



## Poetry & Audience

50: 1

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### **Emily Green, Alison Moorland Winner 2020**

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# Editorial

Whilst writing this, the nation inhabits a place of uncertainty, with an imminent wave of covid climbing to a fresh peak, the future of asylum seekers scarily undetermined, the cost-of-living crisis, and the devastating war in Ukraine continuing. And so, this issue sets itself out with uncertainty after a pause in its long-established publishing, a paper bird mewling its way back to Hannah Copley's *smell of abandoned nest*, containing many poems which hauntingly occupy a state of liminality, of unknowing. Jeffrey Wainwright's first line *So here we find ourselves, for now* speaks to so many of us, whilst Kimberly Campanello's affirmation, *I work with the blankness*, offers us an olive branch from which we might endeavour to continue to sprout creativity. This issue is shrouded in *shadow; mist; negative space; a funeral in miniature*, yet it perseveres, with Casper Howell's *ballads of burning spliffs and sweet smoke*, so generously contributed and gratefully received. We are also debuting the poems which were selected in the *Alison Morland Prize 2020*, of which co-editor of *Poetry & Audience*, Emily Green, was the winner. *Poetry & Audience* would like to thank all poets included in this issue for their work and their patience, and its readers.

**Emily Green and Holly Bars**

Emily Green

## **Firsts**

A pointed stinger is drawn from my ankle  
with bedroom tweezers, mum's kitchen fingers  
careful on the squeeze and pull.

A funeral in miniature unfolds beyond glass doors,  
the coffin a convenient groove in weathered decking,  
just hallow enough to home a half-gone honey bee,  
and there are no attendees.

The off-beat slap of bare soles on tile,  
as feet pink faux-limp the pain away, is  
a procession, but homemade and childish,  
ringing with feelings unfelt.

Mourning comes, though. Moulds itself slick  
to mum's scooping motion as easy words pour  
smooth from parted lips, her palm eyeing heaven,  
*here it is.*

And to mum, so it was: a splinter-small swell  
in her life's full form, another insect death  
to drown quick in her surging whirlpool,  
but, to me,

a grand undulation,  
the sinking of a child's pliant heart,  
then the quiet stillness of firsts.

Matt Howard

## **Netting**

I'd barely a foot through the door, there he was,  
tiny, alone and agitated, gesturing from his day chair  
at the teatime news for me to see birds,  
sand martins, up at the north coast cliffs –

so bewildered in the nets over their nesting burrows  
and shattered at the end of such a long migration.  
Another night where none of his words could untangle.

Wickedness has its own weight. Days have hardly lifted  
since all those last Tuesdays, his last spring, and now  
they're netting hedges down that old back roads run.  
What is it in us that could spite a way home?

Andrea Loftus

**LS6**

The plumes cascade  
through red brick valleys,  
the throes of youth  
untied yet bound.  
The metal pillars,  
drowned and empty,  
like hourglasses draining sand.  
Reverberating back road baselines  
that trace nights drawing to a close,  
as dawn reveals the lonely lovers  
returning home on empty roads.

Jeffrey Wainwright

**Here I come**

Here I come, as though  
through a water-slide, head-first  
from my mother's crying,  
shouldering her pelvic bone, mucus-clad,  
bloodied, slithering, hard to grasp,  
gulping at this foreign gas,  
screwed-up against the light.  
Here is all there is of me,  
me exactly,  
into life and clinging to it  
without reflection, the boundary of me,  
the knuckle, kneecap,  
anything there is to celebrate,  
anything divine,  
is here in this wawl, squirm and slather.



