

# a fine line

The magazine of the New Zealand Poetry Society

Te Hunga Tito Ruri o Aotearoa

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New Zealand Poetry Society  
Te Hunga Tito Ruri o Aotearoa

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## WELLINGTON MEETINGS

Currently on hold.

## Quotations of the Month

In a sea of information, poetry is an anchor.

—Christina Patterson,  
*The Guardian*

Sometimes it helps to say it through a seashell. The sound of it washed in waves, loud yet silent, trailing in and out.

—Jennifer S. Cheng,  
*Black Warrior Review*

## Feature Article

Become a Better Poet:

### 6 Tips for Starting and Running a Poetry Critique Group

Karen Paul Holmes

*\*First appeared as a blog post for The Exit 271 Studio (<http://www.exit271.com>), August 2016*

Writers often write in a vacuum. I used to. I broke free from my isolation six years ago when I started the Side Door Poets. And here's the thing I discovered: since I've been part of this trusted group of peers who critique my work and encourage me, I'm a *better* poet.

Here are some well-tested tips on starting your own critique group, based on my experience:

**Find a venue:** We meet at a community room in my condo complex, centrally located in Atlanta, Georgia, USA (a city of five million). The room is free, and I can reserve it. Before this, we met at a library, which often have free meeting rooms that can be reserved (check their websites or call).

When we began with three people, we would meet at a restaurant, but it was noisy, there was no guarantee we could get a table and, once our group grew, it became impractical. Other ideas might be rooms at universities, community centres, churches, or meeting at someone's house. When I first started with a group of strangers, I wasn't comfortable having it at home, but now I would be.

I also sometimes attend a writing group when I spend time in the mountains, two hours from my home. Even though it's a small town, about 10 people regularly attend — some drive quite a distance to get there. So a need definitely exists for this kind of opportunity to connect in more rural areas.

**Advertise:** Make your group easy to find! I list mine with the Atlanta Writers Club and the Georgia Poetry Society. You could promote yours through the New Zealand Poetry Society, and on Facebook and LinkedIn.

I have invited poets I met and liked while attending writing workshops. You could also contact English teachers — several of the Side Doors teach in high schools or universities.

I recommend publicising a regular meeting day and time. Now that my group and I are more informal and have become friends, we're flexible with our schedule but still meet monthly.

**Select members:** When someone wants to join the Side Door Poets, I ask for a few poems to be sure that the poet is serious about craft. I aim for a mix of experience and backgrounds because I know that diversity will help everyone become better poets.

I have had only one problem. When we were small and less selective, one woman ruined our group dynamic. She talked too much and did not know much about craft. Because she was a needy person, I thought it would be mean to kick her out. But members convinced me it was unfair to everyone else to keep her. That did it! I politely asked her to find another group or take a class, and I gave her resources. She sent an angry email, but that was that. As the leader of a critique group, sometimes you will have to make tough choices.

I also chose to keep the group adults-only when I had an inquiry from a teenager, but that could be an individual choice.

**Determine format:** The Side Door Poets only critique poetry and can effectively review a maximum of ten poems in a two-hour period. I ask members to RSVP for the meeting, so we know how many plan to come. We don't send poems ahead of time; instead, we bring copies for everyone. I randomly shuffle to determine the order. One poet reads while the rest follow along. We take a minute to digest and jot notes, and then we discuss.

Though it's often recommended that the poet not speak, we don't enforce this rule. The poet is quiet for a while but then can ask and answer questions. We all feel the dialogue is useful. Rather than discussing typos or grammar, we mark them on the paper, unless it's a tricky situation worth talking about. I don't set a timer — there's usually a natural pause in the discussion, and we move on, returning our copies to the poet with our names on them, in case the poet has a question later.

I do know of mixed-genre groups, so that's an option, especially if you're having a hard time finding enough members. For prose, you'll have to limit the number of words to critique in one session for each writer, and it's helpful to email the piece to members before the meeting.

**Set the mood:** In the beginning, I emphasised that critiques needed to be kind but useful. No tearing a poem apart viciously but also no namby-pamby "what a lovely poem" comments. Our purpose is to help each other be better poets. We say what we like, and we say (kindly, firmly) what could be improved. We don't re-write the poet's poem but may make wording suggestions.

I discourage defensiveness on the poet's part. We're an amiable group. Sure, sometimes one of us gets on another's nerves or says something someone doesn't like, but generally, we trust each other and get along. If someone takes the discussion off-track, one of us gently brings us back on topic.

When we meet at night, some people bring wine and munchies. On a Saturday morning, I bring coffee and tea. We don't have a formal sign-up for refreshments.

**Support each other:** The Side Door Poets became friends quickly because we shared our intimate stories and vulnerabilities via poetry. We've had Christmas parties and hosted readings for each other. We buy each other's books, write recommendations and blurbs for each other, and share our publishing acceptances — and rejections. (We have a private Facebook page to facilitate sharing news).

The group has had remarkable success. Among our members, our books have been published by reputable poetry presses; poems included in anthologies — such as *Stone, River, Sky: An Anthology of Georgia Poets* (Negative Capability Press, 2015) — and nominated for the Pushcart Prize (a significant literary prize in the US); and we have won awards.

I can honestly say each Side Door Poet values the group professionally and personally. We have grown and no longer even keep a waiting list of people wanting to join — we have little turnover in membership.

Members often thank me for keeping the group going, but I thank them for making it a mutually beneficial community. We know our publishing successes are in big part due to the challenges and encouragement we get from each other. I've had a book published and am sending out another manuscript — something I couldn't have done without my group's support.

I encourage you to join a group or start one if there aren't any in your area. You may have to start small but, as the energy of the group develops, it will draw the right people to it.

Writing shouldn't be lonely — sharing your work takes it to a new level. Your poetry will improve, as will your confidence.

## *From the Editor*

*By Ivy Alvarez*

For National Poetry Day 2016, I attended a poetry reading at a bookshop in Mt Eden, Auckland. About 80 people gradually appeared in a room fit for 50. Still, there was something thrilling about the sheer number of people compacted in a small space, willing to sacrifice personal comfort to hear the news only poetry can deliver.

What was your National Poetry Day experience like?

During National Poetry Month in the States, a Boston non-profit group, Mass Poetry, used clear, waterproof paint to stencil lines of poetry on pavements, lines that can only be read when it rained. Sing Lit Station in Singapore has plans to bring its streets to life with poetry. Why not us? We have enough rain. Might we do the same in Aotearoa next year?

I would love to see your Letters to the Editor, book reviews (500 words max), articles about writing and poetry (750 words min), and no more than 4 poems from members (40 lines max) for the November edition of *a fine line*. Email [editor@poetrysociety.org.nz](mailto:editor@poetrysociety.org.nz), due 10 Oct.

Selected work will receive book tokens. Please view our guidelines on the website.

A warm thank you to Anna Hudson for her stalwart patience, and the NZPS Committee for their guidance as I put together this edition of *a fine line*, brimming with thought-provoking articles, insightful reviews and evocative poetry. I am especially delighted to publish Kerrin P. Sharpe, our Featured Poet this month.

Happy reading!

# About our contributors



## Catherine Amey

Catherine Amey is a librarian, writer, and baker from Wellington, who enjoys hanging out with most kinds of animals, including humans. She lives with the love of her life in a tiny house full of books with a wild garden overlooking the sea. She still feels guilty about the cockroaches.

## Barbara Bailey

Barbara Bailey is an Auckland writer and painter. Her writing and painting are intrinsically linked. They share expressive elements that connect human beings' perceptions, emotions and experiences. Barbara has exhibited paintings throughout New Zealand and overseas. She has published poems, travel articles, fashion pieces and product descriptions.

## Irene Bakker

Irene Bakker: "Wanting to reinvent myself, I discovered haiku. After unsuccessful, frustrating attempts at writing haiku, I taught myself to write tanka by reading other poets' work and how-to articles. To my surprise, my first tanka was accepted for publication last year. I enjoy the brevity of the genre and its impact on the senses."

