

NEW BEGINNINGS

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WHEN THE MORNING COMES:

POETRY FOR A NEW DAY



RENARD PRESS

RENARD PRESS LTD

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United Kingdom
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www.renardpress.com

New Beginnings first published by Renard Press Ltd in 2021

Poems and biographies © the poets and judges, 2021
All other text © Renard Press, 2021

Cover design by Will Dady

Printed in the United Kingdom by Severn



Paperback ISBN: 978-1-913724-45-0

eBook ISBN: 978-1-913724-62-7

9 8 7 6 5 4 3 2 1

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ABOUT NEW BEGINNINGS

In February 2021 Renard put out a call for submissions for the New Beginnings poetry project, a competition open to all those who ‘felt their voice was silenced in 2020’, no matter where they were in the world, or what age. The book you’re holding is the result, containing all of the poems on the shortlist, and is a celebration of the end of many of the toxic aspects of 2020 and the Covid pandemic we all lived through, and offers a glimmer of hope for the future and a manifesto for change.

As with any project, there were several vital people working away behind the scenes. The judges – Miriam Halahmy, Denise Rawls, Hannah Fields and Tom Denbigh – had the unenviable task of whittling down a vast pile of submissions to the shortlist you see here today, and it is testament to their skill and patience that the list is so varied and rich in talent.

The project was supported by a crowdfunding campaign, the kind contributions to which paid for the prizes and rewards – thanks in abundance go to all those who supported the project, and their names can be found on p 122.

Thanks must also go to Ruth Irwin, Matt Dady-Leonard and Finn Dady for their suggestions and input, without which this project might never have come to fruition.

THE PUBLISHER

ABOUT THE JUDGES

MIRIAM HALAHMY

Miriam was a teacher for 25 years, and, having worked with refugees and asylum seekers in schools, her writing engages with historical and contemporary issues that affect children across time – most notably the plight of refugees. Her young-adult novel, *Hidden*, was a *Sunday Times* Children's Book of the Week, was nominated for the Carnegie Medal and has been adapted for the stage. *Saving Hanno*, her latest book, is about a boy who comes to the UK on the Kindertransport, and reflects on the grief and loss experienced by refugee children.

DENISE RAWLS

Denise is a writer, based in east London. She is an alumni of Spread the Word's Development Programme; the first chapters of her novel in progress achieved 'highly commended' in the Writers & Artists Working-Class Writers' Prize; and she is contributing to *Common Gossip*, a working-class anthology. Outside of writing, she has been vocal about the lack of career progression across the civil service for black and brown women on BBC's *Women's Hour* and Sky News. As well as writing her novel, *Marisol's Baby*, Denise works for the National Theatre, where she leads the organisation's communications team.

HANNAH FIELDS

Hannah is a writer, editor and publisher from Texas. She founded the independent publishing company, Folkways Press, in 2020, and launched the company with an anthology, *We Are Not Shadows*, as its inaugural publication. The anthology selected writing from women of all ages and backgrounds and covers a wide range of topics – including issues of race, gender, sexuality, trauma, adversity, disability, and more. She has worked on various publications, from children's books to award-winning magazines, along with various publishers in the US and UK.

TOM DENBIGH

Tom lives in Bristol with an obscene number of books. He is the first Bristol Pride Poet Laureate and a BBC 1Extra Emerging Artist Talent Search winner. He has performed at the Royal Albert Hall and festivals around the UK, and has brought poetry to Brighton and London Pride. He is a producer at Milk Poetry and has facilitated writing workshops for groups of students from the UK and abroad. He is particularly proud of his work with queer young people. His debut collection *...and then she ate him* is out now with Burning Eye Books.