Blaise Sales

**Living Words**

For the most part  
Motionless

But bound  
As a scroll

To unfurl

Heavy  
Deadened print

Ink pressed, deep  
Dried. Eons since

And still

Beneath  
Certain swathes

The light just-right  
The patient gaze

We find

The characters  
Creep outward

Wet  
And sticky

They glisten  
Beneath sound

The way  
Caterpillars crawl  
Or tendrils climb

Spreading sense  
From smallness

Dripping

In in-fin-it-  
Es-imals

Like raindrops  
On a leaf

Refusing to petrify

Jeffrey Wainwright

### **Standard Model**

So here we find ourselves, for now,  
deep in the Standard Model,  
that is the way the universe is lawfully arranged  
from a toilet brush to neutrinos,  
though the smaller things get  
the more doubtful they become,  
at best a momentary smear across a screen  
- was it there at all, and what does that mean?  
And they, these bosons and fermions,  
are everywhere, even beyond the next galaxy  
and pass through everything  
like a ghost through a wall –  
anything but standard.  
The sun on my arm, noticed briefly,  
the smell of ragwort, torn and rent,  
everything we are aware of  
inside and outside our words  
may have its bedrock in these bosons and their like  
keeping us and telling us we are alive.

Hannah Copley

*poems from* **Lapwing: a memoir**

Note: the following poems are taken from the second half of a book-length sequence that explores the life, disappearance, mythology, and legacy of a half-bird figure called Lapwing. Part two of the book is written from the perspective of his offspring, 'Peet'. These poems see her trying to trace Lapwing, while also recounting his life and reflecting on her own experiences of grief, habitat loss and survival.

*description*

'Last seen in his winter plumage. Black and white  
from a safe distance, metallic at close range.  
Undertail coverts rufous, cinnamon tinged,  
thin legs of bright red flesh. Almost raw looking.

Often mistaken for Hoopoe, which riles him.  
Black pectoral band, white flank, with a dark ring  
of colour beneath each eye the thickness of paint.  
Longest feather of his crest once boasted at four inches.  
Wings an iridescent green. Seen only when flying away.

Will go by Peewit, Plover, Tew-it, Lhapwynche,  
Peet-Peet-Peet, Toppy, Kievit, Lappewincke, Pater,  
Vanellus Vanellus, Phillipeen.'

*Is that all?*

'Just that everything he says sounds like a question.'  
*on the difficulty of care*

They once found him lulled beneath the concrete base  
of the pylon, raggedy feather rucked  
in leaf mould and mess. Smell of abandoned nest  
caught in the grass. Green feather almost a pure dull.  
Peet, leaning in close enough to hear  
his heart's violent thrum against the steady gust  
of each commuter.

Lapwing, otherwise known  
as 'Tew-it, remains where he tucks, body ringed  
by the offerings of his brood: proffered crane fly,  
larvae, a dozen wetland molluscs rotting  
into a single organism. Slug bloated  
and floating backwards in the waterlogged rut.

Indifference, otherwise justified as the quick nipping  
of pain in the bud, pulls Peet Peet to a safe distance.  
Let the pylon loom, she thinks, let him kite himself  
across this metal nation, let the A-road keep us  
forever severed. A safe acreage between them.  
Let him fashion his own flight home.

Love held  
in leagues, love wrapped in steel and power cables,  
love in concrete wings. Elsewhere, Lapwing,  
otherwise known as the empty head of his nest,  
continues to disintegrate.

*in which Peet repeats the lessons that Lapwing taught her*

That a field is only a defined shape from above;

that the neatness of a field  
on a piece of paper is a kind of shibboleth:  
*we are both wrong*, it says. *We have never lived in this field.*

That a child will always  
draw a square field;

that a field appears smooth to a drone  
or a balloon or an airplane or a paraglider  
or a sky lantern drifting slowly  
downwards;

that a sky lantern  
drifting towards the field portends death;

that a field is a series of jagged edges;

that a wheat field can be drawn as a racing  
heartbeat;

that a wheat field can be drawn  
as a disused needle factory;

that a wheat field can be drawn  
as a hoard of spent arrows;

that a wheat field can be drawn as the sky's  
scrubbing brush;

that each rutted valley is called ginnel;

that a field is part wrapper,  
part coin, part buried screw, part crudely  
painted stone;

that a field is only flat when seen from sky;

that a field roots itself  
deeper than it is ever able to rise.

Jon Glover

## **Escapology**

Cicadas, crickets, Katydid's sing, screech,  
for the holidays. For them it's work,  
defence or attraction. Precision through the  
glow worms and tree tops. The tree bark is song  
light but it knows itself though I don't here.  
Staying in Elaine's old childhood home  
where the cellar may have been used for freedom,  
the underground Niagara Railroad  
to Ontario, hard to think of free  
pilots, conduits and passengers  
needing a station to hide in, near the Lake,  
Hard not to think of Calais or Moria,  
a dis-fanciful, dis-abusing route  
into Elaine's book-led escapology.