## Anne Curran

Anne Curran is a Hamilton poet. She has been writing verse for some years now, but feels that she is just making a start. She is grateful to family, friends, poets and editors for the inspiration they provide.

## John Ewen

John Ewen writes poetry, short stories and plays, as well as nonfiction. His work has appeared in Takahe, Catalyst and JAAM, the UK online literary magazine Five Dials, various anthologies and broadcast by Radio NZ. He is a Hagley Writers' Institute graduate.

## Karen Paul Holmes

Karen Paul Holmes has a poetry collection, *Untying the Knot* (Aldrich Press, 2014). Her credits include *Best Emerging Poets* (Stay Thirsty Media, forthcoming), *Poetry East*, *Slipstream*, *Cortland Review*, *Lascaux Review*, *Skive Magazine* (Australia), and many more. Karen hosts an open mic and a poetry critique group. <http://www.facebook.com/karenholmes>

## Anna Hudson

Anna is a Wellington based poet and writer who lives in Island Bay with her partner and semi-feral cat.

## Dr Maris O'Rourke

Dr Maris O'Rourke began writing in 2008. Since then she has been well placed in a number of competitions and published in a wide range of journals and anthologies in New Zealand and overseas including inaugural featured poet in a fine line. In 2015 she won the coveted IWW's Kathleen Grattan Prize for a Sequence of Poems.

## Vaughan Rapatahana

Vaughan Rapatahana continues to criss-cross the Pacific from Aotearoa to homes in Philippines and Hong Kong. His writing across several genres also continues to criss-cross the globe via international publication in both Maori and English. This is his NZBC writers file: <http://www.bookcouncil.org.nz/Writers/Profiles/Rapatahana> Vaughan

## Kerrin P. Sharpe

Kerrin P. Sharpe's first book is *three days in a wishing well* (Victoria University Press, 2012). A group of her poems appeared in *Oxford Poets 13* (UK: Carcanet, 2013). A second book *there's a medical name for this* (2014) was also published by VUP, with her third collection *rabbit rabbit* just published this year (2016).

## Gus Simonovic

Gus Simonovic is a cultural catalyst, artist, educator, entrepreneur, publisher, producer, a Poetry Slam winner, Auckland coordinator for NZPS, driving force behind long-standing poetic project Printable Reality [www.printablereality.com](http://www.printablereality.com). As a Yoga teacher and massage therapist, Gus combines his passion for art and dedication to wellbeing in running Yoga and Creativity workshops and retreats. [www.tehengastudios.com](http://www.tehengastudios.com)

## From the President

### The New Zealand Poetry Society: Acting President's Report, 2016

I'd like to begin, as always, by thanking all those who make the work of the New Zealand Poetry Society possible. We remain grateful to our Patrons, Dame Fiona Kidman and Vincent O'Sullivan for their ongoing interest. The web development company Signify continues to host our website for free, for which we are most grateful; and Community Post makes it possible to inexpensively promote and follow up our annual competition, as well as assisting with anthology posting costs.

Big thanks are due to our Committee members Anna Hudson, Gus Simonovic, Kathryn Reeves, and Sally Legg, all of whom stepped up this year when our previous President, Lonnard Watkins, resigned mid-term for personal reasons. We thank Lonnard for the huge chunk of work he put in while he was able. Anna in particular has taken on a vast amount of the work of running the organisation this year, and I'm inexpressibly grateful for her willingness to take a load off me, after I tried really hard to retire last year.

We currently have around 170 members, with more and more finding us in Auckland, thanks to our Auckland rep, Gus, who promotes the NZPS at every opportunity.

*a fine line* took a bit of a hiatus last year, and I'm pleased to welcome our newly-appointed editor, Ivy Alvarez, to the Committee. Again, it's thanks to Anna that the most recent issue of the magazine was created while I was flitting around Italy in June.

Unusually, the 2015 competition made a small loss, due to reduced entry numbers and the cost of an extra

section to acknowledge the 100th Anniversary of the Gallipoli landings. However, anthology sales more than made up for it, and the overall cycle was profitable. I remain forever grateful to the Jeanette Stace Poetry Trust for continuing to offer supplementary prizes in the haiku sections.

I'm reluctant to offer too much public praise to last year's anthology editor, since that person was me, but I'm delighted to report that the cover by Helen Rickerby was brilliant and received widespread positive feedback. The collection, *scattered feathers*, sold well, and we are still receiving orders for the last handful. Our anthologies always make useful gifts for people who enjoy reading poetry, but who wouldn't risk buying it from a bookstore. Unsold back copies are donated to prison libraries, where, I am assured, they are highly sought after.

The website is a work in progress, and the progress is great. Kathryn and Anna are working together to develop a new site, and early versions of it promise an excellent outcome when it's completed. Our social media presence has grown dramatically, and the Facebook Page is extremely popular. It is our intention to eventually enable members to post their own events, making it extra valuable for those who support the Society by actually joining it. As always, Sandra Simpson continues to make the haiku pages a most reliable go-to destination for the international haiku community.

Our biggest effort, of course, was the National Poetry Conference, held at the National Library in November. Lonnard and a troop of willing helpers, including especially Gill Ward, put together a comprehensive programme with some amazing presenters, and it was a busy and buzzy weekend. We are now committed to supporting a biennial event, which will move around the country. The next one will be in Auckland next year and already Gus is liaising between the organising committee and our committee, as our representative.

One thing we stopped doing this year was holding monthly meetings in Wellington. Attendance gradually decreased to the point that the Thistle Inn was no longer willing to host us, and we reluctantly made the decision to cease meeting. Reluctant, because meetings were the genesis of the Society back in the 70s. However, there are so many poetry opportunities these days that the original reason isn't really relevant any longer. If anything, it's a sign of just how popular poetry is that there is room for many events, and we can focus on other business and new initiatives for making this a truly national Society.

The Lauris Edmond Award for Distinguished Contribution to Poetry in New Zealand is currently between years, in which we save up for the next one. Last year, it was presented to Bob Orr at the Wellington Festival, and for the first time, our financial prize was supplemented by Victoria University Press. Both the Society and the Friends of the LEA are grateful to Fergus Barrowman for coming on board with the Award. It is slowly but definitely growing to be a prestigious and desirable recognition of some of the country's unfêted senior poets.

The financial situation remains healthy, and allows us

to start paying for committee services again. The growth of the Society demands more concentrated effort than can be provided by volunteers alone, though of course they remain welcome and more support is always appreciated.

## Conclusion

The Society is still up and running, despite premature rumours of its demise when the magazine went into remission briefly last year. Behind the scenes, things were still ticking over, and significant progress has been made in improving committee processes. The committee is determined to ensure a healthy future for the Society, and we are constantly working on new initiatives to grow it.

At the 2014 AGM, I confidently declared that was my last report as President, and it hasn't quite worked out that way. I believe another year's work by the fantastic people who are willing to be on the committee from this meeting will have the Society in such a thriving state that I'll be able to stand down with a sense of relief that all is well. This year has been testing; we've come through it, and it's all looking very promising.

Thank you all for your confidence in the committee. With your financial input and moral encouragement, the NZPS will continue to support New Zealand poets and poetry for many years to come.

*Laurice Gilbert,  
Acting President  
August, 2016*

## CALL FOR POEMS: NZ EDITION OF ATLANTA REVIEW

### Live in Aotearoa, New Zealand? Have poems?

Selected writers receive publication and copies of Atlanta Review (NZ edition)

### Your poems

Please send 3 poems (max), 70 lines (max) per poem.

Poems must not be previously published in print in the USA or Canada (all other countries acceptable) or in online publications, where another editor selected your work.

Poems can either be pasted in an email, or as an attachment (.doc, .docx, .txt or .pdf).

Email your poems to [nzedition2017@gmail.com](mailto:nzedition2017@gmail.com), addressed to Ms Alvarez, editor.

This NZ edition is forthcoming in the Northern Hemispherean spring, 2017

Deadline 1 October 2016.