NEW BEGINNINGS

WINNER

UNIVERSITY WILL BE ONLINE TODAY

Martha Grogan

RUNNER-UP

TODAY WE ARE ALLOWED TO HUG AGAIN

Rosie Gliddon

SPECIAL MENTIONS FROM THE JUDGES

MIRIAM HALAHMY

SICK RAPUNZEL

Charlotte Murray

DENISE RAWLS

GOD ONLY KNOWS THE BLEND

Ellie Herda-Grimwood

HANNAH FIELDS

THE RACE

Oyinmiebi Youdeowei

TOM DENBIGH

FOUR WEEKS

Allie Bullivant

UNIVERSITY WILL BE
ONLINE TODAY

Martha Grogan

I write essays on queer literature
As you stream games from last year.
You decode a cipher a page and let
Me watch as I knit over the Internet.

University will be online this week.

You leave tupperware meals on my doormat,
Bao buns, katsu curry and pulled pork with all the fat.
I eat them in bed, tucking pillows around me,
And imagine they're your arms in a brushed cotton sea.

University will be online this month.

My mum wants to know your address for a task,
To post you a new-sewn mask
With three layers and fabric adorned with chickens,
And a nose clip to stop the fog on your glasses' lens.

University will be online this term.

NEW BEGINNINGS

Park-crossed lovers, standing in the rain,
The gardens are empty between the river and cobbled lane.
We bring our own coffee in flasks.
We hide under umbrellas, and smile six feet apart.

University will be online this year.

The closest I have come to being kissed
Was when my lateral flow test missed
My throat landed on my tongue.
The nurses' praises were coughed, not sung.

University will be online.

TODAY WE ARE ALLOWED
TO HUG AGAIN

Rosie Gliddon

Today we are allowed to hug again,
And yet you are no longer here to hold.
I see people, warm in their embrace
Whilst I stand alone and cold.

After two cancelled weddings in 2020,
It was hard to be positive, any more.
Next year will be a better year, they said,
Your luck will change for sure.

The first one was an easy decision,
Cancelled months in advance.
When we rebooked it for later in the year
I felt we really had a chance.

Alas, lockdown closed our doors again.
Plant the flowers back in the dirt,
Hang the dress back in the cupboard,
Try to best hide the hurt.

It will happen some day! Just be patient,
Came the usual consolation prize.
I'd smile and nod, knowing then it would.
Now, holding back tears in my eyes

It's easier to pretend it's still 2020,
The year we were so desperate to end.
You were still here, we were so happy
And now I've lost my best friend.

It was quick and painless, I'm told.
Barely forty days into this great new year.
You couldn't hear me say goodbye
As I watched you disappear.

I held your hand as tight as I could,
Wishing for this not to be true.
Insides shattered, razor-sharp pain.
How can I live without you?

So, as restrictions are eased,
My sky is for ever grey.
No one dares ask the question,
When is the big day?

270,000,000

Melissa Sia

What if my roots are in China?
Heartbeat red,
complexion fast,
skin scaled,
a celebration of peace,
the masculine and the feminine.

To survive at all costs,
to survive even though it hurts,
to survive
after
the ringing.

I am compact,
heartbeat read,
read me – not dead.

A wishing well,
copper coins,
I was stretched
across green expanses.
Large space;
silent escape.

When I was five,
my mother told me that people
die
because they are too perfect
for a world so sour.
But does that mean everyone
living
is flawed?
Mouths stitched shut.
Eyes wide open.
 Tethered,
 tethered,
 tethered.

In a parallel universe
it was a full moon.

In a parallel universe
I slept till noon.

When I was eleven,
my father told me to hit
back
if I am hurt.

But what if it hurt
too much
for my mind to process?

What if the pain isn't physical?

270,000,000

In a parallel universe
I am Gingko biloba,
with my antique brass arms
jutting out
with fine veins.

I chose my first kiss
with you
to be cotton
on cotton
on cotton.

You are a field of trees,
and I am anchored
(a root).

ABOUT THE POETS

SORA LI ANDERS

p. 51

Sora Li Anders was born and raised in Guam, a US territory in the Pacific Ocean. Since writing her first couplet declaring an undying love for pizza at age five, she has been a prolific author of varyingly disturbing prose. The recent and unexpected discovery of the notes app on her phone has further facilitated her creative ventures. She is currently a high school student residing in California.

