

**Jam**

**Slam**

**Rap**



**PHANTOM  
BILLSTICKERS**

**NATIONAL  
POETRY  
DAY AUG25**

**20/20**

**Forty poems that reflect the  
diverse and vibrant voices in our  
contemporary literature**

**CELEBRATING  
20YRS  
EST.1997  
POETRYDAY.CO.NZ**

**Join**

**Create**

**Make**

**Collect**

**Read**

**Write**

**Recite**

**Admire**

**Known**

**Own**

**Inspire**

**20 ACCLAIMED KIWI POETS**  
-  
**1 OF THEIR OWN POEMS**  
+  
**1 WORK OF ANOTHER POET**

To mark the 20th anniversary of Phantom Billstickers National Poetry Day, we asked 20 acclaimed Kiwi poets to choose one of their own poems – a work that spoke to New Zealand now.

They were also asked to select a poem by another poet they saw as essential reading in 2017.

The result is the *20/20 Collection*, a selection of forty poems that reflect the diverse and vibrant range of voices in New Zealand's contemporary literature.



Published in 2017 by The New Zealand Book Awards Trust  
[www.nzbookawards.nz](http://www.nzbookawards.nz)

Copyright in the poems remains with the poets and publishers as detailed,  
and they may not be reproduced without their prior permission.

Concept design: Unsworth Shepherd  
Typesetting: Sarah Elworthy  
Project co-ordinator: Harley Hern  
Cover image: Tyler Lastovich on Unsplash (*Flooded Jetty*)

National Poetry Day has been running continuously since 1997 and is celebrated on the last Friday in August. It is administered by the New Zealand Book Awards Trust, and for the past two years has benefited from the wonderful support of street poster company Phantom Billstickers.

**CELEBRATING**  
**20YRS**  
**EST.1997**  
**POETRYDAY.CO.NZ**



### JENNY BORNHOLDT PAGE 16

Jenny Bornholdt was born in Lower Hutt in 1960 and lives in Wellington. She is the author of nine collections of poems and many chapbooks, and is the co-editor of several notable anthologies, including *My Heart Goes Swimming: New Zealand Love Poems* and the *Oxford Anthology of New Zealand Poetry in English*, which won the 1997 Montana New Zealand Book Award for Poetry. Her many honours include the Meridian Energy Katherine Mansfield Fellowship to Menton, 2002, and the Te Mata Estate New Zealand Poet Laureate, 2005–2006.

+

They called her Ishmaël, and when Ish Doney was little, children called her Ish-the-male and the children's parents quoted Moby-Dick. Ish's mum had wanted to name her daughter after an album she liked called ...ish. Ish doesn't like the album. Her biological father protested on the grounds that '...ish' was not a proper name. Together they found the name Ismail and tried to feminise the spelling. They apologise, all they had was the Encyclopaedia Britannica and a baby name book. After completing a design degree in Wellington, Ish has been living in Europe. This is her first book.

### ISH DONEY PAGE 14



### PAULA GREEN PAGE 20

Paula Green is a poet, reviewer, anthologist, children's author, book-award judge and blogger. She has published eight poetry collections, including several for children. Co-written with Harry Ricketts, her book *99 Ways into New Zealand Poetry* was short-listed for the 2010 NZ Post Book Awards. She runs two blogs: NZ Poetry Box and NZ Poetry Shelf.

Paula has a Doctorate in Italian and was Literary Fellow at the University of Auckland (2005). She is a regular guest in New Zealand Literary festivals and performs and undertakes workshops in schools from Year 0-13. Paula's latest collection, *New York Pocket Book*, was published by Seraph Press in June 2016, and she is currently writing a book on New Zealand women's poetry. In 2017, Paula was admitted to The New Zealand Order of Merit for Services to Poetry and Literature.

+

Simone Kaho is from New Zealand and of Tongan ancestry. She earned her MA in creative writing from the International Institute of Modern Letters. Her poetry has been published in journals such as *JAAM*, *Turbine*, and *The Dominion Post*. A noted performance poet and former member of Literatti, she has appeared in shows such as *The Kerouac Effect*, *Poetry Live*, and *spit.it.out*.

### SIMONE KAHO PAGE 21



### VINCENT O'SULLIVAN PAGE 22

Vincent O'Sullivan has long been recognized as one of New Zealand's significant literary figures, through his extensive publications as a short story writer, novelist, biographer, playwright, and editor, as well as for his many volumes of poetry. He has received Montana Awards for poetry as well as for fiction, the Prime Minister's Award in 2005, in 2000 was made a Distinguished Companion of the New Zealand Order of Merit, and was New Zealand Poet Laureate 2013–2015. O'Sullivan lives in Dunedin.

+

Lynley Edmeades had her first collection *As the Verb Tenses* published by Otago University Press in 2016. Her poetry has been published in NZ, Australia, the UK and the USA. In 2011 she completed an MA at the Seamus Heaney Centre for Poetry at Queen's University, Belfast, and she is currently completing a doctoral thesis at the University of Otago, looking at sound in avant-garde poetics. Edmeades was one of four New Zealand poets featured in 'Poems in Your Pocket' for National Poetry Day 2016. She lives in Dunedin with her partner and her cat.

### LYNLEY EDMEADES PAGE 23



### APIRANA TAYLOR PAGE 17

Apirana Taylor is from the Ngati Porou, Te Whanau a Apanui, and Ngati Ruanui tribes, and also Pakeha heritage. He is a prolific poet, playwright, novelist, short story writer, story teller, actor, painter, and musician. His poems and short stories are frequently studied in schools at NCEA and tertiary level. His poetry and prose have been published nationally and internationally, and translated into several languages. Taylor frequently travels to schools, libraries, tertiary institutions and prisons to read his poetry, tell his stories, and take creative writing workshops. His new novel *Five Strings* (Anahera Press) was launched at the Auckland Writers Festival 2017.

+

Kiri Piahana-Wong is a poet and editor of Maori (Ngāti Ranginui), Chinese, and Pākehā (English) ancestry. She is the author of the poetry collection *Night Swimming* (2013), and publisher at Anahera Press. Her work has appeared in many journals and anthologies, most recently in *Essential New Zealand Poems* (2014), *A Treasury of NZ Poems for Children* (2014), *Dear Heart: 150 New Zealand Love Poems* (2012), and *Puna Wai Kōrero* (2014). Piahana-Wong is a former emcee at Poetry Live!, New Zealand's longest-running live poetry venue.

### KIRI PIAHANA-WONG PAGE 18







### ALISON WONG PAGE 26

Alison Wong is a fourth-generation Chinese New Zealander living in Geelong, Australia. She has written a novel and a poetry collection and been widely published in a multitude of journals and anthologies. Her poetry was selected for *Best New Zealand Poems* in 2006, 2007 and 2015. Her poetry collection, *Cup*, was shortlisted for Best First Book for Poetry at the 2007 Montana New Zealand Book Awards. She has also been the recipient of numerous fellowships, including the Robert Burns Fellowship at the University of Otago.

+

Chris Tse is a writer, editor, actor, musician and filmmaker. He studied film and English literature at Victoria University of Wellington, where he also completed an MA in Creative Writing at the International Institute of Modern Letters. His poetry and short fiction have been recorded for radio and published in numerous journals, magazines and anthologies. *How to be Dead in a Year of Snakes* won Best First Book at the 2016 Ockham NZ Book Awards. Tse was born and raised in Lower Hutt, Wellington.

### CHRIS TSE PAGE 24



### TUSIATA AVIA PAGE 30

Tusiata Avia is an acclaimed poet, performer and children's book writer of Samoan descent. Her previous poetry collections are *Wild Dogs Under My Skirt* (VUP, 2004; also staged as a one-woman theatre show around the world from 2002–2008) and *Bloodclot* (VUP, 2009). Her latest collection *Fale Aitu / Spirit House* (VUP, 2016) was shortlisted for the Ockham NZ Book Awards 2017. Avia has held the Fulbright Pacific Writer's Fellowship at the University of Hawai'i (2005) and the Ursula Bethell Writer in Residence at University of Canterbury (2010). She was also the 2013 recipient of the Janet Frame Literary Trust Award. Avia lives in Christchurch.

