



Poem Anthology

The following poems were created by participants aged 13–17, who took part in the 'Exploring Creative Writing through Poetry' Short Course at Guildhall School from 9–10 April 2022.

Welcome

Welcome, dear reader, to our collection of poems, written by some incredible young writers, during our creative writing course. It's important to note that these three poems are the product of only a weekend's worth of writing together. And yet, they show such a rich understanding of what poetry is, and can be.

Each poem carries its own, personal story – and opens a window into the gorgeously individual worlds of these writers. First, we have an epic poem that journeys through the soundscapes of life and death – reminding us of what it truly means to overcome. Next, a tender poem that lets us travel inside its depths to meet the sea, and witness the stories that wait beneath its waves. And finally, a moving meditation in prose poetry about the many beautiful and strange thoughts that carpets offer us, if we would only pay them proper attention. What wonders lie inside these pages.

It's important to say a very big thank you to the team at Guildhall, particularly to Laurie, Steph and Alex in their support in organising the course, and to Airelle for creating the graphic design for this anthology.

It was such a joy to be able to work with these poets. I was continually humbled by their intelligence and imagination. Each person brought such care to the work that we did. It was lovely to see how by the final day, we had not just a group of writers, but rather a community, uplifting and encouraging each other.

Not all of our poets on the course were able to contribute writing in time to submit to this anthology, but I can assure, their words were so very powerful and worthy of reading too. It's not always easy to share such personal things.

I hope these young poets realise just how moving their work is, especially in this difficult time. They give me hope for the future, in the knowledge that the world is a brighter place with their writing in it.

Annie Hayter

C minor

Adrien Prewer-Jenkinson

My Childhood is managed by the clicking
of a note.

The once soothing static tones of the naive
major key have shifted from their juvenile
state and transformed into the mature
mellow minor.

It is not a bitter melody that cascades and
caresses my calloused ears,

It is calming – almost soft,

Like years of raucous numbing tunes
disguised in the guise of bliss... ceased,

And changed from terror to truth.

At the tip of my tongue, there are troubling
tales of wordsmiths more tormented than I,

In the midst of my mouth there are more
moral melodies I could be humming than
this,

But this key beckons me as though I were its
spawn...

I perform my movement along this melodic
line while magenta mercury pours in pools
from my gaping mouth as I spin –

I dance like a child.

My arms are out stretched and straining, my
breath is heaving from exhaustion,

I am acutely aware that this alteration may
murder me – that is almost the point.

For while it is one reason to live for an
overestimation of humanities' desire to save
a splintering form,

It is another entirely to be willingly
resigned and offer yourself to death's
crushing grasp.

That is the true blasphemy to life – not my
acknowledgement that it is futile.

Although I know neither of this world's
extremities are evil, I have tasted the
forbidden fruits that bloom from living and
the temptation resonating from the concept
of dying,

And I have decided:

I shall not falter to insecurity alone.

It will take more than a couple crimson
cries to kill me.

My minor key believes in this life more
than any empty major alibi.

To follow those falsehoods is fickle –
Sisyphean.

I am not reproachful to those righteous
radicals that remind me how nooses played
in treble clefs are still honest endings;

But I cannot be one of them. Not anymore.

Life is too valuable of a piece to play –

Even if its manuscript is proceeded by
pessimistic preludes played by people

I dare not name,

My magenta will flood this floor,

And out of it I shall make my peace
knowing I did not cause my death and
that the timer would run dry from its own
course.

Sand slipping from the hour glass stand,
striving to suffocate me one day,

That day is not soon,

And that day is not known anywhere
anymore.

So the world is permitted to finish my piece
if it must;

As long as the pen is not placed in my hand
and perpetrated by sickly longing,

I shall still honour death... But no more
than I honour life.

That is what it means to live in C minor.

So, as I cry my final note, I implore you:

Place this piece upon your piano, just follow
the key, and let my music play.





Found at Sea

Sophia Hussain

The timeless ebb and flow of the tide

Sings across centuries

Soothing travellers' woes

And healing splintered souls.

Each wave washes in treasures

Pulled irresistibly

To a new place, a found place.

To be held by an infant

Grabbed by a magpie

Sold, borrowed, stowed or thrown away.

Finding fragments of stories

We glue them together

Making the truth whole.

comfort is a carpet

Freddie Radcliffe

an old carpet lies on the stairs. people constantly walking on top of him. i wonder how he must feel. he probably thinks we hate him.

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summer, it's boiling outside. people running up and down the stairs to change clothes. i wonder, is the carpet too hot? should i pour water on him? haha, no because i don't want to be interrogated by my mum on why i did it.

/

autumn, and i'm alone. well, almost. my cat is running up and down the stairs like a maniac as usual... no one will know, will they? I bend down and sniff the carpet. it reminds me of the countryside in summertime...

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if you were to ask me whether i prefer the countryside or the city, I wouldn't be able to answer. the memories of running in the woods at my ah-mah's house fill my empty head. i miss it. it smells like a farm and lying on freshly cut grass with the ducks from the pond quacking as if trying to tell me something.

/

i always loved sheep, so i think i'm respecting them by praising their fur. it's ok, it's not like it's a habit. one more sniff though.