LUCY BECKLEY

p. 23

Lucy Beckley is a writer, wanderer and wonderer. She can often be found trailing after her children on the beach, taking a moment to catch her breath, soak up the sunshine and find the beauty and joy in the unseen and seemingly ordinary. She's worked in a range of roles in Marketing and Communications in the UK, Germany and Portugal and has a Master's in European Cultures. She also worked for a couple of years as a flower grower and florist in Cornwall. Her writing and poetry has appeared in a range of independent magazines and books. She is currently working on a novel and her first collection of poetry.

HEINRICH BEINDORF

p. 19

Born and raised in a German coal-mining town, Heinrich studied modern languages and literature in Munich, Toronto and the USSR. After some *sturm and drang* years involving faraway continents, old vans and stark creative penury, he settled in Cologne, where he has been living and working as an author,

translator and court interpreter since 1985. His poems, short stories and crime fiction have appeared in newspapers, poetry mags and anthologies, as well as on radio and the web. Seeing language reduced to verbiage for the purposes of dystopian political, economic and technological gospels makes his veteran wordmonger's heart ache.

MARTIN BENNETT

p. 47

Martin Bennett lives in Rome where he teaches and contributes occasional articles to *Wanted in Rome*. He was the 2015 winner of the John Dryden Translation prize.

NISHA BHAKOO

p. 97

Nisha Bhakoo has three poetry collections published: *You Found a Beating Heart* (The Onslaught Press, 2016), *Black & White Dream* (Broken Sleep Books, 2018) and *Spectral Forest* (The Onslaught Press, 2020). She edited *Contemporary Gothic Verse* for The Emma Press in 2019.

DAVID BOTTOMLEY

p. 40

David Bottomley is a poet, playwright and librettist originally from Whitby. He was shortlisted for the Nick Darke Award for his play, *Waterton's Wild Menagerie*. He performed in his one-man show, *Message in a Bottle*, at the Edinburgh Fringe Festival. His play, *The Peacock and the Nightingale* was produced at the San Diego International Fringe Festival, and *Britain for Breakfast* was a finalist at the Enter Stage Write Awards at Birmingham Hippodrome in 2020. He was recently awarded second prize in the E.H.P. Barnard Poetry Prize 2021. During lockdown he collaborated with fifty creatives to interpret fifty poems on film for his *Poetry Film Festival*.

ALLIE BULLIVANT

p. 31

Allie Bullivant is a writer whose work could be (but so far hasn't been) described as the ginger lovechild of Mary Oliver and the Coen Brothers. Her writing has been featured in *The Critic*, *The Cardiff Review*, *Dappled Things* and *Oxford Culture Review*. She is a Long Island native but currently resides in Virginia with her husband and daughter.

PRIYANKA KELLY BURNS

p. 81

Priyanka Kelly Burns is a storyteller at heart. Kelly (as she is affectionately known), is in Law School in the South West of England, where she currently resides. She is proudly South African: born in Durban, KwaZulu-Natal and raised in Cape Town. Kelly is a writer of poetry, short stories and fiction. This is her first published piece of writing but certainly won't be the last. Kelly is a comedian (according to her mom), an Aquarius (according to her birth certificate) and an adrenaline junkie to the nth degree. Her passions include, but are not limited to: meditation; swimming (in the sea or with sharks, or both); kick-boxing; reading; debating; gaming; volunteering; and, of course, writing.

LAURA CHOUETTE

p. 13

Laura Chouette published her first poetry collection *When Dusk Falls* in 2020. She was born in Austria and discovered her passion for writing in early childhood years. Later, she found her love for the English language after seeing Oscar Wilde's play *The Canterville Ghost* at the age of twelve. In 2018, she completed her First Certificate in English (Cambridge English) and later attended classes in English Literature at the Paris-Lodron-Universität in Salzburg to improve her language

skills and writing style. She is currently studying law and economy while working in her free time on a new poetry collection.

ROSE COOK

p. 67

Rose Cook is a poet based in the South West. She co-founded the popular Devon poetry and performance forum One Night Stanza, as well as a poetry performance group Dangerous Cardigans. She has worked as an Apples and Snakes poet for over a decade, performing in many venues. Her poetry has been published in six collections; her latest book is called *Shedding Feathers* (published by Hen Run, Grey Hen Press).