+

Teresia Teaiwa was a talented poet and iconic figure in Pacific studies. Born in Honolulu, Hawai'i, to an I-Kiribati father and an African American mother, she was raised in Fiji. In addition to her scholarly work, she was the author of the poetry collection *Searching for Nei Nim'anoa* (1995) and co-author of *Last Virgin in Paradise: A One-Act Play* (1993, with Vilsoni Hereniko). Her creative work was also published in *Terenesia: Amplified Poetry and Songs* by Teresia Teaiwa and Sia Figiel (2000). Teresia taught history and politics at the University of the South Pacific in Suva, Fiji, then Pacific studies at Victoria University, New Zealand. She was also co-editor of the *International Feminist Journal of Politics*. Sadly Teresia died in 2017.

### TERESIA TEAIWA PAGE 31



### KEVIN IRELAND PAGE 32

Kevin Ireland is one of New Zealand's most highly acclaimed writers. His published work includes novels, memoirs and more than fifteen books of poetry. Ireland has won the Montana Award for History and Biography, and the National Book Award for Poetry. He was awarded an OBE for services to literature (2000), was made an Honorary Doctor of Literature by Massey University (2000), received the prestigious Prime Minister's Award for Poetry (2004) and the A.W. Reed Award for Contribution to New Zealand Literature (2006). Ireland lives in Auckland, on the North Shore.

+

Gregory Kan is a writer based in Wellington. His poetry has been featured or is forthcoming in literary journals such as the *Atlanta Review*, *Landfall*, *Listener*, *SPORT* and *Turbine*. His poetry and philosophical work have also featured in exhibitions and publications for contemporary art institutions such as the Auckland Art Gallery, Artspace, the Adam Art Gallery, the Dunedin Public Art Gallery and the Physics Room. His first book, *This Paper Boat*, was published by Auckland University Press in 2016. An earlier incarnation of *This Paper Boat* was shortlisted for the Kathleen Grattan Poetry Prize in 2013. The book was also shortlisted for the Ockham New Zealand Book Awards for Best Poetry in 2017.

### GREGORY KAN PAGE 37



### DIANA BRIDGE PAGE 34

Wellington poet Diana Bridge has published six collections of poems, the latest of which, *aloe & other poems*, came out in 2009. She was awarded the Lauris Edmond Memorial Award in 2010, for her distinguished contribution to New Zealand poetry, and her essay, "An attachment to China" won the 2014 Landfall essay competition. In 2015 she won the prestigious Sarah Broom Poetry Prize. Bridge has spent many years stationed overseas with her diplomat husband in London, Singapore, Beijing, Hong Kong, Delhi and Taipei. She has a PhD in Chinese Literature from the Australian National University and has studied, researched and taught Chinese language, literature and art history and early Indian art history.

+

John Dennison was born in Sydney in 1978. His first collection of poems, *Otherwise* (Carcant/Auckland University Press) was published in 2015. The book was long-listed for the 2016 New Zealand Book Awards, and short-listed for the Seamus Heaney Centre for Poetry Prize for First Full Collection. Dennison is also the author of *Seamus Heaney and the Adequacy of Poetry* (Oxford University Press, 2015). In 2016 he was awarded the Louis Johnson New Writer's Bursary by Creative New Zealand. He lives with his family in Wellington, where he is a university chaplain.

### JOHN DENNISON PAGE 36



**ANDREW JOHNSTON** PAGE 38

Andrew Johnston is a New Zealand poet, critic and editor who lives in France. His books of poems include *Fits & Starts* (2016) which recently won the 2017 Ockham Book Award for Poetry, *Sol* (2007), *Birds of Europe* (2000), *The Open Window* (1999), *The Sounds* (1996) and *How to Talk* (1993), which won the 1994 New Zealand Book Award for Poetry.

Johnston was the co-editor, with Robyn Marsack, of *Twenty Contemporary New Zealand Poets*, published in 2009 by Carcanet, UK, and Victoria University Press, New Zealand. He also edited *Moonlight: New Zealand Poems on Death and Dying* (Random House, 2008). In 2007 he was the J D Stout Research Fellow at Victoria University of Wellington.

+

Bill Nelson lives in Wellington. His poems have appeared in *Sport*, *Hue & Cry*, *Shenandoah*, *Minarets*, *The 4th Floor*, *Swamp* and *Blackmail Press*, and he has worked on collaborative projects with Footnote Dance and City Gallery Wellington. In 2009 he won the Biggs Family Prize in Poetry from the International Institute of Modern Letters. He is also a writer and co-editor of *Up Country*, an online journal about outdoor pursuits. 'The whys and Zs' is part of a series of poems featuring text mined from an old copy of *How to do Just About Anything* by The Readers Digest.

**BILL NELSON** PAGE 39**MICHAEL HARLOW** PAGE 40

Central Otago writer and editor Michael Harlow has published ten poetry collections. Among his many achievements, in 2014 Michael received the Lauris Edmond Memorial Award for Distinguished Contribution to New Zealand Poetry and the PEN/ NZ Best First Book of Prose. Most recently, Michael received the PSNZ/Beatson Fellowship Award (2016).

Associate and poetry editor at *Landfall* for ten years, Michael was also editor for the Caxton Press Poetry series. He has been panellist and judge for national and international poetry competitions, and represented NZSA on the Burns Fellowship selection committee (three terms). Michael's book of poems, *Nothing For It But To Sing*, won the Kathleen Grattan Poetry Prize (2015).

+

Paul Schimmel is a psychoanalyst, writer, and fly-fisher for trout whenever he can find the time. Originally from New Zealand, he currently lives and works in Sydney. Aotearoa remains home however, and his poetry has appeared in various, mainly New Zealand, literary magazines. A first collection of poems, *Reading the water*, was published by Steele-Roberts, Wellington, in 2016. His psycho-biographical study *Sigmund Freud's discovery of psychoanalysis: conquistador and thinker*, was published by Routledge UK in 2014.

**PAUL SCHIMMEL** PAGE 41**C.K. STEAD** PAGE 42

C. K. Stead was born in Auckland, New Zealand, in 1932. He has published more than 40 books and received numerous honours recognising his contribution to literature, including a CBE (1974), an Honorary DLitt from the University of Bristol (2001), the CNZ Michael King Fellowship (2005), and in 2009 both the \$60,000 Prime Minister's Award for Fiction and the Montana New Zealand Book Award. In 2010 Stead won two international prizes: *The Sunday Times EFG Private Bank Short Story Award* and *The Hippocrates Prize for Poetry and Medicine*. He received our highest award, the Order of New Zealand, in 2007. Stead is the current New Zealand poet laureate for 2015–2017.

+

Johanna Emeney spent fourteen years in the UK, where she studied Japanese and Literature at Cambridge University, and taught English Literature at Gresham's School in Norfolk. She now lives back on Auckland's North Shore with her husband David, and their cats and goats. She works as a tutor at Massey University, and also runs workshops for both young and older people, including the Young Writers Programme on behalf of the Michael King Writers' Centre, Devonport, with her friend Rosalind Ali.

Her new book *Family History* is just out with Mākarō Press.

**JOHANNA EMENEY** PAGE 44**DAVID EGGLETON** PAGE 52

David Eggleton is a poet, art critic, writer, freelance journalist, and current Editor of *Landfall*. He is of Rotuman, Tongan and Palagi ancestry, grew up in Fiji and South Auckland and now lives in Dunedin. Well-known as a performance poet, Eggleton has released several poetry recordings featuring his collaborations with musicians and been involved in poetry text collaborations with practitioners of a variety of other art forms, from sculpture to fashion design.

Amongst numerous accolades, recently his latest collection *The Conch Trumpet* won the Ockham Poetry Award (2017). He is also the 2017 recipient of the Fulbright-Creative New Zealand Pacific Writers' Residency Award.

+

Leilani Tamu is a former NZ diplomat, 2017 parliamentary candidate (for the NZ Greens), published poet, mother, historian, Fulbright alumna, first class masters graduate and freelance public policy analyst. Born in Auckland with ancestral and marital ties to Samoa, Tonga and Niue, she has made her mark on NZ's cultural landscape by sharing a much-needed perspective in a range of fora. Tamu has just completed her second book - a poetic political degustation - *Cultural Diplomacy*. It is currently being considered for publication. Watch this space...

**LEILANI TAMU** PAGE 53

**ELIZABETH SMITHER** PAGE 54

Writer and prolific poet Elizabeth Smither has published numerous novels, books of short stories and poetry collections. Her wealth of awards is too extensive to list, but includes the Montana New Zealand Book Award for Poetry (2000), Te Mata Poet Laureate (2002) and Sarah Broom Prize for Poetry (2016). In 2004 she was made a Member of the New Zealand Order of Merit and was awarded an honorary DLitt from the University of Auckland for her contributions to literature. Smither is also a recipient of the Prime Minister's Award for Literary Achievement in poetry. She lives in Taranaki.