# Letter to the Editor

## Concerning National Poetry Day

Dear Editor,

I am puzzled as to why we celebrate National Poetry Day when we do. Who sets the date as the third Friday in August and what is the rationale behind that?

World Poetry Day is held on 21st March annually — a Tuesday in 2017 — and it would seem to me that it makes more sense for us to join in the international celebrations, while retaining a prominent focus on New Zealand poets. We are a small — no, let's call ourselves a *boutique* — nation far, far away, and wouldn't it be nice to allow the world to be reminded once a year how good our poets are?

Is there anyone who agrees with me on this?

I recently attended the 35th IBBY Congress hosted by Storylines and held in Auckland in August. Among the focus sessions, where four speakers on each topic held forth on a pre-chosen theme, mine and Tommy Kapai Wilson's was on storytelling and books from our own backyard. Such sessions were supplemented by poster presentations, where originators of ideas or schemes outlined these on illustrated posters and made comments, and answered queries on their chosen topic. Among them was an American poster, where the woman squealed her delight when she saw my delegate's name tag and pointed out *Poetry Pudding*, the collection I put together for Reed with Kiwi poems by Kiwi poets for Kiwi kids, was on the poster.

I think this refutes an idea often put forward to me that our books don't travel well if they're New Zealand-based, and New Zealand-biased. Here was a woman who disagreed, and her poster included info on poetry from many other countries, too. I was so proud to be a Reed author, I even attended their 100th birthday and got a free copy of their company history, *Whare Raupo*. Only a few months later, they were bought out by Penguin, renamed *Raupo* and *Poetry Pudding* disappeared, taking my carefully prepared teachers' notes along with them. Strange all these years later to have its worth acknowledged by an American!

And is that par for the course? Especially with poetry, where it's better to create a good reputation abroad, or publish independently. Again, writers tell me you're more likely to get grant-aid if you write 'New Zealand stuff', yet our mainstream publishers — the few that remain — seem to argue for works that are not 'provincial'.

Increasingly, we have to put our own time, energy and money into proving them wrong, and that takes me back to the idea that it might be sound common sense, and even good marketing, to line up our celebration of poets and their poetry with World Poetry Day from 2017 onwards.

Jenny Argante

Editor, *Freelance* – Writers Helping Writers

# Feature Article

## Queensland Poetry Festival 2016 – Lost Language Found



Report by Gus Simonivic

Given the word limit and a timeframe of "*my rapido*" from our lovely new Magazine editor — I write this article (at Brisbane International Airport) about a Festival I just left, but which certainly didn't leave me — I am seriously tempted to just say *fabulous, amazing, unbelievable, sublime*, and then find another 746 words to say *the finest, highest standard, inspiring*. Or perhaps just use a good old Kiwi standard: *Choice, mate!*

Certainly wouldn't be a great read, but it would be the most honest and accurate review I could convey.

**Rewind.** As I land on a warm Gold Coast evening last Thursday, a friend picking me up from the airport says, 'Let's try to catch a local Poetry Slam, so you get a taste of what's to come.'

As we enter the venue, I hear the familiar voice of Grace Taylor finishing her set and introducing another amazing NZ poet, Ben Brown. Half of the audience are Kiwis, and after some great late-night poetry, the evening ends with lots of hugs and turns into a spoken word, hip-hop party. A great start and a warning-without-disguise about sleepless nights and skipped meals to come, over the course of a glorious, poetry-packed weekend, when days and nights blend into one big poetic-rollercoaster-experience.

The venue, the Judith Wright Centre, is a perfect choice with spaces dedicated to performances, readings, panel discussions, film screenings and a book / merchandise shop.

The Event also reaches out to wider audiences and communities through an extensive program of 'satellite events', as well as a substantial educational timetable delivered by an esteemed international Festival guest to hundreds of Australian schools, via an internet platform provided by the Ministry of Education.

**The sessions** — view the program for more details on [www.lostlanguagefound.com](http://www.lostlanguagefound.com) — vary in content, from poetry to music, dance, discussion, science, spirituality, indigenous cultures, language, activism and film, but certainly don't fluctuate too much in quality.

I stroll from one session to another, enchanted, or perhaps it would be better to say *hypnotised* by the calibre, sincerity and uniqueness of the presentations. From Pulitzer Prize-winners like Tracy K. Smith, to spoken-word legends like Morganiacs; from a film

featuring Australian poetry icon Clive James, to a Hip Hop dance short *Rising Dust* (shot in rural locations around the Hokianga), which was accompanied with commentary by NZ poetry superstar, Robert Sullivan.

Following the continuous string of high-quality showcases, which started from early morning to late at night, is like walking on a tightrope of pleasure and anticipation. Comedic to operatic, musical to dance, cabaret to word-poignant performances — all nicely-wrapped in the best possible artistic and poetic ways. I was sure to be laughing or tear-full, or being otherwise mind- or heart-blown after every single session, barely being able to even follow the program or know *what's coming next* — and in the end, did it matter?

The overarching theme of the Festival, “Lost Language Found”, meant that audiences were given access to a carefully selected list of guests and acts, almost all from First Nations, with special showcases of indigenous artists from territories and lands across Australia, Canada, Singapore and New Zealand.

It's fair to say that I am quite snobby when it comes to poetry events of any sort, thinking, ‘I have seen that’, or that I can always do better than what's on offer. Even though there is no textbook or manual on how to make these kind of events successful, no matter how many big names or sold-out sessions you have, the 2016 Queensland Poetry Festival definitely carried that elusive, memorable, magical, ‘mojo’ element. Congratulations to the Festival Directors (one of them's a Kiwi: Anne-Marie Te Whiu) and the whole crew!

#### **Postscript:** ( *shhhh* )

Although I would, without any reservation, recommend this kind of experience to any ordinary ‘arts-loving punter’, attending can be possibly fatal for a poet. Potential dangers are not limited to:

- raising a strong feeling of inadequacy;
- being so intensely inspired as to pose a danger to yourself and others;
- not being able to cross the road;
- forgetting where your passport or undies are;
- walking too close to suburban fences in the early hours of the morning, trying to activate sensor lights, so you can write down in your notebook some parts of the five poems that you are simultaneously writing in your head...

Anyhow, here are my 750 words' worth, in the hope that we can re-create, to any extent, this standard and sensation at the 3rd New Zealand Poetry Conference and Festival, to be held in Auckland on 10-12 November 2017.

## Opportunities



### Cookham 2017 Festival Stanley Spencer Poetry Competition | Closing Date: 30-Sep-16

The Cookham Festival has teamed up with The Stanley Spencer Gallery, The University of Reading and Two Rivers Press to organise an international poetry competition on the theme of Stanley Spencer; his work, his life, his themes, influences or beliefs. First prize £2500, plus 2 runner up prizes of £500. All shortlisted works will be published by Two Rivers Press in an anthology. Poems must not exceed 54 lines.

Entry Fee: £10 for each entry.

Contact: For entry and more information see: <http://www.cookhamfestival.org.uk/>

### The Ballymaloe International Poetry Prize 2016 | Closing Date: 31-Dec-16

Prizes: 1st prize 10,000 Euro, plus 3 prizes of 1,000 Euro for each of the shortlisted poems. For an unpublished poem of any length. The four winning poems will appear in the spring issue of *The Moth*. Judged by Deborah Landau.

Entry Fee: £12

Contact: See: [www.themothmagazine.com/a1-page.asp?ID=8010&page=13](http://www.themothmagazine.com/a1-page.asp?ID=8010&page=13)

### Prole, Poetry and Prose

Prole, Poetry and Prose is open to submissions of fiction, creative non-fiction and poetry. Our submission guidelines are here:

<http://prolebooks.co.uk/submissions.html>

We are also taking entries for our prose writing competition, The Prolitzer Prize. We have a £300 prize fund and the excellent Angela Redman is our judge this year. Full details are here:

<http://prolebooks.co.uk/prose%20competition.html>

Prole was recently voted best Literary Magazine 2016 at the Saboteur Awards.