Emily Rosette

### **Witchdoctor**

A wax figure of a woman overwrought with grief  
nobody cares to see the figure of a mother grieving  
for her fruit and seed.

Nobody really cares to see a mother who couldn't mother  
and now can only grieve.

Nobody even sees a mother. A failed.

An empty woman,

woman lack,

woman less

one less woman in my nest.

A mother who can only contort her body into violent shapes  
shaking like a spell, a sad spell and tears.

Like a witchdoctor      dance    and    dance    and    dance    and  
yet still not conjure her back.

Which is to say, it's the funeral day.

Caitlin Stobie

## **Waking a Sleeping Rabbit by Surrounding Him with Grapes**

In this frame, I am the fruits of tight skin  
lined artfully round your twitching

The still in still life  
as buck legs stretch  
to pulse and jump in dreams

You honk and squeak through  
imagined banana bites,  
parsley roots and dillweed  
(you've yet to smell red dripping sweet)

As an eyelid peels its lens  
we are frozen in symbiosis –  
you, lying side-like, looking shot,  
me, a membrane, doubled womb –  
and it's unclear who's the sacrifice

God is the hand that splits me even  
now, as your teeth range free from  
sleeping to waking, free for so long from  
decaying till time coils and I am once more a vine, vining

Round a rabbit-shaped negative space  
waiting for the thumbnail's knife  
to slice me open, please

Casper Howells

### **Low swinging shadows**

The shadows swung low last night  
and cast outstretched arms upon us.  
I felt them graze my cheek, raise my chin,  
with a cloaked hand that felt familiar.  
You felt them trace your fears,  
painting sweat that trickled down your brow.

I heard the shadows murmur their songs to me,  
ballads of burning spliffs and sweet smoke.  
The walls were wet with icy siren lights,  
bringing spray-paint tattoos to life.  
The echoes trailed behind as they passed  
and the horse-hooves slowed in your chest.

In the shadows swam cigarette butts,  
orange and white like autumn and spring,  
though seasons do not govern the dark.  
The only sun where shadows swing,  
hums and flickers in muddy reflections,  
glancing off gold, kissing steel.

The shadows loom again tonight.  
Far from any road, our trembling hands tangle.  
The antler branches rattle and wilt  
for they can touch but not entwine,  
and though our thorny fingers run blood,  
the shadows loom not so large.

Elizabeth Chung

## Hypochondriacs

Ten years have passed  
since our humid summer haven,  
since golden sun rays pierced through grey clouds  
and a low buzz of joy swept through the streets.  
姑姐<sup>1</sup> and 姑丈's<sup>2</sup> apartment in the suburbs,  
lying on their rooftop to watch clouds pass by,  
being called 寶寶<sup>3</sup> though not the baby anymore.  
Sticking to the leather of 麻麻<sup>4</sup> and 爺爺's<sup>5</sup> black sofa,  
watching Cartoon Network and sipping 麥精.<sup>6</sup>  
Since hearing the hypochondriac superstitions of 香港父母,<sup>7</sup>  
chanting through the metropolis;

*Eat all your rice –*

*Fish-eyes for the guest –*

*講大話甩大牙<sup>8</sup> –*

Ten years have passed.  
Everything has changed,  
Ocean Park is too expensive.  
姑姐 is gone, so is 爺爺,  
姑丈 has remarried,

and 表弟<sup>9</sup> studies in Australia.

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<sup>1</sup> Gu1 ze2\*1: father's younger sister (biu2 ze2 and biu2 dai6's mother)

<sup>2</sup> Gu2 zoeng6\*2: paternal aunt's husband (biu2 ze2 and biu2 dai6's father)

<sup>3</sup> Bou2 bou2: baby, darling – term of endearment

<sup>4</sup> Maa4 maa4: paternal grandmother

<sup>5</sup> Je4 je4\*2: paternal grandfather

<sup>6</sup> Mak6 zing1: Vita Soy – a brand of sweet soymilk popular in Hong Kong

<sup>7</sup> Hoeng1 Gong2 fu6 mou5: “Hong Kong father and mother [parents]”

<sup>8</sup> Gong2 daai6 waa6 lat1 daai6 ngaa4: literally, “say big talk, get rid of molar teeth”; tell lies and your teeth will fall out.