Born in Invercargill, Rob Hack has lived in Paekakariki for eleven years after returning from his third attempt to live in Australia. He's been a high rise window cleaner, builder, greenkeeper, insurance agent, cattle station worker, night shift at a gas station, gym owner and many more. Nowadays, he keeps the wolverine from the door working as a handyman. Hack began writing poetry in 1999, as an investigation into a long neglected Cook Island heritage and early life on Niue, but now writes on a wide array of topics and often reads his work in public.

**ROB HACK** PAGE 55**RICHARD REEVE** PAGE 56

Richard Reeve is an Otago-based poet, editor and reviewer. His five collections of poetry to date are *Dialectic of Mud* (Auckland UP, 2001), *The Life and the Dark* (Auckland UP, 2004), *In Continents* (Auckland UP, 2008), *The Among* (Maungatua Press, 2008) and *Generation Kitchen* (Otago UP, 2015). Reeve holds a PhD on 'New Zealand poetic reality', and is a lawyer by profession. While his poetry often is philosophical, he describes himself as 'as a poet of visceral themes and energetic language.' Reeve won the Macmillan Brown Prize for Poetry in 1998 and the \$20,000 Todd Foundation New Writer's Bursary in 2002/03. He was co-founder of literary magazine *Glottis*, has been an editor for Otago University Press and is the Chair of environmental group The Upland Landscape Protection Society.



Michael Steven was born in 1977. His poems, short stories and non fiction have appeared in *Landfall*, *Phantom Billstickers Cafe Reader*, *Poetry NZ Yearbook*, *IKA*, *Contrapasso* and other journals. A chapbook, *The Story of My Past Lives*, is forthcoming from Maungatua Press. He lives in Auckland.

**MICHAEL STEVEN** PAGE 57**ROBERT SULLIVAN** PAGE 27

Robert Sullivan is an internationally published Māori poet and academic whose numerous collections include the bestselling *Star Waka* (Auckland UP, 1999), which has been reprinted five times, translated into German (Mana Verlag), and shortlisted for the Montana New Zealand Book Awards (2000). Sullivan's writing explores dimensions of contemporary urban experience, including local racial and social issues. His writing has a postmodern feel, where history and mythology, individual and collective experience, become areas of refined focus. Sullivan's work has won, or been nominated for, many awards and he is an editor of the online journal, *Trout*.



Ngahua Te Awekotuku was born and raised below the hill, Pukeroa. As the principal author of *Mau Moko: the World of Māori Tattoo* (2007), she won many prestigious awards. Her recent book *E Nga Uri Whakatupu: weaving legacies* (2015), focuses on traditional textiles. She writes poetry and fiction; *Ruahine: Mythic Women* (2003) are crafted retellings of Māori legends about heroic women. Her latest work is *Tahuri: a limited edition* (2017): stories about growing up in the 1950's-60's Māori, female, and different. An accomplished academic writer, she is trying to become a poet again.

**NGAHUA TE AWEKOTUKU** PAGE 28**BILL MANHIRE** PAGE 46

Award-winning Wellington poet, fiction and creative non-fiction writer Bill Manhire has been a significant figure in the promotion of New Zealand poetry and literature. He is particularly known for founding New Zealand's first and highly successful creative writing program through Victoria University. Regarded as one of the greatest New Zealand poets of his era, Manhire was New Zealand's inaugural Poet Laureate (1997-1998), and is a Fellow of the Royal Society of New Zealand. His awards include the Prime Minister's Award for Poetry, an Arts Foundation laureateship, and New Zealand Book Award for Poetry (four times). He is a Companion of the New Zealand Order of Merit and been named an Arts Foundation of New Zealand Laureate. Manhire also holds an Honorary Doctorate of Literature from the University of Otago.



Louise Wallace grew up in Gisborne and now lives in Wellington. Her poems have been published in literary journals in New Zealand, Australia, Germany and the US. In 2015 she was the Robert Burns Fellow at the University of Otago, Dunedin. In 2016 she represented New Zealand at the Mexico City Poetry Festival. She is the founder and editor of *Starling*, an online journal publishing the work of young New Zealand writers. Her third collection of poems, *Bad Things* was published by Victoria University Press in August 2017.

**LOUISE WALLACE** PAGE 48





**SELINA TUSITALA MARSH** PAGE 58

Selina Tusitala Marsh is a poet of Samoan, Tuvaluan, English and French descent. Her poetry is widely published and translated, nationally and internationally. She was a Poet Olympiad for the 2012 London Olympics Poetry Parnassus event, and won the 2015 London Literary Death Match at the Australia New Zealand Literary Festival. Her award-winning poetry collection, *Fast Talking PI* (Auckland UP, 2009), featured at the 2012 Frankfurt Book Fair and won the NZSA Jesse Mackay First Best Book Award (2010). Marsh was the 2016 Commonwealth Poet, performing her commissioned poem 'Unity', for the Queen at Westminster Abbey. Her latest collection *Tightrope* (AUP) launches on National Poetry Day 2017.



Reihana Robinson writes, paints and farms organically on the Coromandel in Aotearoa/New Zealand and in western Massachusetts. Her writing has been published in numerous well-known USA and NZ journals, and was also part of *AUP New Poets 3*, (AUP, 2008). Robinson has held artist residencies at the East West Center, Honolulu, Hawai'i and the Anderson Center, Red Wing, Minnesota. She is the inaugural recipient of the Te Atairangikāhu Award for Poetry. Her first poetry collection *Aue Rona* (Steele Roberts, 2012) will be followed by a second collection *I WANT YOU BACK* (Makaro Press, March 2018).

**REIHANA ROBINSON** PAGE 61



**CILLA McQUEEN** PAGE 62

Poet, performer and artist Cilla McQueen has published 14 poetry collections to date during her impressive career. She was the New Zealand Poet Laureate (2009–2011), and was presented the Prime Minister's Award for Literary Achievement in Poetry (2010). Three-time winner of the *New Zealand Book Award for Poetry*, her extensive list of accolades includes the PEN/Jessie Mackay Award for Best First Book of Poetry (1983), John Cowie Reid Memorial Prize for Poetry (1982), and Queen Elizabeth II Arts Council Scholarship in Letters (1992). Her poetry, often laced with humour, explores such diverse themes as displacement, love, loss, colonisation and ideas of home, modern science and politics.

Her most recent collection, *In a Slant Light – a Poet's Memoir*, was published by Otago University Press (2016). Cilla lives in Bluff, New Zealand.



David Kārena-Holmes was born in Lower Hutt in 1938. His writings have appeared in journals, newspapers and anthologies in New Zealand, Australia, England, India and Canada. A collection of short poems, *Genesis*, was printed in 2009. He has also authored two books on the grammar of te reo Māori (and a third is in preparation). Currently, however, his central preoccupation in writing is "a poem of some length" which was begun with *From the Antipodes: Prologue to a Work in Progress* (first published in 2002).

**DAVID KĀRENA-HOLMES** PAGE 63



**JAMES NORCLIFFE** PAGE 64

James Norcliffe is a highly published poet, fiction writer and educator. He has also worked extensively as an editor including (with Harry Ricketts and Siobhan Harvey) the major anthology *Essential New Zealand Poems – Facing the Empty Page* (Godwit/Random, 2014), and with Joanna Preston *Leaving the Red Zone – Poems from the Canterbury Earthquakes* (Clerestory Press, 2016). He has had a long time involvement with *takahē* magazine. Norcliffe has won numerous awards and residencies including the 2006 Fellowship at the University of Iowa. With Bernadette Hall, he was presented with a Press Literary Liaisons Honour Award for lasting contribution to literature in the South Island. *Dark Days at the Oxygen Café* is his ninth poetry collection.



Marisa Cappetta's first collection *How to tour the world on a flying fox* was published by Steele Roberts in 2016. In 2013 Cappetta received a mentorship from the New Zealand Society of Authors, with mentor James Norcliffe. Cappetta graduated Summa Cum Laude from the Hagley Writers' Institute in 2011 and is the winner of the Hagley Writers' Institute Margaret Mahy prize. She has been published in *takahē*, *The Press*, *International Literary Quarterly*, *Enamel*, *Shot Glass Journal*, *Snorkel*, *Blackmail Press*, *Turbine*, *Landfall*, as well as several anthologies. She has had three poem posters made by Phantom Billstickers.