### Turbine | Kapohau (from IIML)

Our online journal has a new name and is open for submissions.

Many thanks to Karena Kelly from Te Kawa a Maui for her advice with the reo. Karena explains: 'Kapohau is the Māori term for the action of a wind turbine, comprised of 'kapo' (to catch/capture) and 'hau' which typically means wind in the turbine context. However, 'hau' is also used in other contexts to mean the vitality or vital essence

of a person, place or object. It seems to me that this ambiguity makes for an apt play on words and a beautiful fit for your journal.'

The deadline for submissions is 28 October, and the submission guidelines are on the Turbine | Kapohau website (<http://iiml.cmail20.com/t/j-1-kdirudl-ctkolkj-s/>).

## Fire River Poets Open Poetry Competition 2016

Closing Date: 31-Oct-16. 1st Prize: £200, 2nd Prize £100; 3rd Prize £75. Adjudicator: Alison Brackenbury. Prizewinners will be notified at the end of January and winning poems will appear on the Fire River Poets website. Prizewinners will be invited to take part in a special reading in Taunton with Alison Brackenbury in April 2017. 40 lines maximum.

Entry Fee: £4 for one poem; £3 each additional poem.

Contact: SEND TO: Fire River Poets Poetry Competition 2016, 2, Deane View, Bishop's Hull Road, Taunton TA1 5EG. For further information, rules and entry details, including online entries, visit <http://fireriverpoets.org.uk>.

## Inspired by Film Poetry Competition 2016

Closing Date: 01-Dec-16. This competition is open to all participants of the Inspired by Film poetry workshops taking place at The Friends' Meeting House, King's Lynn, Cambridge Picturehouse, Crouch End Picturehouse, Cinema City, Norwich and the NAWA Conference workshop at Stratford-on-Avon. You may enter one poem inspired by the workshop themes. Judges: Maura Dooley and Heidi Williamson. Prizes: First Prize One-year Picturehouse Membership, a poetry book bundle (including signed copies of our judges' books) and a one-to-one mentoring session with one of our judges. Second Prize: A Day School of your choice at Cinema City, a poetry book bundle (including signed copies of our judges' books) and a one-to-one mentoring session with one of our judges. Third Prize: Magnetic Poetry Kit, signed copies of our judges' books and a Writing Ideas notebook and pen.

Entry Fee: £0

Contact: For entry and further information see: <http://www.sueburge.uk/poetry/>

## Katikati Haiku Contest (NZ)

Closing date: October 31 (in hand). Entry fee: Senior section (18 & over) \$5 for every 3 haiku, \$2 for 1; junior section (17 & under) \$1 for up to 2 haiku. Overseas entrants \$US5 for every 3 haiku, \$US2 for 1 (PayPal available). Prizes: \$100, \$50, \$25 (seniors), \$50, \$25, \$10 (junior) and a book prize for the best haiku by a local writer. Judges: Sandra Simpson (senior), Catherine Mair (junior). Full details at [www.poetrysociety.org.nz/haikunews/competitions](http://www.poetrysociety.org.nz/haikunews/competitions)

## The Peter Porter Poetry Prize

The Peter Porter Poetry Prize is one of Australia's most prestigious prizes for a new poem. The Prize – now open to all poets writing in English – is named after the great Australian poet Peter Porter (1929–2010). The Prize was first awarded in 2005 (Stephen Edgar) and renamed in 2011, following Peter Porter's death.

Past winners include Tracy Ryan, Judith Beveridge, and Anthony Lawrence. To date, Judith Bishop is the only poet to win the Prize twice.

Each year, all the shortlisted poems are published in the magazine, giving them equal prominence. The overall winner (who receives \$5,000 and an Arthur Boyd print) is then named at a subsequent ceremony.

Entries are now open for the 2017 Porter Prize (worth \$7,500).

Entries close 1 December 2016.

More information on the website: <https://www.australianbookreview.com.au/prizes/peter-porter-poetry-prize/current-prize>.

## Brief

*Brief* is an independent print journal, founded in 1995. It appears biannually and publishes poetry, prose, essays... and things which are difficult to categorise. We are always looking for interesting, experimental, adventurous, or challenging new writing, from both established and emerging writers.

Full details of how to submit, subscribe, etc are on our website: [www.briefthejournal.nz](http://www.briefthejournal.nz)

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Keep up-to-date with all the latest opportunities on the NZPS website ([www.poetrysociety.org.nz](http://www.poetrysociety.org.nz)) and Facebook <https://www.facebook.com/NewZealandPoetrySociety>.

### Minutes of the 2016 New Zealand Poetry Society Annual General Meeting

The NZPS AGM was held in Wellington on Wednesday 17 August 2016. Members wishing to receive a copy of the minutes may do so by emailing [info@poetrysociety.org.nz](mailto:info@poetrysociety.org.nz).

# Feature Poet

Kerrin P. Sharpe, poems from rabbit rabbit



## between the feet of angels

between the feet of angels  
air is always  
the colour of holiness

*1 part sand*

*2 parts fern*

*And beechwood*

it's not easy  
to coax a river  
into a spine of windows

and often after the dance  
between lead and light  
our hats are the stars

you point at

## the gynaecology of flight

after the doctor heard his brother  
he used shells to contact  
babies in far-off lands  
and sang *the rose of scotland*

though some arrived with beakers  
of rough wine and others seemed lost or wild  
they never felt so welcome

in his theatre he managed  
small stages of bones and used  
the ventouse and high forceps  
for babies off the wagon

through the episiotomy of days  
he knew their weight their blood their pallor  
their boots outside the uterine door

sometimes from the fertility dreams  
of tom cats he arranged  
the fine tunes of conception

these babies he often found  
in the ribs and mane of the forest  
the lungs of their parachutes  
purple gestational life

with his sail-maker's needle  
he encouraged multiple babies  
who for nine months had shared  
the same hotel room to keep talking

these days he lives with those babies  
on whom he had first felt  
the origin of wings  
they teach him to fly

## the design of butterflies

it takes a strong man  
to design a butterfly

\*

butterfly bones  
difficult to find

\*

what kind of mother  
makes butterfly cakes?

\*

in Alaska  
the temple  
full of butterflies

\*

an ambulance  
the same effect  
as a butterfly

\*

under the boathouse

just room  
for a butterfly

\*

my daughter once mistook  
a bee sting  
for a butterfly kiss

\*

you were never sure  
of that last breath  
your mother's  
or a butterfly's?

### **when a crayfish could feed 6 men**

when a crayfish  
could feed 6 men  
my mother bought  
an astrakhan coat  
cross cut on the straight

like the Volga  
it swam in temperatures  
below -30

after the ice swallowed  
her favourite horse my mother's  
astrakhan coat became smarter  
and made decisions  
like what she should wear

at times I believed the coat  
was half animal half  
native plant with my mother's legs

and it seemed right that she bore  
the angels of stillborn lambs  
for the heavy fashion of Russia

yet though the coat  
cracked the small change  
it was when my mother's money  
stretched beyond the frontier towns

that she no longer wore  
what after her funeral seemed  
little more than a fleece

## *Member Poems*



### **One man, two dogs, 6.15 am**

*by John Ewen*

Dawn in Connecticut.

We're shoulder to shoulder at the deck's front edge,  
two old guys, grey muzzles catching the early light.  
Heavy of body, he stands beside me, head raised,  
nudging the breeze for news. There've been deer  
through the trees in the night, I saw them,  
and squirrels, too.

Hector will know what else stepped out  
through fall leaves but he doesn't follow up.  
He's left that to Mo: young, exuberant,  
overfilled with juice. His nose shovels aside  
the undergrowth for clues about the wider world.  
Mo has to know.

But not Hector. His eyes cloudy as  
grazed glass don't take in trees or grass,  
or where mist grips the valley floor.  
Once our eyes and minds were clear. Our  
bodies so strong and moving free, stiffen  
a little more each year.