<sup>9</sup> Biu2 dai6: younger male cousin via female line

表姐<sup>10</sup> and I still eat with 嫲嫲 once a month,  
 giving her company and smiles.  
 表姐 and I still eat all our food, but now searching across the city –  
 sushi in 馬鞍山<sup>11</sup> and 旺角<sup>12</sup> for Hong-Kong-style cream puffs,  
 we drink bubble tea at every place we can, my treat.  
 My new family growing with 姨姨<sup>13</sup> and 細佬<sup>14</sup>,  
 sharing books and stories, playing 家姐<sup>15</sup> with advice and jokes.  
 Learning about home all over again,  
 my weak Cantonese growing stronger by the week.

Summer 2019:  
 Everything is changing.  
 We all wear masks everyday –  
 sterilized or gas –  
 and not wear black in a gathering.  
 I worry about the next time 表姐 texts me.

Two months, no word.

好耐冇見,<sup>16</sup> *how are you?*

*Keep working.*

*Scared of the white shirts.*

*Yellow helmets*

*Black helmets*

*Yellow umbrellas  
 shields.*

*Polycarbonate*

*Yellow*

*versus*

*blue.*

*You stand with who?*

*Do you protest?*

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<sup>10</sup> Biu2 ze2: older female cousin via female line

<sup>11</sup> Maa5 on1 saan1: Ma On Shan (a district in the New Territories of Hong Kong)

<sup>12</sup> Wong6 gok3: Mong Kok (a district in Kowloon, Hong Kong)

<sup>13</sup> Ji4\*1 ji4\*1: “auntie”, a colloquial term for middle-aged female friends.

<sup>14</sup> Sai3 lou2: “little brother”, a colloquial term for close, male friends who are younger than oneself.

<sup>15</sup> Gaa1 ze2\*1: older sister (polite term).

<sup>16</sup> Hou2 noi6 mou5 gin3: literally, “long time no see”.

*I cry.*  
*For my brothers and sisters.*  
*I cry*  
*from the gas.*

Tears for tear gas and tears for heartbreak.  
*I want my home back.*

Spring 2020:  
I sit on a cream suede sofa in Hertfordshire,  
surrounded by blue skies, flora, and fauna,  
green, pink, orange, and yellow,  
cats, dogs, bees, and birds,  
but see home through a digital screen.

Two more months,  
*好耐冇見, how are you?*  
*Staying inside with my mask.*  
*Be careful 表妹,<sup>17</sup> wear your mask when you're out*  
– same advice as my dad,  
*小心, 莉莉, wash your hands and stay in. 加油, 寶寶.<sup>18</sup>*

香港人<sup>19</sup> neurotic as always,  
but this time maybe they're right.

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<sup>17</sup> *Biu2 mui6\*2* or *biu2 mui6\*1*: younger female cousin via female line (my relation to *biu2 ze2*).

<sup>18</sup> *Siu2 sam1, lei6 lei6* [...] *gaa1 jau4\*2, bou2 bou2*: “Be careful, Lei-Lei [my nickname]” [...] “add oil [a term of encouragement], darling”.

<sup>19</sup> *Hoeng1 Gong2 Jan4*: “Hong Kong People”

Jon Glover

### **Darkness and Books**

I was watching and listening to glow-worms. How ever to go to bed?  
Darkness  
substitute indoors and a bedroom, I felt for ever on my skin tight  
paintwork,  
on the staircase up to the varnished woodwork leaving the buzzing insects  
owning  
their worlds. Yes leave it plural. Elaine you came out from multiplicity  
in school  
in the kitchen in gardens as big as a farm, the forest just over  
the fence  
just like a bookend, holding tactile knowledge in order or  
spitting it out as  
unreadable and full of strange unknown European beast  
on the page propped up.

