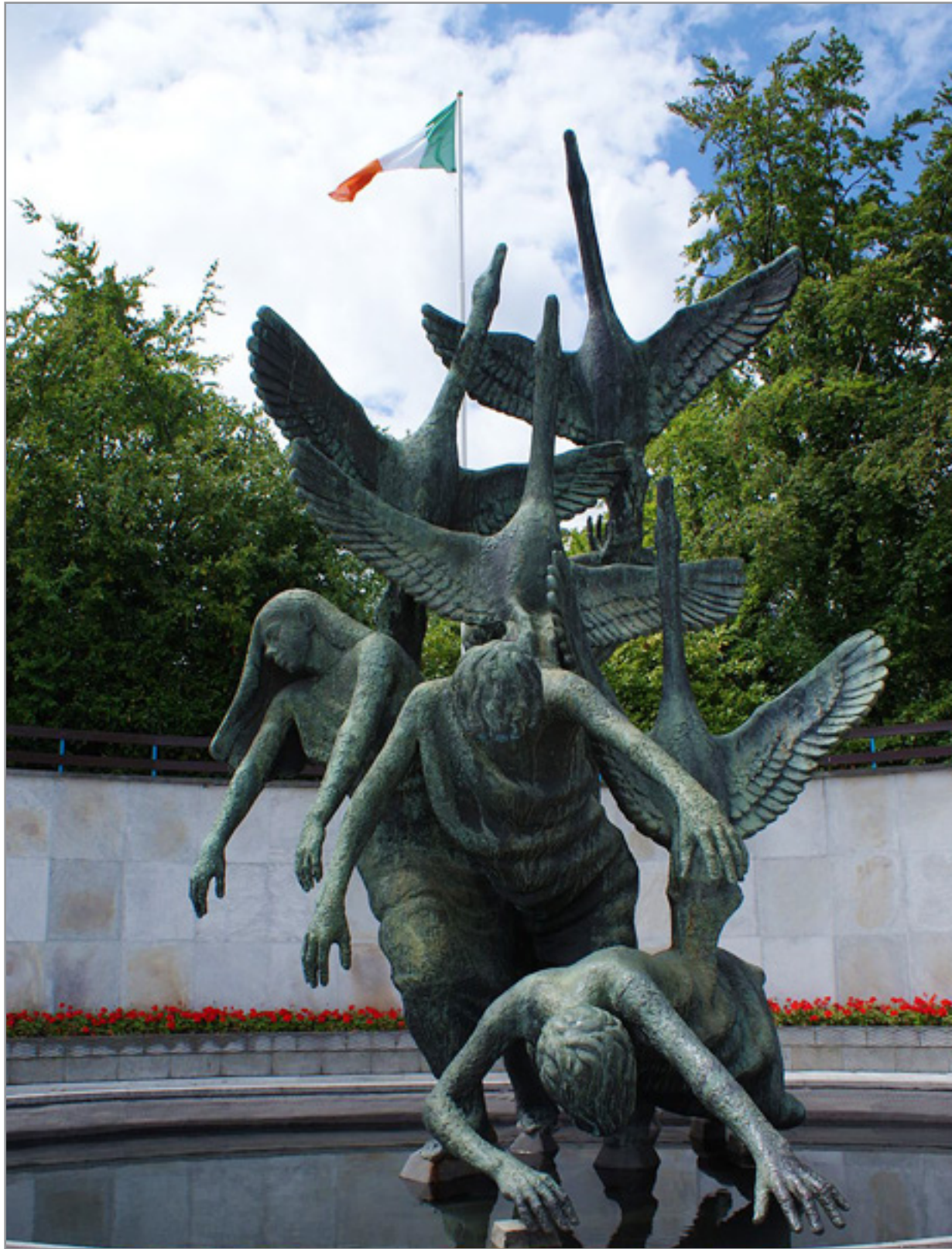


THE WORDS FOUND THE SCHOOL

The words found the school
And stood up so straight
Like our teacher
When her hands bless the air
Like the new trees in the new school
I will never forget the old school
And the small little prefabs
Now I'm in the new school
It's all quite amazing
But I will never forget
The old school.

Photograph Pixabay.com

Jake Paul Taylor, age 9, Stonepark N.S., Co. Longford.



AT THE GARDEN OF REMEMBRANCE

The Queen lays a wreath.
The wreath is saying
the time has passed
the time is now.
When Ireland and England
forgive each other
for all the people killed.
With the wreath of peace
it's all history.
All we can do now
is make a better relationship
between Ireland and England.
For the first time on Irish soil
in one brilliant day
for Ireland!

Photograph: Sculpture of the Children of Lir, designed by Oisín Kelly and situated in the Garden of Remembrance (Dublin). [LINK](#)

James Murphy, age 9, Stonepark N.S., Co. Longford.



IN TRINITY COLLEGE

The Book of Kells opens
As the Queen looks down.
The snake yawns, the bird sings
A dragon circles her fingers in rings
And pictures in the book amaze.
You can see her smiling through the haze.
Puddles ripple before your eyes
Tadpoles and fireflies.

https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Trinity_College_Dublin#/media/File:ImeldaCasey_TrinityatNight.jpg

Jamie Locke, age 9, Stonepark N.S., Co. Longford.