Next to where I sit, Hector's weighing things up:  
whether lying down is worth the effort, the careful  
collapse onto the deck — he thinks not.  
So I put my hand around his neck and we stay  
as we are, to see what the sun will do  
with this day.

## Tanka

by Irene Bakker

from funeral  
family and friends  
surrender  
twenty-five white balloons  
whisper goodbye

## morrinsville, june

by Vaughan Rapatahana

this austere day  
stumbles up  
& drapes itself  
in old maid's smock,  
drawn tight  
in drab throttle

around scrawny necks  
of hills;

tight-fisted hem  
a taut garrotte  
on clammy  
boots of  
wintry mud,  
in no mood to trudge.

there's only enclosure here,  
barracoon,

as mind chomps deep  
on smirking murk,

slowly c h e w i n g  
doom  
in  
small  
doses.

[he tāone e korohāwini o morenawhira – Māori – the shivering town of Morrinsville.]

## My Gumdrop Beads

by Anne Curran

The day I wore  
my gumdrop beads  
my checked skirt whooshed  
every colour of the rainbow

his eyes shone at mine  
from across the room  
the last to take  
a girl in his arms

my eyes shone back  
the other girls watched  
as we spun and stepped  
to the rock 'n' roll band

nothing between us  
for just one dance  
my gum drop beads and I  
leapt and sang

## Periplaneta

by Catherine Amey

The house was alive  
huhu moths in the bathroom  
weta next to the door  
and thousands of tiny lidless eyes  
glinting from cracks in the kitchen walls

They were geriatric when dinosaurs were young  
They smeared sticky trails to the fruit bowl  
deconstructing health regulations  
with their ancient shrivelled anuses  
Individually they were beautiful  
puny gods poised on the plums  
amber upon amber

I coated pickle jars with vaseline  
added cake, and waited  
until the icing was feathery  
with little legs and antennae  
I tipped them delicately

into the ferns on summer nights  
the closest I could find  
to Carboniferous epiphytes

They liked chocolate cake  
more than rotting wood  
They scuttled back to the kitchen  
as fast as they could  
I surprised a couple *in flagrante delicto*  
on top of the electric jug  
Behind the CD player and in the toaster  
our ancient friends embraced  
forever making love  
or was it war?

When pest control arrived  
I was guilty and relieved  
as our friends died quietly  
under the fridge  
and in the kidney beans  
drifts of brittle fossil-like bodies  
poisoned by the Anthropocene

## Reviews



*The Tulip-Flame*. Chloe Honum (Cleveland State University Poetry Center, 2014) 9780-9860-25754. Paperback, 72 pages

Reviewed by Barbara Bailey

Chloe Honum regards New Zealand as home.

Now living and working in Texas, she grew up in Glenfield, where she attended Manuka Primary, Glenfield Intermediate and Carmel College in Milford.

At 15, she moved to Santa Monica, California, to live with her paternal grandmother.

The natural beauty explored in Honum's North Shore childhood, resonates in this poet's creativity. Her images of nature capture time spent playing in her mother's garden or evening swims at Milford Beach, and they generate a sense of big-sky space, with soaring birds, trumpet-flowers, misty woods and stars.

The sense of an outdoor North Shore childhood coils and weaves through *The Tulip-Flame*. Knotted in are twists of heart-wrenching pain and strands of loss.

Being torn away from her home country at a formative time of life has created a state of homesickness for New Zealand. Honum believes this to be at the core of her poetry.

A sense of loss permeates *The Tulip-Flame*: loss of homeland; loss of mother, who committed suicide; and

## New On the NZPS Bookshelf

NZPS has received the following new books for review

If you would like to get a great poetry book and contribute to *a fine line*, email the editor (editor@poetrysociety.org.nz) to find out more.

Dickson, John - Mister Hamilton (AUP, 2016)

Jones, Tim - New Sea Land (submarine an imprint of Makaro Press, 2016)

Zelas, Karen - I am Minerva (submarine an imprint of Makaro Press, 2016)

Hunt, Sam - Salt River Songs (Potton & Burton, 2016)

Norcliffe, James - Dark Days at the Oxygen Café (VUP, 2016)

lost love and relationships.

The book's cover attracts. The empty bodice image exudes sadnesses, traces of a life removed and displacement.

Honum's poems reach out, and in, and touch those concealed, raw ends, stirring one's emotions.

In "Silence Is A Mother Tongue", the garden her mother tended 'When she was well' is painted in bold strokes: 'black irises, heavy orchids' and blackbirds on the clothesline. Lying underneath this summer portrait is the silence, the unsaid conversations between mother and daughter. The wonderings of a daughter about what is going on.

She prompts the reader with 'Our silences', which were like 'something turned over'. Just as the garden rock she had overturned, encrusted with 'a cluster of quartz crystal', she needed to know the other side of her mother, her needs and concerns, the hidden things.

The candid poems in Chloe Honum's *The Tulip-Flame* are hard to put down. They thread through life experiences and bare scars from untold tales. The poems are intrinsically linked, with experiences reverberating through generations. These poems touch, merge, diverge and slide in and out of each other.

They are cathartic, elegant and tough, revealing layers of hurt and grace and are sweet with rhythm and metaphor.

#### About Chloe Honum:

Author of *The Tulip-Flame* (CSU, 2014), selected by Tracy K Smith for the 2013 Cleveland State University Poetry Center First Book Prize, her first collection is a winner of the 2015 Eric Hoffer Book Award in Poetry, Foreword Review's 2014 Book of the Year, and the 2014 Best First Book of Poetry Award for the Texas Institute of Letters.

Chloe's poems have appeared in *The Paris Review*, *Poetry*, *Agni*, *Orion*, and *The Southern Review*, among other journals. Mark Strand selected her work for Best New Poets 2008 and Claudia Emerson selected her work for Best New Poets 2010.

She has been awarded a Ruth Lilly Fellowship from the Poetry Foundation and a Pushcart Prize, as well as fellowships from the MacDowell Colony, the Kerouac House of Orlando, Djerassi Resident Artists Program, and the Sewanee Writers' Conference.

*Atonement*. Vaughan Rapatahana (Hong Kong: MCCM Creations & ASM/Flying Island Books, 2015) ISBN 9789881311511. RRP: \$11. Paperback, 124 pages

Reviewed by Maris O'Rourke

The fourth poetry collection from the multi-talented, prolific and loquacious Vaughan Rapatahana doesn't disappoint. Small in size, it is big and dense within — with over 50 poems that take us on some wide-ranging,

internal and external journeys. They are short, pithy poems, usually one or two pages, with staccato rhythms, often one-word lines, and varied, often unusual, use of repetition, alliteration, metaphor, similes and other technical tools.

Like the poems, Rapatahana doesn't stay within normal boundaries — he uses all the space on the pages, using words, fonts, space, shapes, photos and songs to produce meaning in more than one way, as with the poems "he patai" (p.83), a question in the shape of a question mark, and "Ruby's Place", a musical score (p.123). Rapatahana has a strong command of language and an extensive vocabulary — I certainly had to look up a number of words!

Multicultural Rapatahana takes us with him on his travels around the world — Hong Kong, Philippines, Mauritius, Macao, London, Japan, New Zealand, USA, Israel and others — offering astute observations of our effect on our environment and each other, and the effect of the country and its history, people and behaviour upon him. All this in four different languages — Māori, English, Chinese and Tagalog, often on the same page, and with the occasional French, Latin or Greek word or phrase thrown in for good measure.

The haves and have-nots thread through Rapatahana's poems as a consistent theme, as in the poems "tel aviv tramp" (p.115), or "auckland triptych III" (p.53):

so the PI guys

now hold

thin cardboard cups

as they squat

in

sequence

down the w i d e pavements,

eyes trying

to grasp yours'

in guilt –

'any spare change' indeed –

while ngā Māori

the inaugural

still clean the bins

&

tote

their w a y w a r d

tots

I'm sort of

wondering why

their gaps never go

how the classes

neverclose

&

how now,  
there's so many  
new kids

on  
the block.