ANNA DALLAIRE

p. 75

Anna Dallaire was born in Montreal, Canada, and moved to the UK in 2007. She loves reading and the power of words. She is now a student at Plymouth University in her final year of a Bachelor degree in Illustration. She hopes to continue illustrating her own poetry after she graduates.

ELLA DANE-LIEBESNY

p. 93

Ella Dane-Liebesny is a student from London. She is currently finishing her Bachelor degree in Sociology and Social Anthropology at the University of Cambridge, where she is President of Girton Poetry Group. She's been writing poetry for most of her life, and hopes to have a book of it one day. When not writing poetry, she can be found at Girton FemSoc, baking for her flatmates, or studying one of the many languages she hopes to learn.

IEVA DAPKEVICIUS

p. 49

Ieva Dapkevicius is a poet and biochemist from the Azores, Portugal, born into a Lithuanian-Portuguese family in 1998.

Her first book was published at the age of nine (*The Golden Horse*, a children's fairy tale), and she has never stopped writing since, in parallel with her scientific pursuits. She has retained her fascination with fantasy and the natural world, two anchors in her creative work, as she navigates homesickness, loneliness and the anxieties inherent to one's early years. She is the founder of the Orangery Literary Society, a small but vibrant online community for up-and-coming poets and writers worldwide.

CATHERINE EDMUNDS

p. 17

Catherine Edmunds is a writer, portrait artist and professional violinist. Her published works include two poetry collections, five novels and a Holocaust memoir, as well as numerous short stories and poems in journals including *Aesthetica*, *Crannóg* and *Ambit*. She has been nominated three times for a Pushcart Prize, shortlisted in the Bridport Prize four times, and was the 2020 winner of the Robert Graves Poetry Prize. Catherine is married and lives in historic Bishop Auckland, in the foothills of the Pennines in the North of England.

MOLLY J. EVANS

p. 89

Molly J. Evans is an 18-year-old poet from South Wales. She is soon to be a student of English Language and Literature at Balliol College, Oxford. She is a keen photographer, writer and musician, and is working towards a career in novel-writing, politics or journalism.

VOIRREY FARAGHER

p. 85

Voirrey is an active feminist, socialist and Quaker. She lives in Cornwall with her husband, close to their three sons,

who live in Cornwall and Devon. It is wild, there, in so many ways – close to the sea, the valleys and the moorland. Voirrey was unemployed in her younger years, and later worked with people whose mental health had been injured by their life experiences. Later she became a commissioner of services. She belongs to the North Cornwall Poetry Stanza, and loves it, as well as her fellow poets. They sustain each other.

WILLIAM FOSTER

p. 95

Born in Govan, Glasgow, William moved south to look for work in 1974, and found himself working in a factory, where he remained for forty-five years. Since retiring in 2019, he spends his days gardening and walking the dog; this relaxed and peaceful existence gave him the time to redress priorities, and he found himself writing poems whilst walking the dog. Although the poems started out just as a bit of fun, and largely relating to family, they've taken on a life of their own.

JOHN GALLAS

p. 33

John Gallas is an Aotearoa Poet, presently living in Leicestershire. He is published mostly by Carcanet, as well as by Five Leaves, Indigo Dreams, Cold Hub (NZ), New Walk Editions, SLG Press, Cerasus Publishing and Agraphia Press. He is the poet for St Magnus Festival, Orkney, and the Saxonship Project. He runs a month-by-month poetry website, and his latest book, *The Extasie* (Carcanet) was a *Sunday Times* Summer Reading choice. He is a fellow of the English Association, a biker and a tramper.

ROSIE GLIDDON

p. 5

Rosie Gliddon was born and raised in Chelmsford, Essex, and now lives in London, where she has resided for the last

few years. After studying English Literature at College in Southend-on-Sea, Rosie went straight into employment and is a corporate banker in London. Her passion, however, remains writing poetry, and she regularly develops her ideas on her daily commute into the City. When not writing, you can find Rosie cooking, reading, watching football and spending time with her family and friends. It is Rosie's dream to one day write a novel and have it published.