**MARISA CAPPETTA** PAGE 66



**BRIAN TURNER** PAGE 67

Brian Turner was born in Dunedin in 1944 and lives in Central Otago. He is a poet, freelance journalist, editor and writer. His first book of poems *Ladders of Rain* (1978) won the Commonwealth Poetry Prize. This was followed by a number of highly-acclaimed poetry collections and award-winning writing in a wide range of genres including journalism, biography, memoir (*Somebodies and Nobodies*, 2002) and sports writing.

He has been the Robert Burns Fellow at the University of Otago and writer in residence at the University of Canterbury. In 2009 he was awarded the Lauris Edmond Award for Distinguished Contribution to Poetry and also received the Prime Minister's Award for Literary Achievement in Poetry. Brian Turner was named the Te Mata New Zealand Poet Laureate in 2003.



Jillian Sullivan lives and writes in Central Otago, New Zealand. She has published books in a variety of genres, including creative non-fiction, novels, short story collections and poetry. She teaches workshops on creativity and writing in New Zealand and America. Her awards include the Highlights Fiction Award in America, the Tom Fitzgibbon Award, the Kathleen Grattan Prize for a Sequence of Poems, and the Takahē Poetry Prize. Her latest book is the memoir *A Way Home* (Potton and Burton, 2016).

**JILLIAN SULLIVAN** PAGE 68



---

## MISCARRIAGE

*Ish Doney*

Autumn is the season  
for suitcases.  
Leaves and leaving.

Each morning I stand at my wardrobe  
trying to pack quickly, lightly.  
Each night I empty bags onto the floor  
and fall asleep.

The tiny clenched muscle,  
like your little fists,  
the beat of it  
says we should have been okay.  
Five per cent.  
We should have been okay.

Autumn is the season  
for being left behind.  
I miss your departure,  
too busy buying baby  
clothes. Take a taxi home  
and eat three packets  
of two-minute noodles.

'Broken' is what they've named you.  
My body rids itself  
of tissue.  
The heartbeat.  
The fists.  
You weren't holding on.

Winter is the season  
for staying in bed,  
the wind crying to be changed,  
the fridge needing to be fed.

.  
*from Where the fish grow*  
*(Hoopla: Mākaro Press, 2016)*



---

## BECOMING GIRL

*Jenny Bornholdt*

Becoming girl. What was  
that? The girl and  
the becoming? Hair  
like Venetian blinds, all  
the lesser excellencies  
turned to stone, the stone quarried  
to become road – Eddy Ave  
which leads to Carillon  
where mothers count their way  
to sanity – down which the bus travels  
to where you need and most want  
to go. To where you and your friend,  
who you’ve known since you began  
to remember, become zebras  
as the light falls down the sky;  
to where all your best answers  
are afterwards. All the while becoming  
girl, lost and tender as steak  
or as the tree on an island  
named for a Portuguese exclamation,  
the tree whose trunk you stroke  
and all its branches quiver.

.  
*from Selected Poems*  
*(Victoria University Press, 2016)*

when i hear the haka  
i feel it in my bones  
and in my wairua  
the call of my tipuna  
flashes like lightning  
up and down my spine  
it makes my eyes roll  
and my tongue flick  
it is the dance  
of earth and sky  
the rising sun  
and the earth shaking  
it is the first breath of life  
eeeeee aaa ha haaa

.  
*from A Canoe in Midstream*  
*(Canterbury University Press, 2010)*

## HAKA

*Apirana Taylor*

---

## HINERANGI

Kiri Piahana-Wong

Near the end of my  
days, I knew.  
Time moved through  
me like the wind.

With every outbound tide  
I felt my breath receding,  
my life running from me  
like the river feeding  
the bay. And the  
longing.  
I was tired.  
I longed to merge my voice  
with the world-song, become  
a single drop in the ocean,  
be everywhere and nowhere.

My skin felt too small.  
With each turn of the moon,  
I felt more hollowed and  
so grey.

I spent these last weeks  
atop the cliff above the bay,  
looking westwards. Three  
moons waned, grew fat and  
full, and thin again. The sun  
set each evening in my eyes,  
as I kept vigil. Anchoring  
myself deep in the earth, I  
felt my roots grow deep  
and strong.

I died there.  
My sons and the husbands of  
my daughters came and gathered  
up my body and carried me down,  
one last time across the long black  
stretch of bay.  
I was laid to rest in the ground,  
in te urupā.  
My bones are still there, but I am  
gone now. I went on my last journey,  
to Te Rerenga Wairua, the cape of spirits.  
They called me, and I came. I flew.  
I danced. I left, and I began  
the long return.

Perhaps you would like to hear  
I met him again in Hawaïke,  
the afterlife. I did not. The truth is,  
I did not care. All that I had bled  
for in the world of tears I put aside  
here. I existed as spirit.  
I slid outside the trap of time.  
I was more than myself now. And  
I was less. I let the world-song  
swallow me.

from Puna Wai Korero ed. Robert Sullivan & Reina Whaitiri  
(Auckland University Press, 2014)

(A note from the poet)

Hinerangi's story:

*Hinerangi was an early tupuna of Te Kawerau a Maki (tangata whenua of the area in Auckland now known as Waitakere City, traditionally known as Hikurangi). Hinerangi married a young Karekare chieftan and settled with him there until an aituā (tragic accident) befell him. Her husband went fishing at the southern end of Te Unuhanga o Rangitoto (now known as Mercer Bay) with two friends. This spot was named Te Kawa Rimurapa (reef of the bull kelp), and was a popular, but dangerous, fishing spot. On this particular day Hinerangi's husband and his friends were washed from the rocks and swept away. Hinerangi, inconsolable and heartbroken, sat on the headland above, scanning the sea, and refused to leave. Eventually she died there. Her sad face is now said to be outlined in the rocks below the headland on which she sat. This headland is now known as Te Āhua o Hinerangi (the likeness of Hinerangi)*

---

## JOSEPHINE WAITS IN A QUEUE

Paula Green

Josephine wears her *Time Out* guide as a hat and then uses it as a fan  
and then wears it as a hat again because she is caught in a queue  
that is endless interminable bending about in the biting heat  
with the buskers upstaging the Statue of Liberty and the Statue of Liberty

out there in the harbour like a pale welcome sign in the murky light.  
Someone stands on a ladder dressed as the statue and doesn't blink  
or twitch, the classical green folds look like stone and next the bronze figures  
stuck on the pier that might twitch or blink or be there for an eternity

one knee-deep in water with fingers outstretched missing the rescue  
always not-quite saved the man stretching fingers down from the boat plinth  
and there's an accordion frozen in time hands to mouth the bronze  
tinged with liberty green a tableau of hope intense melancholy that

trips Josephine up. For a moment she thinks she's an immigrant  
taking off her shoes and belt and surrendering her bags, and then after three  
hours and without warning she is moved into the fast lane as though she  
is exactly what America wants.

.  
from New York Pocket Book  
(Seraph Press, 2016)

The first time I remember being scared was not at home, my family  
was staying with a relative in another town for a celebration. Over-  
night we watched a scary movie, where a disembodied female  
hand, bloody and clutching a knife, stalked a male victim through  
a house, calling his name in a high reedy voice – finally finding  
him in bed.

The next day, my two-year-old brother toddled over the umu coals;  
they burnt through his gumboots and into his feet. I connected the  
two events for some reason and needed a light on at night after  
that, despite my grandma saying *Jesus wants you to have the light  
off at night that's why he made it dark.*

.  
from Lucky Punch  
(Anahera Press, 2016)

**PREY**

Simone Kaho

---

## KNOWING WHAT IT'S ABOUT

*Vincent O'Sullivan*

This woman who's the quiet one  
in any group of women thinks it  
a fair morning's work, this setting free  
a bee that's tangled to one of a dozen  
webs on a garage door. At first  
the bee's too minutely shackled  
to deal with air again and the stagger  
as it always seems along the flowering  
hedge, until it's placed on the glove  
on her left hand and the naked forefinger  
of her right dabs at it gently as though  
at a child's eye, and the wings begin  
to work, angrily almost, and the body  
straightens, and the 'furred bullet', that's  
what she once read of a demented  
bee, fires back into the day, into  
the sun's endless paddocks and the rocking  
gusts, into a life 'more direct than  
ours', she says, 'knowing what it's about'.