Then there are his reflections on Philippine men who 'cruel their spouses ceaseless' in "heirs to lelaki" (p.61) and the way he takes us around and into the underbelly of Hong Kong with old people pak pak/poh poh, homeless people and scurfy school kids.

Rapatahana often takes us into time of day ('emasculate dawn'), the seasons ('so winter'), and the weather: 'snide rain, canine rain', 'squalling for a fight' (p.93), 'scatterbrain rain' or 'misanthrope mist'. We can feel the Santo Tomas deluge, 'worse than any locust plague' (p.57) sweeping down on us — and breathe the heat and polluted air in Hong Kong.

Rapatahana ranges across time, too, as when he shows the effect of the USA 'occupation' of Japan in the poem "nada near naha;" asking,

why are your conquistadores  
the ones  
behind the bars,  
festooned by fences,

even there at all?

...while in "how hong kong happened" (p.106), he explores the aftereffects of British occupation and plundering. Or when mythologising how Māui hooked up Hong Kong island, while somehow missing 'a far bigger fish to fry' (p.27). Or when examining the disturbing, possible effects of Higgs Boson ("the god particle"), which he links with the video game Tetris, as if we are all being played with (p.76).

For me, the strongest poems were those where Rapatahana explores his personal history and Māori background. These often melancholy reflections dig deep, contemplating his return home to the east coast to evocative memories and an empty degraded environment, as in 'kei whea te awa?' ("where is the river?", p.45), or 'he urupā mate', where he contrasts the derelict cemetery with 'tūtira mai' and asks, 'engari kei wheanga iwi ināianei?' ("but where's the tribes now?" p.40), or even his affecting summing-up in 'he maimai' ("a lament for the dead", p.47).

There is also the regretful poem about a forced reunion in "just me and the boy threshed backtogether" (p.34), or recalling memories in "it's 3 a.m. in papatoetoe" of heroes Dan Dare and Biggles, a contrast to his father 'while he snored the drunken kitchen table' (p.32). The thought-provoking, final poem "down at ruby's place" (p.120) is

notable.

There's humour, too, with a quizzical reflection on Hone Tuwhare (p.43), where he asks:

but I tell you what maaan –

I'm gonna ask him

*apopo, pea*

why he looks so much

like a chinaman

these days.

...which, oddly enough, was exactly my thought when I looked at Rapatahana's photo on the back cover!

There's a lot to take in, in this multi-layered, multi-ethnic, multi-lingual, multicultural, small/big book of poems — like a long Chinese feast, it's almost too much at times — but, as with a feast, worth savouring and lingering over. Kia ora ano.

*A version of this review previously appeared in Scoop (15 September 2015).*

*Edwin's Egg & other poetic novellas.* Cilla McQueen (Otago University Press, 2014)  
ISBN 978 1 877578

*Reviewed by Anna Hudson*

*Edwin's Egg & other poetic novellas* is a beautifully-presented work made up of eight separate 'books' in a slip-cover decorated with quirky, old-fashioned roses.

I was immediately attracted to it because it reminded me of a boxed set of the *Chronicles of Narnia* we had as kids, and the characters in this work may almost have stepped out of post-war English children's fiction. They have names like Digby, Walter, Doris and Edwin. They grow lobelias and hydrangeas, and listen to news on the radio. They bake muffins and scones and eat hard-boiled eggs with soldiers.

Despite the English flavour, the setting is still undeniably Kiwi and contemporary, not just because of the references to dairies and Mitre 10. There is also something undefinably Kiwi about the broadness of the terrains and the dwellings, even as there is a sense it is all slowly being eroded. A last outpost of the comfortable, dare I say, white middle-class New Zealand that prided itself on being a better version of England, before the Auckland Housing Crisis and the economic collapse of the provinces.

This is a gentle, well-crafted and intricate work of humour, thought-provoking ideas and clever use of language. Readers after angst-riddled, sex-fuelled self-loathing, or political diatribes about the injustice of the world won't find what they're looking for here.

Being a chronic skipper of long passages, one of the things I was most struck by was the breathtakingly

succinct and evocative skill with which McQueen describes characters and their feelings. I read the text twice without skipping a word.

A description of Roly after selling Doris a dodgy second-hand water-blaster describes how he ‘pulled his hoodie up and ran away’; of Digby the reclusive Lotto winner ‘with a glass in his hand on the porch of his weatherbeaten cottage’; and Walter’s dad with his ‘kindly, remote smile’. Even a cat is drawn with strong clean lines in minimal words: ‘Spiro jumped down and stalked away, stiff tailed’.

McQueen displays the same enviable brevity when using the outer world to describe the inner or connect readers to her characters:

What woman hasn’t experienced this?  
Feel for keys, Braille fingered  
over pen, lipstick, purse, cards,  
diary, paper-clip. Not a jingle.

On Edwin, packing up his ex-wife’s old sporting memorabilia: ‘... took down one by one the / tarnished trophies of his wife’, and Eric reflecting on the growth of his relationship: ‘the transition from observer / to participant in her life’.

Doris considering the possibility of a relationship with one man: “‘A man is so sudden,” she thought.’ And Doris rejecting the possibility of a relationship with another: ‘she clicked the window shut and drew the curtain’.

The other enchanting aspect of the writing is the incorporation of random facts from the scientific world. These include the deaths of Marie and Pierre Curie, the demise of the Lyall’s Wren and the characteristics of pleochroic gemstones. My favourite piece along these lines was the description of Jacques Montgolfier inventing the hot air balloon while watching laundry dry, and noticing how it filled with pockets of hot air:

As the bloomers filled with hot air  
he appeared to be grasping by the  
waist a stout woman falling head-  
first down the chimney

McQueen wrote the text for *Edwin’s Egg* while she was Poet Laureate from 2009-2011. Each piece was spliced together with pictures supplied by the Alexander Turnbull Library, and these pictures are reproduced in this printed version of the work. Anyone who doesn’t like this book for the poetry should read it anyway, just for the pictures. Three of my personal favourites were a very strange picture of a couple standing in a forest behind a brand new stove, fridge and freezer set; a disturbing lunchbox that, as well as a sandwich and an apple, contained a bag of ‘deer chow’ and a bag of ‘monkey chow’ that is strictly ‘not suitable for CHIMPS’; and the Umbrella Tree Trainer available for just 30/-.

As you can probably tell, I enjoyed this collection immensely, even though I came away from two readings not quite certain what it meant or even what had really

happened, something I usually dislike. The relationships between the characters seemed central to the theme, and yet at the same time, I was never quite clear what the relationships were. It felt like a mystery that was never quite solved. Why are there two chisels? Who is Roly’s girlfriend? What is the significance of all the eggs? McQueen gives no explanation or justification. Readers are left to either do the hard work and draw their own conclusions, or to just read it, because it’s beautifully well-written and very funny. Especially the end — very black, and took me two reads to get it.

## Events ~ Around NZ



### Poets to the People, Kapiti

by Elizabeth Coleman and Michael Keith

Spring greetings to you all – looking forward to the clock’s leap ahead and to welcoming our distinguished guest Bill Manhire at our next event on Sunday 25 September, 4–6pm, at Hightide Café.

Thank you for the wonderful turnout to launch Jane Graham George’s new collection of poems, *A Year on the Kapiti Line & Other Poems*, and our own 10th anniversary volume *Tide Lines*. Let’s get the commercials over now: contact Jane for orders of her book ([janegrahamgeorge@hotmail.com](mailto:janegrahamgeorge@hotmail.com)). Contact Michael ([mickeith@ihug.co.nz](mailto:mickeith@ihug.co.nz)) or his company ([shearwaterassociates@ihug.co.nz](mailto:shearwaterassociates@ihug.co.nz)) for copies of *Tide Lines* – copies are \$10 each, postage 1–2 copies \$2.50, 3–10 copies \$5.00. He will invoice you with payment details, and dispatch your order on receipt of payment. Of course, we’ll have copies on sale at P2P at Hightide.