MARTHA GROGAN

p. 3

Martha Grogan is a writer from the Isle of Wight. They're in their final year at the University of Kent, studying literature, creative writing and journalism. They live in Canterbury with their housemates.

DAVID HENSLEY

p. 91

David Hensley is a poet, writer and brand consultant. Originally from Liverpool, he has lived and worked in Europe, Africa, Asia and the Middle East, but is now more prosaically based in Tunbridge Wells. He is the Chair of the Kent & Sussex Poetry Society (founded in 1946 by Vita Sackville-West) and former Chair of Creative Conscience, a charity whose mission is to embed purpose-driven creative thinking into organisations around the world, encouraging the creative community to use their talents for positive social and environmental impact.

ELLIE HERDA-GRIMWOOD

p. 35

Ellie Herda-Grimwood studied English Literature and Music at university, followed by a Master's degree in Film Music and Opera. She attended a one-off poetry class in early 2021 (put

on by her workplace) whilst also doing a course of bereavement counselling. The two experiences pleasantly collided, leaving a lasting impact and merging to inspire her first poem ‘God Only Knows the Blend’. She is eternally on a relentless hunt for inner peace and – when not staring wistfully out of windows – can usually be found at the theatre, reading, playing piano, building Lego, watching Judy Garland films or eating pizza. She lives in London with her lovely supportive wife.

PETER HILL

p. 101

Born in the village of Haydock, formerly in West Lancashire, Peter is the second eldest of four children born to working-class parents Leslie and Shirley Hill. His earliest influence came from an uncle who was a published poet and gifted artist in oils. After an eight-year hiatus, Peter began writing poetry again during the early part of 2021. Inspiration for poems is drawn from people, life, events and all things related to being human and the human condition.

SIMON JACKSON

p. 21

Simon Jackson has had more than twenty plays performed, and was British Gas Young Playwright of the Year when he was still a young playwright. His poetry is published internationally, and he has won several awards. His short films with Scottish poets Billy Bragg and Franz Nicolay have been screened by the BBC, *Rolling Stone* and at film festivals around the world, and his play, *Turning to the Camera* was the *Guardian*’s Pick of the Week for Scottish theatre. He’s never come close to making a living through the arts; he teaches Film in Shanghai, where he lives with his wife and two children and plays sax in the jazz-punk band Hogchoker.

J.L. JAMES

p. 57

J.L. James studied Creative Arts at university before later training to become a nurse. During the pandemic she rekindled her passion for creative writing and began entering poetry competitions. Since learning to read as a young child she has read daily throughout her life, and finds solace in the power of words. She has dreamed for many years of her writing making it into print and ‘One Strong Day’ is her first published work.

JESSICA JOHNSON

p. 69

Originally from Darlington, Jessica studied Law at Newcastle University, focusing on public international law and human rights. After graduating, Jessica moved to London to work in the charity sector, particularly on projects concerning homelessness and housing. Writing has always been a passion of hers, which she has worked on alongside her charity roles. The lockdowns of 2020 allowed her to focus solely on this, with ‘Postpartum’ being her first published poem. Jessica now lives in Walthamstow, East London, with her partner, Matt, and their one-year-old son, Nico.

JASMINE KAUR

p. 105

Jasmine Kaur is a queer writer/artist born in Moga, Punjab, and raised in too many places to name here. She likes to surround herself with stories and poetics in any medium, including audio, video, still images and performance. She decided to be a part-time poet as a twelve-year-old, and has continued to find joy in writing poetry since. She’s currently a Master’s in Philosophy student at Delhi University.

KATHRYN LOUISE KNIGHT

p. 63

Kathryn was born and raised in east London by her loving working-class family. Despite struggling at school, she enjoys writing short stories and poems, and believes everyone should be able to express themselves, regardless of their education or upbringing. Kathryn is an avid reader and enjoys Stephen King's works. She has moved to Leeds to be with her partner and start her family, and hopes to continue writing while she juggles her work and family life.