.  
*from And so it is*  
*(Victoria University Press, 2016)*

Winter has grown on us – the cool breeze  
no longer shocks and the birds carry on

with their sunshine-fed song. Around  
their eyes are thin yellow orbs that seem there  
to contain, hold that avian pupil in place.

It's all a question of relativity, you say –  
the years felt so long as a child.  
But back then, a year was a quarter  
of your entire life. Now it's a mere tilt

of the head – something that's a little bit more  
than nothing, a frame growing smaller  
as the days pull at the skin around your eyes.

And yet the point remains the same:  
what will be will never be contained.

.  
*from As the Verb Tenses*  
*(Otago University Press, 2016)*

## CONTAINED

*Lynley Edmeades*



## IN WHICH THE AUTHOR INTERVIEWS LIGHT

Chris Tse

I am not petulant; like you,  
I am  
merely hopeful. Where shadows bleed  
must lie a source of light.  
Light is warm and sure  
of its place in every widescreen vista  
or on a stage, where it unfolds  
each scene. Light is proof  
that something is happening  
right before you.  
I am the eye. I am  
the thought of least resistance.  
After belief  
I make myself  
visible – a golden loose thread.  
I can be trusted –  
just watch. This will move them.

...

Here's where the body fell  
– no, wait –  
over there.

(There are so many ways to begin  
I often confuse myself. Old age  
has worn my edges down – nothing  
catches, nothing drags me  
through a life of usefulness.  
Sometimes I can't decide  
where the story truly starts or  
where to place their marks.

Each event that punctuates  
the arc carries its own intention,  
as does each storyteller's  
tongue laced with favour and prejudice.  
Mine is to seek out the tension and  
violence in their vibrating hearts.)

Let me start over.  
1905: this is the end.  
We meet again – same street,  
same sky.  
At first blush, the man falls  
and stays down,  
language and music fleeing his body,  
freed from the limits  
of flesh and bone. From here,  
the world extends into white  
and the voices of the living carry  
nothing but death.

...

If I could speak  
all you'd hear is echo  
over here  
– no, over here –  
– there –  
passing through each version  
like a tragic round.

.  
from *How to be Dead in a Year of Snakes*  
(Auckland University Press, 2014)

---

## THERE'S ALWAYS THINGS TO COME BACK TO THE KITCHEN FOR

Alison Wong

a bowl of plain steamed rice  
a piece of bitter dark chocolate  
a slice of crisp peeled pear

a mother or father who understands  
the kitchen is the centre of the universe

children who sail out on long elliptical orbits  
and always come back, sometimes like comets, sometimes like moons

.  
*from Cup*  
(Steele Roberts, 2006)

and  
Essential NZ Poems: Facing the Empty Page  
(Godwit, 2014)

The grass at Te Kaaretu was renowned  
for its softness – our ancestors would line  
their whare with it for bedding. Today we are  
gathered up like clumps of Kaaretu grass,  
made soft by the gathering, and we line  
the whare nui at Pihareinga, Te Kaaretu,  
with our bedding once again.

I learn Arapeta's song, *e tuwhera atu nei*,  
*te awa o Taumarere* . . . our ancestral river  
of Taumarere opens here, although of course  
we had settlements at Matauwhi and Kororareka –  
the first New Zealand capital – we were  
one of the first tribes to be affected  
by westernisation. Today we are following

the river, tracing the paths of our people,  
the great names and the previously unknown,  
trying to find the first Sullivan who gave us  
his name early last century. What was his  
first name? who did he marry? why did he stay here?  
was he marooned? was it a woman?  
what was his waka? These questions remain to date.

But there are tears at this reunion.  
The speeches are from everyone here,  
we introduce ourselves as the special branches  
of the whanau. We move around  
like the four winds, but when we gather  
at Te Kaaretu, we are anchored  
and hold fast to one another.

.  
*from Star Waka*  
(Auckland University Press, 1999)

## SULLIVAN WHĀNAU

Robert Sullivan

---

**PUKEROA**  
*Ngahua Te Awekotuku*

So wild blows the wind  
                    - cold  
and here I sit  
                    against  
a tree, emblem of Life  
                    green, growing  
silent upon this hill  
that was the realm,  
                    the fortress  
                    of Te Makawe  
feared and avoided

That road before me stretches  
far into the cool twilight –  
                    black tar which melts  
beneath the hot sun.  
Cars – modern, streamlined, vintage  
                    how they move  
upon a road that  
                    once knew  
only the read of tough  
                    brown feet  
and heard the power of the haka  
the plaintive wail of  
                    the tangi  
a call, a challenge, echo  
                    across our warm marae.

Still, he has come, the white man  
- has come, and has conquered  
wiped from beneath us  
                    that base we knew so well  
so that it should exist no more  
but be replaced, our glorious heritage  
with muskets, fire and bricks  
with industry, with progress  
                    with 1966.

.  
*from Puna Wai Kōrero: An Anthology of Māori Poetry in English*  
*ed. Reina Whaitiri and Robert Sullivan (Auckland University Press, 2014)*

## I CANNOT WRITE A POEM ABOUT GAZA

*Tusiata Avia*

*for Izzeldin Abuelaish and everyone*

I cannot write a poem about Gaza because I cannot eat a whole desert.

I cannot write a poem about Gaza because I cannot go to bed with the stiff little babies and the bodies of children, there is no room for the little lost limbs, the disembodied arms yanked off like parts in a doll hospital.

I cannot write a poem about Gaza because if I speak up for the bodies of babies, for the pieces of children, for the women pulling out their own eyes, you will call me anti-Semitic and I must allow the blood of thousands to absolve me.

I cannot write a poem about Gaza because my fury and my grief will rise up out of my chest like a missile plotted on a computer in Tel Aviv, it will track me, pinpoint me and in a perfect arc, it will whine down out of the surgical sky, enter the top of my head and implode me.

I cannot write a poem about Gaza because Israel has a right to protect itself Israel has a right to protect itself Israel has a right to protect itself Israel has a right to protect itself Israel has a right to protect itself Israel has a right to protect itself.

And Gaza does not.

I cannot write a poem about Gaza because behind every human shield is another human shield and another human shield and another human shield and another human shield and another human shield. And behind that human shield – is a human.

I cannot write a poem because it's complicated, so complicated, very, very complicated. So, I cannot write a poem about Gaza until I finish a PhD in Middle Eastern Politics and the Holocaust, until I am reborn a Jew and live under the iron dome myself.

I cannot write a poem about Gaza because Tamar in Tel Aviv has got to get to the supermarket and the garden centre before the next siren. She's putting plants in their bomb shelter and the kids' favourite toys and treats, to make it less depressing.

I cannot write a poem about Gaza because Fatima in Gaza City has 58 seconds to evacuate her house with her babies before the missile strikes and the only way out is the sea. She has seen pictures on TV of babies thrown into pools and swimming instinctively.

I cannot write a poem about Gaza because there is an impenetrable iron dome that covers the entire state. It covers each mind and each heart, except for the few that line up and demand to be imprisoned.

I cannot write a poem about Gaza because of my friends: Tamar, Shira, Yael, Michal, Noya, David, Yair in Tel Aviv and Nazareth and Beersheva. Because every time I point to the blood-soaked I upset them, offend them, anger them, betray them. Let them go.

I cannot write a poem about Gaza because of my friend Izzeldin and his three exploded daughters and one exploded niece filleted across his living room.

I cannot write a poem about Gaza because I can do the maths. If two thousand one hundred and sixty-eight dead Palestinians divided by sixty-nine dead Israelis equals. Find the true value of one Palestinian.

.

*from Fale Aitu/Spirit House (Victoria University Press, 2016)*

I maaku

You told me ba ko tangirai

I maaku

I maaku

My arms were awkward so ko taua baiu

I maaku

I maaku

The dancer trembles because te ruoia is a kind of sorcery

I maaku

I maaku

The frigate birds fly high above us and I'm afraid of falling

I maaku

.