Matt Howard

### For Milé

Not because he conjured the most sure-of-itself thing  
I've ever seen, that bulk of a male Ural owl  
amongst frost-rimed scrub with mist hanging  
the full length of the road, deep snow sloping  
away through vines up Vršac Hill's shrouded side.

Or because he was too shy or gentle to speak  
what is said to be excellent English.  
Or that his response to Milan's grunting  
and snorting in some approximation  
of a passing raven was the perfect pitch  
and tinkling of siskin that drew one in  
to perch on a fence post just for a look at him.

Or for the fact that he looks like Jesus  
or because Milan and Kalman called him *our Jesus*  
*of the border*, and told me how he lives  
alone in the woods, where he is more at home  
in the company of wolves. *He's a magician!*  
*See the miracle of his shit-beap jeep!*

But for the way the both of them, grizzled,  
still full of swearing and twice his size  
bear-hug him off his feet to kiss  
and kiss him at the softness of his temples.



Jeffrey Wainwright

**Perce**

Perce! Hey Perce! Wait!

I've been trying to catch you all my life!

Wait a minute.  
I'd just like a word.

You'll not know me  
but I'm your nephew  
I was here before you were gone,  
you wouldn't know.  
I'm your replacement sort of.

Look, I'll be quick.  
It's a good photo that you left,  
smart, smiling, hair nicely combed,  
you look friendly,  
was that you?  
that sort of lad?

All my life I've tried to catch you.

Don't be a stranger

or this ghost.  
I've had to make you up

from the photograph  
and having your name,  
still laughable Percy,  
and here you are –  
you might pause and look at me  
and wonder who –  
'what's this lad want of me?'

But you must get on,  
your greatcoat's gone  
and now in your tropical kit,  
you've got your death to deal with.

You turn away  
back into the photograph –  
I couldn't replace you  
for all the years I've had,  
and you weren't born to be a memory.

Why should you stop,  
look over your shoulder even?  
You're there now  
and I've nothing for you.

Jon Glover

### **Coal or Freedom**

Coal or freedom along the railroad to Lake Ontario's mud  
choice to be where  
a cellar on a farm, a ship standing by, North through the crops, slave  
food, sold, guts bucks  
hours of starvation despite the fields and corn, compass points blood  
lessness, it wants red  
colour back, when I'm cut or bruised there's no language to reply  
though heartbeats' truthful  
needs. Sorrowful trudge on and on past Appleton's cellars  
and in daylight to find  
body disgust yet more, footsore from hundreds of miles no  
vomit to come up sure  
walk to Barker past divided cemeteries  
bodies' religions recorded.

Matt Howard

**Lunge-feeding**

*Stellwagen Bank*

Look at that surface glimmer!  
A bubble-netted bait-ball of sand eels –  
how the fins and humpbacks are cooperating.

We are making memories, getting it all,  
exactly what we paid for: sunshine, the Atlantic tang,  
fluke displays, almost full breaches.

There's no word but *joy*, which is why we came  
after all. And it outweighs the rising swell,  
this quease as our eyes go swivelling

off the horizon; a submerged reflex that gasps  
at a paler humpback cresting, close in,  
with its spiracle-wheeze of mucus, salt and breath.

*Yes! Yes! That she blows!* A kid quips  
as another loses his Red Sox ball cap  
in front of the whole class, heaving overboard

everything had from the below-desk concession stand,  
a spume of \$5 pretzel, \$6 hotdog,  
washed down with some god-awful soda.

Jade Prince

### **Moonlight at Midday**

The day's perfume: yellow cough drops and mint.  
We perch on the frayed hem of the park,  
two bluebirds snared in gilded cage.

Bells peel with melodic cry,  
scattering sonic shavings  
that curl amongst warped frames of leaves.  
Silver eels sift through the grit of earth,  
spitting sepia over their shoulder  
and drowning in the velvet folds of  
golden puddles.

The world simmers with incandescence  
and the warm embrace of soft amber,  
then is struck sharp by the raw spark  
of a curious moon  
that spites the glowering sun.