LIZZY LISTER

p. 15

In order to support her career as a poet, Lizzy Lister plays live soundtracks to silent films with the band Wurlitza and rents out Victorian railway carriages to holiday-makers in the Cornish village of St Germans. When not playing music, gardening, eco-warrioring, writing, cycling or painting, she can be found on the dance floor, or frolicking in the sea.

KARIN MOLDE

p. 61

Karin Molde feels at home in Germany, Ireland and Tanzania. She is a teacher of German and English, and has been published in magazines like *The Honest Ulsterman*, *Light Journal for Photography and Poetry*, *The Blue Nib*, and in anthologies including *Everything That Can Happen. Poems About the Future* (Emma Press, 2019), *Identity* (Fly on the Wall, 2020) and *Remembering Toni Morrison* (Moonstone Press, 2020). Her poems written in Low German have been published in *Quickborn*, a magazine of modern literature in the West Germanic language. She is a member of the online poetry group Poets Abroad.

CHARLOTTE MURRAY

p. 77

Charlotte is an archivist and writer from West Yorkshire. She won second place in *Bangor Literary Journal's* Forty Words Competition 2021 and in *Lucent Dreaming's* Poetry Competition 2021, was shortlisted in the Hive Young Writers' Competition 2020 and the Lord Whisky Sanctuary Poetry Competition 2020, and was longlisted for the Dead Cat Poetry Prize 2021. She has been published in *Bangor Literary Journal*, *CP Quarterly*, *Lucent Dreaming*, the *Mancunian Ways* anthology (Fly on the Wall Press) and is due to be published in *the winnow*.

NGOI HUI CHIEN

p. 45

Ngoi Hui Chien is a Malaysian who will soon pursue a PhD in English literature at Victoria University of Wellington. He also holds an MA in the same subject from the University of Leeds. His research interests encompass, but are not limited to, trauma literature, postcolonialism, psychoanalysis, philosophy and ecocriticism. Other than literary criticism, he is committed to creative writing, too – especially poetry. He is highly passionate about anglophone and sinophone literatures, which are the two spheres of cultures that inspire his work. His English poems have been, or are due to be, published in the *Journal of Postcolonial Writing*, *New Writing: The International Journal for the Practice and Theory of Creative Writing*, *SARE: Southeast Asian Review of English and Transnational Literature*.

JENNA PASHLEY SMITH

p. 55

Jenna Pashley Smith is a writer and poet from the Midwestern United States. Her essays, short stories, and poems have appeared in *Kaleidoscope*, *The Annals of Internal Medicine*, *East-*

ern Iowa Review, *The Binnacle* and others. She is currently at work on a young-adult novel in verse. When not immersed in a book or a poem, Jenna raises chickens and children in the suburbs of Houston, Texas, and dabbles in myriad artistic endeavours.

ELISABETH-RAE REYNOLDS

p. 43

Elisabeth-Rae Reynolds is a proud activist for human rights and an aspiring actor and writer from London. After studying both Science and Art & Design at New City College, she then went on to study Human Biology at Canterbury Christ Church University. Whilst studying she was nominated for and awarded the Jack Petchey Award for Outstanding Achiever. Currently living in London, she now plans to follow her passions by delving into the arts and advocating for injustice and inequality.

HEATHER RODGERS

p. 11

Heather Rodgers is an Ancient and Mediaeval History student at the University of Birmingham, and has previously been a runner-up in the 2018 Worcestershire Young Poet Laureate competition. She is keen to write more poetry and fiction across different genres, with a particular interest in personal narratives.

C.M. ROSIER

p. 71

Originally from Malvern, C.M. Rosier studied Ancient History and Archaeology at the University of Birmingham before moving on to become a book promoter for many wonderful publishers. Now living in Staffordshire, Rosier focuses on their own writing, exploring their love of history through a modern lens.

HANNAH ROSS

p. 103

Hannah grew up in Southampton, and then went on to study Religion and Theology in Bristol. She spends much of her time writing sapphic fantasy stories, though poetry was her first love. She was previously been commended for her poetry, which was entered into a competition hosted by the Young Poets Network. Hannah is currently studying her MA while frantically trying to piece together her first novel, which she may or may not finish. Her entry into the *New Beginnings* poetry anthology will be the first time her writing has been published.