*from Poetry Foundation site*

## FEAR OF FLYING (IN BROKEN GILBERTESE)

*Teresia Teaiwa*



---

## FLYING ACROSS AUSTRALIA

Kevin Ireland

There was so much of the whole place to take in  
that whatever may have slipped out of the frame  
belonged nowhere else you could think of quickly

and you might even be tempted to add that there was  
enough down there to get on with anyway so why  
worry about it and who'd argue the point, the drift of

what I am saying possibly being that what glorious  
small thought could ever be deemed appropriate  
when confronted with such immensity, by which I mean

all those patched bolts of crumpled scenery unrolling  
for what could be ever-and-ever – like fate, history  
or the hereafter – indicating meaningful assertions

in hessian, blotched sailcloth, with obscurities of muslin,  
not to mention an endless sufferance of sacking,  
complete with suggestions of hot and gritty ashes,

all of them ripped apart by huge riverbeds, none of which  
were presently serving their prime purpose?

But never forget you could very well take a deep breath

and go on to ask what about the hand of man and if things  
might not be enhanced greatly by long strips of steel rails,  
chains of lorries loaded with asphalt or concrete

and shops with gas pumps, just as with a dramatic sweep  
of the arm you may as well go the whole hog and admit  
to the mystery of endless giant clouds that were pegged out

like permanent fixtures, exactly the same as last time.  
In other words there were aspects of largeness that didn't  
fit a neat picture even though, I agree, they also weren't

trying to go out of their way to be what you might describe  
as pretentiously impressive on an entire imaginary  
scale of holy grandeur. It called for some sort of theory

to tidy up everything. I didn't feel it was down to me  
to figure it out and the passenger next door never stopped  
talking, so there it still is, patiently out there waiting.

*from Looking out to sea*  
(Steele Roberts, 2015)

---

## BIG BANG

*Diana Bridge*

1

Your ground is the first backdrop, black as when God  
hovered over the waters before He let light in.  
Then light came, washing through crevices that opened,  
like these holes, in the darkness. Though you and I  
have slipped its moorings, still we give it space,  
that ancient story, remembering the days  
when we sought sides and a roof to our world.

Now the metaphors lie far apart. But there are times—  
that moment when you turn to your tools, your fibreglass  
and casein, and lift from your storehouse a way of saying,  
'Then there was movement'—when I am sure that  
the grand canvases of the imagination converge, if only  
for an instant. It has taken time to get here, but long before  
we knew to write it down our race has liked a prologue.

2

Bang goes the hierophant! Here is one joyous immediate.  
Last time I looked it was a garden: a shower of dots  
carried along on beaded tracks I took for pods or bulbs  
among a tracery of ornamental paths. But, see,  
the skin too is a garden, its inlaid topiary idiom small  
as the whorl of your thumb, or large as the skin's  
whole imprint. Formations ad infinitum. Full fathom  
five they fountain. Not quite a mayhem of choice  
as referents fissure and switch, but—now we have  
stars, as many as you like. This lace is the night sky;  
there cells unfold like flights of living thoughts.  
Microscopic, macroscopic, their reach is the same.

Here is the moment of origin. You set it against  
the white of a wall. And summon the blank of before.

*from In the supplementary garden  
(cold hub press, 2016)*

---

## SLEEPERS

John Dennison

Friends decide to separate. After,  
we enter the clearing, retrace our steps. A fine  
rain settles, and everything is un—  
accountably beautiful, unaccountable,  
being not promised. Promise – it hung  
in the air over the improvised picnic table,  
between the opened faces; we nearly sang.  
Depressions in the grass, the shape of laughter.  
All that time the lines lay, unconverging,  
fiercely gauged off each other, overgrown in the dirt –  
now ripped out like spade-stuck fencing wire,  
turf turned and agape the length of the clearing.  
We look down. *Gutted for you, mate.*  
And there, unrotted, their pitch glinting, the sleepers.

.

from *Otherwise*  
(Auckland University Press, 2015)

After lunch my mother walks into the dining room  
and my father and I both  
blow our noses.

In the past when I thought about people my parents  
were somehow  
not among them. But some wound stayed

wide in all of us, and now I see in their faces  
strange rivers and waterfalls, tilted over with broom.  
You are watching the brown-paper covers of books grow

out around your father, as he dreams there  
against the wall, thinking perhaps  
how rocks are not quite lands.

.

from *This Paper Boat*  
(Auckland University Press, 2016)

## FROM: THIS PAPER BOAT

Gregory Kan

---

## DEUTERONOMY

*Andrew Johnston*

South of the past,  
dreaming she was still alive,

Echo came in low, under the dateline,  
over the mudflats, mirroring.

To see the plane kiss its shadow  
she would have to be somewhere else

but she sees it, she sees everything  
kissing everything. She was the pool,

his face bending lovely, lips  
touching down.

.  
*from Fits and Starts*  
*(Victoria University Press, 2016)*

His last four years have nothing to say,  
not because they don't want to

but because there are no real words  
to choose from.

Like a who's who in a who-dunnit  
the mystery resolves itself.

The first wrinkle around the mouth,  
the weather and waterskiing.

You can have the wallpapering.  
You can have the whist.

He whispers something about zippers  
and cultured milk

and then his arms are crossed  
over his chest.

Like a sarcophagus, like a bat sleeping,  
like an X.

.  
*from Memorandum of Understanding*  
*(Victoria University Press, 2016)*

## THE WHYS AND ZS

*Bill Nelson*



---

## THE LATE NEWS

*Michael Harlow*

This little boy  
with his new number-one  
haircut, his heart full of surprise,  
clutching his end-of-the-year report card  
to his chest, crossing High Street  
for the last time – without looking  
both ways

His black and white dog,  
her snappy tail on fast forward  
waiting for him, ears pricked,  
on the other side, the cars  
streaming by

Mother at the upstairs  
open window, ironing  
the family clothes, humming  
a familiar tune for company,  
just before raising her head  
to look down into the street  
of the dead

Later, on the late news  
someone, a bystander looking  
for some lost words – that kid  
he said. Not a chance.  
You know today is the longest  
day of the year, and it's  
going to last forever

.

*from Nothing For It But To Sing*  
*(Otago University Press, 2016)*

If I could seduce you with words  
I would touch your wrist  
with the word *wrist*, your ankle  
with *ankle*, caress your breast  
with the word *breast*; I would  
carefully name every part of you

then with fingertips  
I would touch your skin  
everywhere, between all  
the different parts of you  
with the word *love*, to leave  
your body complete

.

*from Reading the Water*  
*(Steele Roberts, 2016)*

## WITH WORDS

*Paul Schimmel*

---

## INTO EXTRA TIME

C.K. Stead

1

There are times (not many) when your whole life seems  
an open book. Whatever takes place takes words  
and the words are telling you

something. A biographer's wanting your life?  
You read her letter as a word of warning.  
You want to improve your French?

Why not say so in verse? You battle your way  
to the yellow buoy and feel an undertow –  
the lovely pull of language!

Nothing it seems is empty quite of meaning,  
and meanings not given their due in nouns and  
verbs are inclined to complain.

But when the thought comes to you from a poem  
by Jaroslav Seifert that – for all your words –  
what you really want is death

you say the time has come to stop this scribbling.  
It's late. You'd like to sleep, but behind closed eyes  
the words, like rats, are working.

2

Your books have read you too often. The songs of  
your youth have forgotten you. This world's an ear  
that listens for something new.

Your pictures that have stared down at you so long  
see scarcely even the one that once you were –  
and sometimes the yellow buoy

as you swim towards it murmurs to its chain  
'Here he comes again,' but without excitement.  
How easy for Captain Oates

to 'step outside for a moment' through that door  
marked 'Hero's End'. But did he hesitate there  
in the battering white-out

straining to catch a voice calling from within  
'Oates, don't do this! Come back!' and hearing nothing –  
nothing at all but the wind?

.  
from *The Black River*  
(Auckland University Press, 2007)

---

## SUBTEXT

Johanna Emeney

He has texted you again,  
bored in his empty apartment.  
The same old game.

Blunt thumbs  
pad out a sharp name,  
send and save.

You force a wry smile,  
brush it off,  
*This is just his style.*

And now you are in tears,  
your face a summer window,  
shown up,

smeared  
with the traces  
of hasty erasure.

All day,  
you keep the phone  
in your pocket,

charged  
with spent emotion  
and unsent words.

All day,  
your mind ticks over  
The Parthian Shot

that will invite no rejoinder,  
that will say it all  
in three lines – or under.

.  
*from Apple & Tree*  
*(Cape Catley, 2011)*

---

## CHILDREN

*Bill Manhire*

The likelihood is  
the children will die  
without you to help them do it.  
It will be spring,  
the light on the water,  
or not.