Bill Manhire is a name engraved on the hearts of most poetry lovers in New Zealand. He was the inaugural Te Mata New Zealand Poet Laureate. He grew up in small country pubs in Otago and Southland, and was educated at the University of Otago and at University College London, where he tried – and failed – to become an Old Norse scholar. He founded the International Institute of Modern Letters at Victoria University, home to New Zealand’s leading creative writing programme. Last year, he was the UNESCO Visiting Professor of Creative Writing at the University of East Anglia.

Bill’s most recent book is a collection of short fiction, *The Stories of Bill Manhire* (VUP, 2015). Recent poetry collections include *Lifted*, *The Victims of Lightning*, and a *Selected Poems*. A new book of poems, *Some Things to Place in a Coffin*, will be published next year.

We are honoured to host Bill on his second visit to P2P. Open mic as usual, from 4pm.

### For your diary

Just a reminder for our line-up for the rest of the year.

October – James Brown

November – Helen Rickerby

## Regular Events

### Auckland

**Poetry Live Auckland** Book yourself in to read at Poetry Live, at the Thirsty Dog, 469 Karangahape Rd, Auckland City. Tuesdays 8pm. Guest poets, guest musician & open mike. Contact: MCs Dietrich, Rachael, Penny, Tim or Michelle by email: poetrylive@gmail.com, putting the MC's name in the subject line. Visit Poetry Live's website: <http://www.poetrylive.co.nz>.

**306 Open Mic Night** Standing invitation every Wednesday night 8–11 pm 306 Bar & Bistro, 306 Onehunga Mall. Poets, Musos, Singers, Poets, Comedians, other performers... the main focus is the acoustic guitar players & singer / songwriters, but all performers welcome. There is a small in-house PA System with 2 microphones. Other than that, musicians should bring their own gear. Free entry.

**Open Mic Night, Waiatarua** 7–10 pm every 2nd Wednesday. Free entry. Elevation Café, 473 Scenic Drive. Poets, singer/songwriters, comedians - original performers encouraged, solos, duos & small ensembles only (sorry, no drum kits). PA, mics, stands & percussion supplied, 3 items (max 15 mins) per performer. Performers prize draw. To pre-book a spot, E: fionamcewen@clear.net.nz or enter on the night. For more info or restaurant bookings, T: Elevation (09) 814 1919; E: info@elevationcafe.co.nz.

**Inside.Out Open Mic for Writers** (est. 2012) Open mic readings and performances with guest musicians, once every month. All writers welcome to share fiction, poetry, non-fiction, performance poetry, etc. or come as audience, meet other writers & get updates on what's on. Five-word-challenge with three book prizes. 7 pm–10 pm, One2One Café, 121 Ponsonby Rd, Auckland.

**Inside.Out Open Mic for Writers** (est. 2012) – once a month on the second Wednesday. Free; koha for musician, please. Café offers meals & all refreshments. Let's hear what you've been working on... with MC Anita Arlov. For more info, email: anitaarlov@hotmail.co.nz.

**Titirangi Poets** Sessions are held at Titirangi Library, 500 Titirangi South Road, between 2 pm and 4 pm. on the second Saturday of every month. More info, email: piers@wwandd.co.nz ; <https://www.facebook.com/insideout-open-mic-204711472989060>.

### Christchurch

**Airing Cupboard Women Poets** meet at 10 am every 2 weeks at South Christchurch Library, 66 Colombo Street. Ring Judith Walsh ph. 03 342 9881 or Barbara Strang ph. 03 376 4486.

**The Canterbury Poets' Collective Spring Season.** Wednesdays at 6.30pm, CPIT Students Association

(CPSA) Hall, 5 Madras Street. Canterbury Poets Collective (CPC) presents open mic and guest readers. Audience votes for the Best Open Mic Poet. The programme will be posted when it is available.

**Catalyst Poetry Open Mic:** First Wednesday of the month, The Twisted Hop, 616 Ferry Rd, Woolston, Christchurch. Website: [www.catalystnz.blogspot.com](http://www.catalystnz.blogspot.com)

**Beat St Sessions,** Christchurch: Third Thursday of the month at Beat St Cafe, Cnr Barbados & Armagh Sts. 6 pm for music and open mic sign-up; 7 pm for Guest poets. Entry: \$5 if you can.

**Poetry for Pudding:** Meets from 12–1.30 pm on the second Friday of the month, at University Bookshop, Ilam. This is a relaxed supportive environment where poets of all levels are welcome. Bring a favourite poem — yours, or another's — to share.

**Selwyn Writers' Salon:** First Tuesday of the Month, upstairs at The Laboratory, 7 pm to 9 pm, Free Admission – all Welcome.

**Small White Teapot:** Meets regularly at 7 pm on the third Tuesday of the month, for about a couple of hours to hear, discuss and critique the haiku. We do not stick to the 5-7-5 format of the Japanese language style of three line haiku, as some thinking is that if Basho, the master haiku writer had spoken and written in the English language, he would have used the syllabic format which has developed. The same guidelines apply: environment, season, nature, the moment, imagery, etc. usually in three lines. Sundry cost of \$3. Venue: Avebury House, Eveleyn Couzins Ave, Richmond. The SWTHG will be pleased to welcome you.

### Coromandel

**Thames Poets Circle,** co-hosted by Greg Brimblecombe and Jill Steadman Read, meets on the fourth Thursday of every month at 7 pm. Venue: SpeakEasy, 740 Pollen Street, Thames. For more information, please contact Greg on 07 868 9947, email: [greg.brimblecombe@gmail.com](mailto:greg.brimblecombe@gmail.com).

### Cromwell

**Cromwell Writers** meet on the last Tuesday of the month in the homes of members on a shared basis. Contact Tom Llandreth ph. 03 4451352.

### Dunedin

**Live poetry with the Octagon Poetry Collective.** We meet monthly (most months) in the Dog With Two Tails Cafe and Bar in Moray Place, a few doors up from the Rialto cinema. At 8 pm, on the second-last Tuesday of the month, one of us hosts an evening of live poetry. Usually we feature two invited guests, who may be local poets of note but we also try to be aware of poets of national and international standing, who might welcome an invitation to read. Our open mic is a popular, lively part of the evening, where everyone is welcome to participate. Great friendly, supportive

crowd, excellent food and drink available at the counter. For specific details, check out our Facebook page: Octagon Collective/Dog with Two Tails Poetry Readings. To contact us, email octagoncollective@gmail.com and cc: cmccurdie@xtra.co.nz.

### Golden Bay

**The Golden Bay Live Poets Society** has a monthly Performance Night at the famous Mussel Inn Bush Café at Onekaka. (For dates, go to Mussel Inn.) Visiting poets are most welcome. For news of meetings, contact convenor Mark Raffills at mark@drycrust.com, tel 03 544 4975 ext. 210.

### Hamilton

**Poets Alive** meet on the last Friday of the month from 7–9 pm. For more information, contact: Celia Hope at poetsalivenz@gmail.com.

### Hawke's Bay

**The Hawke's Bay Live Poets' Society** meets at 8 pm on the second Monday of each month (except January) at the Hastings Community Arts Centre, 106 Russell Street, Hastings. Contact Bill Sutton: phone 06 844 4196, email suttb70@gmail.com.

### Kapiti

**Poets to the People** meets at Hightide Cafe, 44 Marine Parade, Paraparaumu Beach, 4–6 pm, on the last Sunday of the month, February to November, except October. Guest poet each month. Open mic at 4 pm. Snacks and beverages are available. Entry price of \$5 covers the poet's koha and general expenses. Contact Michael Keith mickeith@ihug.co.nz.

### Lyttleton

**The Catalyst poetry open mic.** Tuesdays at 8pm. Wunderbar, Lyttelton. BYO poetry, creative writing. All welcome.

### Marlborough

**Poetry Corner:** an informal group for lovers of poetry; meets between 6 pm and 8.30 pm on the first Monday of each month, at various locations. Readers, writers, listeners and performers are all welcome. Come and go as you please during the allotted time. For more information, please contact June Bowen, at 03 577 9035.