AS THE QUEEN SAYS A PRAYER

The Queen bows her head
And listens to our hearts
And can hear them skip
when she wishes Ireland luck in the future
while the past is left behind.

https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/State_visit_of_Elizabeth_II_to_the_Republic_of_Ireland#/media/File:Garda_Special_Branch_Bodyguard.jpg

Lauren Kenny, age 9, Stonepark N.S., Co. Longford.



SAFELY INTO THE UNKNOWN

The hot air balloon
Awaits up in the sky
For all of the children
When they get to the very top
In the distance
They see the school roof
In the sky so very high
The little birds chirp and sing
And when they land
They see the beautiful
Stonepark school
On the ground.

Photograph Pixabay.com

Mia Dowd, age 9, Stonepark N.S., Co. Longford.

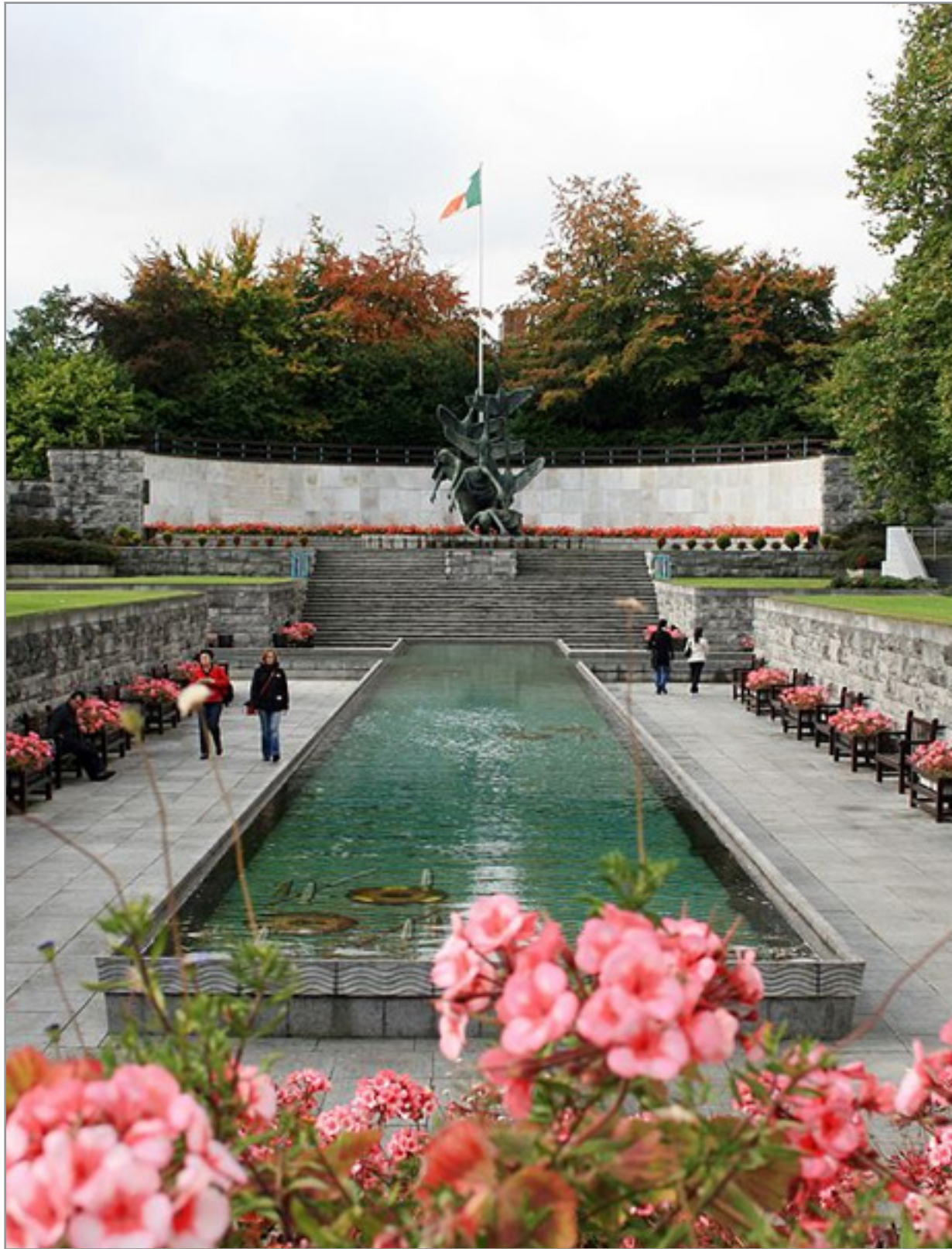


WHEN YOU TEACH ME

When you teach me
Your hands bless the air
And I become smarter.
You teach be to be kind
You teach me how to do maths
You are funny
And dramatic
And you give me big moments.

Photograph Pixabay.com

Tom Flanagan, age 9, Stonepark N.S., Co. Longford.



IN THE GARDEN OF REMEMBRANCE

In the garden of remembrance
the Queen bows her head
and we listen to the silence.
The wind is blowing, blowing hard.
Birds are singing, singing loudly.
Whispers are whispering softly the names
of the remembered
as the Queen walks away.

[https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Garden_of_Remembrance_\(Dublin\)#/media/File:2009-09-27_Dublin_Garden_of_Remembrance_054.JPG](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Garden_of_Remembrance_(Dublin)#/media/File:2009-09-27_Dublin_Garden_of_Remembrance_054.JPG)

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