And though at present  
they live together  
they will not die together.  
They will die one by one  
and not think to call you:  
they will be old

and you will be gone.  
It will be spring,  
or not. They may be crossing  
the road,  
not looking left,  
not looking right,

or may simply be afloat at evening  
like clouds unable  
to make repair. That  
one talks too much, that one  
hardly at all: and they both enjoy  
the light on the water

much as we enjoy  
the sense  
of indefinite postponement. Yes  
it's a tall story but don't you think  
full of promise, and he's just a kid  
but watch him grow.

.  
*from Selected Poems*  
*(Victoria University Press, 2012)*



## THE POI GIRLS

Louise Wallace

---

Kahu, Mere, and Faith  
stand on the grass  
by the corner.  
They lean  
on the fence and watch you  
walk past –  
spinning, twirling their poi.

*Pou*

*Pou*

*Pou*

The Poi Girls  
say with their poi,  
with each hard slap  
of their poi.

On your way home  
they're in the same spot,  
Kahu, Mere, and Faith.  
Their older brother and cousins  
are fixing the car, out  
on Mere's lawn.

The boys stop as you  
walk by.

They lean their hands  
on the car's sides and look out  
from under the hood.

*What*

*you*

*want?*

The Poi Girls  
say with their poi.

You're walking  
down the dip  
but you have left  
your shoes at school.  
The yellow seeds  
stick to your feet,  
and when you get up  
the other side, The Poi Girls  
are looking  
at you.  
*Om*  
*Om*  
*Om-mee*  
The Poi Girls  
say with their poi.  
*Piss off,*  
you tell them,  
*leave me alone.*  
You don't need  
their crap as well.

You stuff Pak 'n Save bags  
into white plastic  
and tie  
them up with string.  
You walk past the corner  
twirling and spinning,  
*Hey*  
*you!*  
*Bumheads!*  
you say with your Pak 'n Save poi.

---

The Poi Girls chase you  
down the street  
but you are too little and fast  
for them,  
especially for Faith, the fat one,  
the one with the lighter skin.

One day in the cloakroom  
it's just you and Thomas  
and he tells you  
you have beautiful eyes –  
green *and* brown,  
just like his girlfriend, Jade's.  
The Poi Girls bust in, twirling.

*You*

*kissed*

*Thomas!*

The Poi Girls  
say with their poi,  
your cheeks  
pounding flush.

Your sister tells you  
to run through the mud  
and you say you will  
and that you don't even care.  
So you run  
and halfway you sink  
to your waist  
and down the dirt road  
come The Poi Girls, slowing  
to a stop.

*Ha!*

*You*

*egg*

The Poi Girls  
say with their poi  
and leave  
with your sister  
in tow, twirling.

It's sunny but cold  
that morning, on the way  
to school.

Mere's front lawn  
is filled with cars,  
and there are people in suits  
and old koros with sticks  
and The Poi Girls stand  
out the front.

Mere doesn't  
look at you today,  
so Kahu and Faith  
glare twice as hard for her.

The Poi Girls' poi  
hang still  
from their hands  
and today  
say nothing at all.

.

*from Since June*

*(Victoria University Press, 2017)*

---

## RAKAIA

David Eggleton

Dark feather of the rainbird, riroriro,  
sweeps over the ranges, bringing watercolours,  
as the facets of ridges ripple with snow-melt,  
and each angled rock-face spawns waterfalls,  
clear threads woven to join the heart of water  
beating in a youthful stampede of spring creeks  
that pull apart to bolt through bush; so spiral,  
purl, englobe boulders, and jostle back together,  
forming a restless racing torrent that collects  
brisk water, slow water, slack water, twirligig pools,  
ravelling these ribbons and vines into a river strand  
descending the mighty spine of the Southern Alps;  
and gathering in the flurries of many tributaries,  
until the Rakaia springs out of the mountains,  
a wily and seasoned campaigner meandering  
in lacy loops and twirls through channels,  
the gravity of gravels a growl in river's throat  
Rakaia, visible portion of a continuous seepage  
pulsing subterranean to the sea, flicking braids,  
the gliding pulse of its groundwater going strong.

.  
*from The Conch Trumpet*  
*(Otago University Press, 2015)*

as the spring rain  
caresses my face  
on a distant shore

I find myself longing  
for Avaiki

the way  
she used to rock  
me to sleep

cradle me  
in her midnight  
embrace

take my muted grief  
and grant it the right

to echo

among her slender peaks  
in the presence of great chiefs  
and fallen warriors

the solace she gave me  
when all that was left  
was the rain

.  
*from The Art of Excavation*  
*(Anahera Press, 2014)*

## AVAIKI RAIN

Leilani Tamu

---

## MISS BOWERMAN AND THE HOT WATER BOTTLES

Elizabeth Smither

Miss Bowerman and the hot water bottles  
'Tiny maids are strongest,' the housekeeper said  
when my mother was interviewed for Government House.  
'She looks too small to lift a mouse'  
but for screwing on Royal hot water bottles she was queen.  
The thought of a flooded bed was too much  
for any major-domo to bear. 'Fetch Miss Bowerman  
and let her apply her wrists, child-sized,  
to the bladder of near-boiling water  
to warm the sheets, the vice-regal feet  
or rest against the spine that stood  
bored and rigid in a receiving line  
and listened all night to boring speeches.'  
Next morning she was called again  
to undo the work of her marvellous wrists.  
'Miss Bowerman, can you let out the water?'

.  
from Night Horse

(Auckland University Press, 2017)

---

I was reading Boris Pasternak's biography.  
Controversy! The publication of *Doctor Zhivago*  
is imminent. He will receive the Nobel prize,  
to a chorus of Soviet boos. The biographer

is welcomed in, handed a drink. There are many toasts.  
*I am apolitical, have no idealist views*, Pasternak tells him,  
*am not a socialist realist, not even a communist*  
however casually asserts, *I am almost an atheist*.

Yet he is emotive in unfolding his ideas on God.  
Vodka voices raised, neighbours talk of burning  
Soviet literary critics yell, *get out of your ivory tower*  
but Stalin had once said, *leave this cloud dweller alone*.

Quickly I flip the page. I am interrupted  
an ant is traipsing across the page.  
Instantly, automatically, I flick at it with my finger,  
hitting it, but do not dislodge it.

The ant now crawls, one leg if that's what it's called  
bent at a bad angle, limping if that's what it's called  
toward the edge of the page  
and I bereft am left to wonder, what was it

that caused my need to strike at and hurt something  
ten thousand times smaller than me?  
I lose interest in history and slam shut the book  
open up the page, the ant now resembles a flat

question mark, unmoving under the word *unworthy*.  
At least it is out of its misery. Not me. I put the book down  
and write the poem. It is to me. But it is for the ant.

.  
from Everything is Here

(Escalator Press, 2016)

## ALMOST A BUDDHIST

Rob Hack

---

## AT FRANKTON SUPERMARKET, QUEENSTOWN

*Richard Reeve*

*for Tim*

In Frankton supermarket, it is possible to buy a frozen Atlantic lobster.  
Over for the day

from Hawea, past Cardrona, up the valley  
to the pass where the road snails its way onto the Crown Range,  
roll on up in your SUV, snowburnt, sunscreen-sweet, children  
  
in the back, beer up the front, note foxgloves, fences, rabbits, the odd

poplars peering at real estate (never allowed in), mountain elbows  
prodding each other for room. The subdivisions genuflect;  
at Arrowtown we round up the boy in glib reminiscence,

eat a pizza called Glenorchy at one of the local pubs.  
Taking selfies by the ruins, we are complex. Survivors,  
we have become the presiding custodians of perspective,  
paradisaal grubs awaiting the gulp of a new long century.

By the fruit and veg, I sponsor the Remarkables with my eyes.  
Eternal death, its blank face pressed up to the roof window,

browses today's specials, cold mountain ghosting a customer.

.  
*from Manifesto Aotearoa ed. Emma Neale and Philip Temple  
(Otago University Press, 2017)*

A kind of remittance man from northern Dublin  
he was easily a character from a Behan play  
or a late song by Thin Lizzy, sent to live in this city  
of grids and ghosts: duking it out with an ineffable  
darkness after his first marriage ended.

A black dog.

A Celtic duende. A man who proclaimed to function  
best in a state close to coma. He was accountable once a week  
(usually on Sunday) to suspicious questions fired  
down the phone-line in a thick brogue,

'Have you a job yet?'

'Were you in Mass today?' 'Your fahdha knows you're drinking.'  
—You hated Kerouac. You nicked my stash.  
I took your smokes. I ran up toll bills pining to ex-lovers.