### Nelson

**The Nelson Live Poets Society** meets on the fourth Monday of every month at The Free House, 95 Collingwood Street; 6 pm for a 6.30 pm start. Open mic. Contact: marybell@ts.co.nz.

### Palmerston North

**Stand Up Poetry.** Open mic poetry evening and special guest poet. First Wednesday of the month, 7–9 pm, Sound & Vision Zone, Level 1, Central Library. Organiser: Helen Lehndorf. For more information on this and other happenings, contact (06) 351 4100; email: promotions@pncc.govt.nz; website <http://www.citylibrary.pncc.govt.nz/> Contact person at the library is Jenny Veller.

### Picton

**Picton Poets** (founded by Ernest Berry in 1994). Regrettably, due to Ernie's ill-health, meetings at his Cottage have had to be curtailed for now. A new space is being actively sought, and an update will be posted when the group has a new home.

### Porirua

**Poetry and Music at The Metro.** First Sunday of every month, 3 pm – 6 pm at the Metropolitan Restaurant and Bar, 7 Lydney Place, Porirua City Centre (opp. Railway Station, behind Bus stop). Programme: 3 pm – 5 pm. Open mic for any performance poetry, song, instrumental, original or covers, dance etc, any genre - traditional or contemporary, pop, rock, folk, rap, whatever. 5 pm – 6 pm features invited guest artist - poet, musician, singer, band, soloist or combination. Come along and put your name on the blackboard and have a go, or just listen and enjoy. Koha collection taken for guest artist. Food and drink available from bar. We are always looking for guest artists whether musos, poets, dancers, or any other type of performers. For more information, contact Phil O'Connell, phone (04)237-9902; mobile 027 786 5542; email philjoconnell(at)gmail.com if you are interested and available.

### Rotorua

**The Rotorua Mad Poets** meet every Wednesday night at the Rotorua Public Library at 6 pm. All poets and general public welcome to attend. Light refreshments available afterwards. 7.30–9.30 p.m.

### Taupo

**Live Poets:** A friendly group of Taupo poets and writers who meet for informal readings at 5.15 pm on the last Wednesday of each month at the Taupo Museum. These are open to all, and readings of original poems and those by favourite authors are encouraged. There are monthly Poetry Workshops at members' homes, which look in depth at poems written by members, with a view to improving the skill of members in an encouraging atmosphere. Children's Poetry Readings are held every school holidays. We read at local Rest Homes on dates which suit the Rest Homes. We also organise occasional guest poets and Poetry Day events for Taupo. Email Geni for more information: genirayjohnston@gmail.com.

## Tauranga

**Tauranga Writers:** A self-help group established over 40 years ago. We get together monthly to exchange experience and expertise, discuss tactics and techniques and to share work in progress for constructive criticism. We meet on the first Thursday of the month at 7 pm, at The Alzheimer's Society House, 116, 13th Avenue, Tauranga. Contact: Jenny Argante, ph 07 578 5757, mob 022 053 48 68, or email [jenny.argante\(at\)gmail.com](mailto:jenny.argante(at)gmail.com). All genres and new members always welcome. Enquirers may request a complimentary copy of *Update*, our monthly newsletter, to find out what we're all about.

## Timaru

**For poetry events**, or to contact Timaru or South Canterbury poets, contact Karalyn Joyce at [karalynjoyce@xtra.co.nz](mailto:karalynjoyce@xtra.co.nz), ph. 03 6147858.

## Wairarapa

**Wairarapa Word** meets on the first Sunday of the month, 3–5 pm, at Almo Books, High St, Carterton. All welcome: poets, novelists, lyricists, story-tellers, more. We read aloud our original work and the work of others. Free entry. Cash bar.

## Wanaka

**Poetic Justice Wanaka:** Wanaka poets meet sporadically for open mic nights and workshops. They have a growing programme of national and international performers. For meeting dates and times, see: <http://poeticjusticewanaka.wordpress.com>

## Wellington

**Poetry in Motion** happens on the first Wednesday of the month at Meow, in Edward St. It is an inclusive event,

which aims to raise the profile of poetry and spoken word as a fun, engaging artform and challenge people's notions of what poetry is. This is a forum for sharing ideas, laughter, tears and views on life with a community of people who love words and performance in a lively bar atmosphere. No open mic as such, but people can book a 'Stage' slot during the first half of the show and read/perform for 5–6 minutes. For more information:

<https://www.facebook.com/PoetryInMotionWellington>

**Poetry at The Fringe:** 4 pm – 6 pm on the 3rd Sunday of every month at The Fringe Bar, Allen St. Featuring an open mic, Guest Poet and a musical interlude. For information, contact: Neil Furby, [ballroompoetrycafe@gmail.com](mailto:ballroompoetrycafe@gmail.com).

## West Coast

**Greymouth: Word of Mouth** meets every month on the last Wednesday, 7.30–9 pm at the Left Bank Art Gallery, 1 Tainui Street. A friendly, enthusiastic gathering of poets and poetry fans. All welcome. Contact: Greg O'Connell W: (03) 768 5597 H: (03) 768 5222 M: (027) 759 0531 E: [greg\(at\)gregoconnell.com](mailto:greg(at)gregoconnell.com).

## Whakatane

**Live Poets** meet at 7.30 pm on the third Monday of the month, in the home of a member. Contact: Margaret Wilson at 07 3072308 (there is an answerphone).

## Whangarei

**Poets Exposed:** at the Piano Bar and Restaurant, Rust Avenue, Whangarei, third Thursday of every month, 6 pm to 9 pm. Contact: [piet@outlook.com](mailto:piet@outlook.com)

## New Poetry Paper at Victoria University

### FHSS 101 Special Topic: Reading and writing poetry with Anna Jackson

An introduction to between 50 and 100 poems by poets ranging from Shakespeare to Anne Carson, and selected essays by leading poetry critics. Taught over 6 weeks, from 14 November – December 22.

100% internally assessed, the course counts towards an English major or can be taken as a special interest course. Lectures are given by poet Anna Jackson, along with optional tutorials and writing workshops. For more information, email [anna.jackson@vuw.ac.nz](mailto:anna.jackson@vuw.ac.nz)





# 2017 New Zealand Poetry Conference

After a huge success in Hawkes Bay in 2013 and Wellington 2015, the third New Zealand Poetry Conference and Festival is to be held in Auckland on the weekend of 27-29th October 2017. The Auckland Poetry Conference and Festival Committee, supported by the New Zealand Poetry Society, eagerly looks forward to celebrating our city's unique cultural identity through poetry, storytelling, spoken word, workshops, panel discussions and the widest possible sharing of new literary ideas. We know full well how robust the creative scene is here, and want to showcase some of what's going on to an even wider New Zealand literary community.

Over the course of the three days, the Auckland Poetry Conference element will bring together 150 poets/delegates from across New Zealand. Its focus will be plenary sessions and discussion covering New Zealand's poetic diversity, publishing opportunities in contemporary Aotearoa and overseas, and so forth. It will also hold workshops facilitated by leading New Zealand writers, which will be aimed at writers young, secret and serious. There will be book launches and poetry anthology publication featuring all delegates.

The Auckland Poetry Festival will run in tandem with the Conference, utilising multiple venues across our wide city, to offer poetry readings (modelled on Wellington's hugely successful LitCrawl), poetry film screenings, poetry and music, poetry slams, and so forth.

As such, the 2017 Auckland Poetry Conference and Festival will promote our city's dynamic literary diversity, enable strong network building between Auckland's literary sector and other cities' writers, and so on. From the success of previous Poetry Conferences, we know how these innovations, networks creations and invigorations flow through into the creativity of the community.

If you would like to know more and get involved with organisation, please contact Gus on [conference@poetrysociety.org.nz](mailto:conference@poetrysociety.org.nz)