KAY SAUNDERS

p. 27

Kay Saunders is a seventeen-year-old from the Cotswolds who has been writing creatively her whole life. A core source of her inspiration has come from her experiences as someone within the LGBT+ community, which powers her to create heartfelt narratives that are relatable and a safe place for people to feel seen and understood. Between short stories, flash fiction and poetry, Kay has won local awards for her writing and recognition from publishers and authors, and hopes to soon join her literary idols in a world of publication.

MELISSA SIA

p. 7

Melissa is originally from Liverpool and now lives in Glasgow. They draw inspiration from existing authentically as themselves and using this to embrace those who feel they cannot be visible just now. Poetry inspires them to create something physical from non-physical pain, a way of taking ownership and pride in their experiences, as well as that of their community. They completed a Master's degree in Gender Studies,

and their final piece focused on lifting the voices of minority groups and exploring the fundamental healing nature that poetry has on those living with trauma. Outside of their busy working life, they revel in the calmness of their free time and believe there is beauty in the gentle rumbling of change.

ALY LOU SMITH

p. 99

Aly Lou Smith works as a visual artist based in Newcastle upon Tyne. She writes on the side, mainly about her lived experience of Bipolar. Throughout 2021 her practice has evolved to be dominated by poetry, which gave her a therapeutic outlet and a way to record middle-aged, married life. Aly often considers herself unable to fit into ‘normal’ society due to her mental health diagnosis; however, her poetry has shown her just how reassuringly mundane her life actually is.

SOPHIE SPARHAM

p. 83

Sophie Sparham is a poet and writer from Derby. She has written commissions for BBC Radio 4, The V&A and The People’s History Museum. She co-hosts Word Wise, which won best spoken-word night at the 2019 Saboteur Awards. Her latest collection *The Man Who Ate 50,000 Weetabix* came out in April via Verve Poetry Press. Sophie’s work has been published in *Orbis*, *Under the Radar* and *The Morning Star*. Her poem ‘Sunrise Over Aldi’ won third place in the 2020 Charles Causley International Poetry Competition.

LYNNE TAYLOR

p. 25

Lynne lives in Didsbury, Manchester. Her poems have been published in anthologies and magazines including *PN Review*,

Stand and *Acumen*. Her fundamental fascination is what makes people tick: how they are affected by early influences in life; how they interrelate; and how they affect one another. She feels reading and writing poetry is a kind of therapy: a communication that facilitates empathy and understanding between people.

CHRISTIAN WARD

p. 79

Christian Ward is a UK-based writer. Recent work has appeared in *Wild Greens*, *One Hand Clapping*, *Eskimo Pie*, *Literary Yard* and many other publications. While he writes mostly poetry, he occasionally dives into flash fiction.

OYINMIEBI YOUDEOWEI

p. 87

Oyinmiebi Youdeowei, better known as Miebi, is a fifteen-year-old Nigerian-born writer. She was raised in south-east England and has always loved expressing her creativity in different ways. She recently began writing poetry about various issues in society such as racism, and is happy to begin sharing her work with a larger audience.

There were originally another three poems on the shortlist, but sadly we were unable to contact the poets, and therefore couldn't include their poems in this edition.

SUPPORTERS

This project was made possible through the financial support of the kind people listed below (in alphabetical order).

Rosie Barrett
Zara Branigan
Sharnta Bullard
Chris Cooke
Joanna Cooke
Libby Dady
Matt Dady-Leonard
Rachel Dallaire
Ieva Dapkevicius
Samuel Farrell
Polly Halsey
Ellie Herda-Grimwood
Iain Hood
Celia Hunt
Clémentine Koenig
John Ling
Lizzy Lister
Nuala McGowan
Dana Mills
Kacper Pancewicz
Bella Pearson
Heidi Pyper
Coco van Straaten
Bethany Williams

and Anonymous, on behalf of
the Grimshaw Girls and their Brother Tom