You and I  
drink in the stillness,  
let the colours meld to our skin,  
trace the freckled constellations of  
scintillate pools and  
steely, electric daggers.

Jason Allen-Paisant

### **Self-Portrait as Othello III**

I was called *bois d'ébène*  
pieces of scattered wood

I am dismembered  
I look for the different parts of myself  
in the world's oceans  
in the black blood of Europe's  
monuments, in their sweat stains

In the nervous system  
of the bridge –  
Rialto –  
I sound my cells  
I have been here before and heard  
the lips of the water against the houses,  
seen the light of the Canal

This place is no stranger  
The vowels planed from the ocean  
dissolve on my tongue.

A patina-streaked conqueror  
wants to be my father  
*I birth you with my seed*

My name is in crisis.  
I am scattered all over  
your cities, Europe



Kimberly Campanello

### **Circling Work**

The work of archaeologists confirms that the ancestors hauled the sacred circle hundreds of miles to rehome it. This work in turn supports the ecstatic truth of a long-loved legend. In truth, the most important work I learned was circling the dough with my hand, working it over and onto itself, back home in the middle of the country. Though I learned from my ancestors and they from theirs, I never fully mastered it. I have since circled and worked over other things, on other matters, elsewhere. It doesn't matter that in different versions of another legend, life's very essence is sometimes rennet cheese, sometimes hardneck garlic, sometimes yeasty bread. Sometimes it's the yield of trees. We can work with all of them, and sometimes none. The creatures we collaborate with but don't master are careful where we are careless. They pick up the slack like we pick up the sacred. Carrying it from place to place and on and on, we graft and grind till it's lodged safely in the very heart of all matter. And so always in our restaurant the friends of my grandfather go on talking over old country matters, sipping coffee from stackable cups. And on the other side of the counter I work with the blankness, circling it with my hand as best I can.



## Notes on Contributors

**Jason Allen-Paisant** is a Jamaican writer and academic who works as a senior lecturer in Critical Theory and Creative Writing at the University of Manchester. He's the author of two poetry collections, *Thinking with Trees* (Carcenet Press, 2021), winner of the 2022 OCM Bocas Prize for poetry, and *Self-Portrait as Othello* (Carcenet Press, 2023). His non-fiction book, *Scanning the Bush*, will be published by Hutchinson Heinemann in 2024.

**Holly Bars** is a mature student currently studying at the University of Leeds. Holly's poems have been published since January 2021 by *The Moth, Ink, Sweat & Tears, Fragmented Voices, Porridge, Anti-heroin Chic, Visual Verse, Black Nore*, and more, as well as appearing in anthologies. She is currently working on her debut collection, *Dirty*, which will be published by Yaffle Press.

**Kimberly Campanello's** most recent projects are *MOTHERBABYHOME*, a 796-page poetry-object and reader's edition book (2019), and *sorry that you were not moved* (2022), an interactive digital poetry publication produced in collaboration with Christodoulos Makris and Fallow Media. She is a Markievicz Award co-recipient and has been awarded residencies at the Centre Culturel Irlandais in Paris, The Studios of Key West, and RANDOM in Italy. She is Associate Professor of Creative Writing at the University of Leeds.

**Elizabeth Edith "Lilli" Chung** completed her undergraduate degree in English Literature and Theatre Studies (International) at the University of Leeds, UK. Following an exchange year at the University of Hong Kong, her undergraduate Final Year Project was the critical writing and performance of an original theatre piece about her mixed-race experience. As she writes this, she is completing the edits for her MPhil thesis in English (Literary Studies) at the Chinese University of Hong Kong, on the topic of Literary Cartography in Hong Kong Literature, a field she hopes to continue researching via PhD studies in the coming years.

**Hannah Copley** is a writer, researcher and editor. She is a lecturer in creative writing at the University of Westminster and has been involved as an editor at Stand magazine for many years. Her debut poetry collection, *Speculum*, was published by Broken Sleep Books in 2021 and she is currently completing her next collection, which is all about lapwings. Hannah began her writing career as a co-editor of *Poetry & Audience* back in 2012.