Our good intentions forked like the tongue of the same serpent.  
I'll remember you best when we were at our best—  
on that Christmas Day we shared a stolen quart of Ballantynes—  
driving a borrowed Superminx up and down the street,

estranged from, longing for, the intimacy we talked of happening  
behind those closed and wreathed and silent front doors,  
or the time you just burst into the lounge: home from the doctor  
with a valium script (filled, of course) a bladder of Chasseur  
and the Oxford edition of *Ulysses* stuffed down your trousers.

.  
*from The Story of My Past Lives  
(Maungatua Press, 2017)*

## DROPPED PIN: JOLLIE STREET

*Michael Steven*

---

# LEAD

*Selina Tusitala Marsh*

You're a leader-in-the-making, you're making history  
Redefining this nation's brown legacy

Poly-saturated activity  
It's Nafanua graduating from university

And now

In tautua, lead our community  
Lead through uniqueness, your diversity

Lead through leaning, lead through learning  
Lead through others, lead by earning

Your own way in this world.

Lead in alofa, lead in compassion  
Lead in fun – lead in your own fashion

Lead by falling forward when you make a mistake  
Lead by giving more than what you take

Lead when your strategy is a forward-looking story  
Lead when the task in front of you holds no glory

Let your 'Yes' be 'Yes', let your 'No' be 'No'  
Lead and follow in the footsteps of all your heroes

Lead by creating out of happy accidents  
Lead by taking risks when there's no precedent

Lead by following the cup-o'-tea trail  
Sit, listen, eat and they'll follow without fail

---

Lead by digging up diamonds in those around you  
Lead when you scale the heights, then plummet to ground zero

Lead with transparency, lead with laughter  
Lead in celebration, lead in disaster

Lead with your strengths, lead in honesty  
Lead when you see between the lines of policy

And into the people's eyes.

Lead, even in the times you just want to follow,  
Lead for today, lead for tomorrow

Lead when you want to end all injustice  
Lead in the crowd, lead when it's just us

Lead when you want to revolutionise  
When you no longer want to be hypnotised

By what everybody else says is right  
Lead when you have your vision in sight

Lead from the front, lead from behind  
Lead from the middle, wherever you find

Your standing place.

In the workplace, in the home  
Lead when everyone's watching, and when you're alone

Lead with an eye on your dream, an eye on the rest  
Lead when you can look at yourself and assess

---

---

Your weaknesses and strengths with clarity  
Remembering humility and charity

Lead when you're brave enough to ask different questions  
And when the answers aren't good enough, to raise objections

Lead and give yourself permission to fail  
Lead and take the less-often-walked trail

Lead and never forget to be kind  
Lead with the heart bound up with the mind

Lead with a child's curiosity  
Lead with the end goal of unity

Lead with national excellence and innovation  
Lead through intimate conversation

Lead with courage and determination  
Even in the face of discrimination – Lead.

Lead with balance, a sense of fair play  
Lead to help others lead in this way

Lead when you learn your failures are a test  
Lead as you learn to lead from the best

Today we celebrate Pacific success –  
Now, Lead.

.  
*from Dark Sparring*  
*(Auckland University Press, 2013)*

*"I have come to an unalterable decision—  
to go and live forever in Polynesia  
then I can end my days in peace and freedom  
without thoughts of tomorrow and this  
eternal struggle against idiots."  
Paul Gauguin, October 1894*

Gauguin moves southwest,  
sucks on a guava kiss of helpless sea  
in the silence of Tahiti's night  
amid 'mad vegetation'—

*soyez mysterieuse*

Hey white girl  
does it ever cross your mind  
to unravel a boy  
to rattle the doors  
to banter and rant  
and run barefoot?

Crabs, bats, rats  
devouring seed.

Hibiscus flushes your cheek,  
frangipani fills his nose.

.  
*from Aue Rona*  
*(Steele Roberts, 2013)*

## WHITE GIRL'S BLUES

*Reihana Robinson*



---

**FROST**  
*Cilla McQueen*

Time comes when my compass  
trembles to your true absence

and I must turn you  
to the third person,

whispering to the kowhai,  
the patient constructions of spiders,

to the frost, he is history, gone  
from this round world, he is starlight.

.  
*from Fire-Penny*  
*(Otago University Press, 2005)*

Your being is  
a blazing star  
that turns and burns  
like Achenar,

like Fomalhaut  
or Betelgeuse,  
in my darkling  
universe.

A voyager  
in time and space,  
toward that light  
I set my face.

.  
*from Genesis*  
*(Maungatua Press, 2009)*

**YOUR  
BEING**  
*David Kārena-Holmes*

---

## QUESTIONS WITH WHICH TO INTERROGATE A WITCH

*James Norcliffe*

Your body mass index is noticeably low.  
Is this to gain easier access to the ether  
on nights when the moon is  
bloodshot and blinking?

Why have you so scrupulously shaved  
every last feather from your armpits?  
Was this another futile attempt  
to deny those dark malignant flights?

We note your body is wen-  
and blemish-free. You appear to have  
no warts arranged in perfect circles.  
Upon whom have you visited these?

No toads are in your garden.  
Have you eaten them, along with  
all of the newts, geckos, skinks and  
salamanders, also suspiciously absent?

Where is your sinister familiar,  
that low black cat with the yellow  
triangular eyes? Is this bird  
the simpering canary you have turned it into?

We will give you some time  
to consider these questions,  
but remember that though truth comes  
in a lumbering carriage, it will come

as it always comes: terrible  
in an iron helmet with spikes  
on the inside, honest spikes  
with screws to drive them home.

.  
*from Dark Days at the Oxygen Café*  
*(Victoria University Press, 2016)*

---

## IN THE BONDS

Marisa Cappetta

My wife is a massed display of devotion,  
a crackle of kindling on a frosted morning.

She is the vulgarity of a slammed door  
scarred by the blood and terror of her mother.

My wife arranges anniversaries in a bright orderly display.  
She is the aroma of cardamom, cinnamon and cloves

simmering in hot oil; she hoards the fat of our age  
and sings alternating canticles of parent and lover.

My wife's taste and artistry are not easily  
acquired by reading her shoulders, back or thighs.

She has advanced to a higher plane of garden design,  
planting the after-image of her children with the hollyhocks.

When we slip off our foundations she cracks eggs  
into a saucer and checks for rot before she whisks.

My wife might be an avoidable error, frugal  
fare indeed. Or she might be the adornment of our days.

.  
*from How to Tour the World on a Flying Fox*  
(Steele Roberts, 2016)

---

If the sky knew half  
of what we're doing  
down here

it would be stricken,  
inconsolable,  
and we would have

nothing but rain

.  
*from Just This*  
(Victoria University Press, 2009)

SKY

Brian Turner

## MILKING

Jillian Sullivan

---

Sometimes when I milk the goat  
early morning, her freckled, sagging udder  
familiar in my fingers, clean milk

foaming in the bowl, I do not know  
how long I can keep believing  
in the sanctity of marriage.

I carry milk to the daunted kitchen,  
with the cupboards nailed  
shut against the rates,

where honeysuckle seeps  
through wallboards and in winter  
the sun doesn't shine.

Sometimes I sneak to the edge  
of a ruined life and look  
down at how far I will fall, until the children

cry for their breakfast;  
warm milk  
on warm oats.

If there was someone else, but there is only  
the idea of someone else, who  
takes a turn at the plashing bowl

on the rickety milk stand, or bends  
beside me in the rows of silverbeet  
sharing the sun, and the spade.

---

---

And in the evening  
when he comes home, his arms tell me  
I belong here, and how sweet

the goat's breath when she turns  
her whiskered face to my own face  
laid on her warm, white flank.

She gives up her milk for us,  
as I could give up everything  
for the small ones, who didn't ask to be here.

If there was a stream  
I would take the path beside it,  
I would listen for that moment

when the water  
falls from the rock, that hallowed space  
before everything is over.

.  
*from The Unexpected Greenness of Trees*  
*(Caselberg Trust, 2016)*

**Jam**

**Slam**

**Rap**

**Join**

**Create**

**Make**

**Collect**

**Read**

**Write**


**Recite**


**Admire**

---

**CELEBRATING  
20YRS  
EST.1997  
POETRYDAY.CO.NZ**

---

 /NZPOETRYDAY

 /NZPOETRYDAY

**Known**

**Own**

**Inspire**