**Emily Green** recently graduated from the University of Leeds, where she studied English and Philosophy. In 2020, she won the 'Alison Morland Poetry' for her poem 'Firsts'. Since then, she has enjoyed working as part of the *Poetry & Audience* editorial team. She looks forward to beginning her career in teaching English, as she is currently working towards completing her PGCE in Secondary with Post-16 Education.

**Jon Glover** studied English and Philosophy in Leeds between 1962 and 1969. At various times he was on the Board of *P&A*, edited the Poetry and Prose journal *61*, and started, from 1964, to help to edit and produce *Stand*. He met his late wife Elaine in Leeds and she also helped with *P&A*, and with *Stand* till her death in 2019. Both had poems in *P&A*. Jon's most recent book from Carcanet is *Birdsong on Mars*. He edited the *Complete Poems of Jon Silkin*. For many years he led BA, MA, and PhD programmes in Creative Writing at the University of Bolton.

**Rebecca Harrison** is a writer and director. During her final year reading English, Harrison served as Editor and President of *The Scribe*, the University of Leeds's Arts and Poetry Zine. After graduating, she debuted her first play, a comedy titled *Asides from the Elbow*, at the 2022 Edinburgh Fringe Festival with LS6 Theatre. Now based in North Yorkshire, Harrison is working on several writing and theatre projects, including a one-man show merging theatre, poetry, and comedy.

**Matt Howard's** first full collection, *Gall*, was published by *The Rialto* in 2018 and was winner of the 2018 East Anglian Book Award for Poetry, shortlisted for the Seamus Heaney Centre First Collection Prize in 2019 and won Best first Collection in the inaugural Laurel Prize 2020. After eleven years working for the RSPB, Matt is now the Douglas Caster Fellow in Poetry at the University of Leeds 2021 - 2023.

**Casper Howell** recently graduated from the University of Leeds. He is currently working in construction and writing in his spare time. He is working on a novel, although he often finds himself drawn to poetry in which to explore themes difficult to articulate. He is planning to travel next year and use his experiences as inspiration for his writing.

**Andrea Loftus** completed her BA Spanish and English Literature degree at the University of Leeds in 2020. During her final semester she wrote 'LS6', a reflection on the constants she found in the streets and people around her home in Leeds during the pandemic. Her poetry has also been published in the *University of Leeds Human Rights Journal Vol.8 (1)*, *The Release* and various print and online platforms. Andrea currently works in communications and continues to write observational poetry, exploring her interests in community and the environment .

**Jade Prince** is a 21 year old from Essex who recently completed her BA English Literature with Creative Writing at the University of Leeds. She has been selected as feature poet in *Makarelle* and has forthcoming pieces due soon for publication in various literary magazines. She is currently completing a Masters degree in Postcolonial Literary and Cultural Studies, also at the University of Leeds.

**Blaise Sales** is a second-year PhD student. Her PhD explores the relationship between embodied cognition and ecocriticism in contemporary world-literature. Before this, she completed an MA in Medical Humanities at the University of York and a BA in English at King's College London.

**Emily Rosette** is a poet based in Leeds, UK. She has previously been published in *Zarf poetry*, *Scope* and *The Sister Magazine*. She was shortlisted for the 'Alison Morland Poetry Competition' in 2020 and is an organiser of Leeds Poetry Festival in 2021.

**Caitlin Stobie** was born in South Africa and holds a PhD from the University of Leeds. She is a winner of the Douglas Livingstone Creative Writing Competition and the Heather Drummond Memorial Prize for Poetry, and was named by South African literary journal *New Contrast* as one of the country's 'rising stars' in poetry. Her debut poetry collection, *Thin Slices*, is forthcoming with Verve Poetry Press later this year.

She lives in Oxford and works at the University of Oxford's Ethox Centre and the Wellcome Centre for Ethics and Humanities.

**Jeffrey Wainwright's** ninth book of poems from Carcanet Press, *Here on Earth*, will be published in November 2022. A graduate of University of Leeds and former editor of *Poetry & Audience*, he lives in Manchester where he taught for many years at Manchester Metropolitan University. His prose work includes *Poetry the Basics* and *Acceptable Words: Essays on the poetry of Geoffrey Hill*.