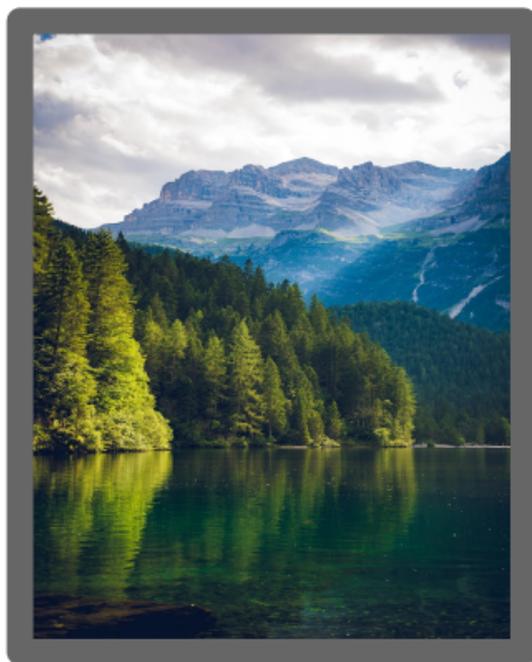


Sideways

poetry magazine



ISSUE 1: NATURE

Sideways Poetry Magazine

Issue 1, 'Nature'

FREE

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We at *Sideways* believe that poetry should always be accessible, with everybody having a voice.

If you've always enjoyed poetry, or even if this is your first taste of it, we encourage you to jot down the first poem that comes to your mind. No fear of rejection, no fear of judgement. Freedom to express yourself.

Please support poetry and the poets in this issue by sending around copies to your friends and discussing your favourites.

Google the poets and reach out to them if you especially enjoyed something.

"My wish is to stay always like this, living quietly in a corner of nature" - Claude Monet

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Editorial

On... Nature

To understand how long poetry and nature have walked hand in hand, one would have to first appreciate one of the initial examples of recorded poetry. The *Epic of Gilgamesh* (2,1000 BC) details the epic journey of the King of Uruk and his antithesis Enkidu, formed from water and clay by the Gods. Nature itself actually appears right there, in what is regarded as the first ever poem; be the crumbling mountains and thunderstorms being depicted as omens, or fields and rivers being called upon to reflect Gilgamesh's grief. The vast clay tablets, most notably translated by Andrew George for Oxford University Press in 2013, show man at one with the soul, the Gods and the very Earth bequeathed to us all. When tracing nature within poetry, one does not have to look very far at all: the themes of nature, love and fear of death have been there from the start.

In the four thousand years since the events of Sumer, the love affair between poets and nature has remained at the fore of literature. Walt Whitman is probably one of the best-known examples, with his stunning collection *Leaves of Grass*, first published in 1855. In this, his poems forged that familiar triangle of the Self, God and Nature. Whitman was a student of nature, a man of solitude, who came to acknowledge the natural elements as his eternal best friend, a life partner. This aligned with his interest in the senses to inform his spirituality as well as his ideas of life after death. Through nature and looking inwards, he listened to his health, body and the effect of music upon his heart. With a prominent interest in birds and trees, he sought out this nature everywhere he travelled, from his Long Island hometown to the mountains and plains of North America.

Conversely, for his contemporary Henry David Thoreau, nature spoke almost selectively. The author of *Walden* only truly felt the heartbeat of the wind and trees as an agent for the mind. For him, nature represented a spiritual stepping stone for the human mind to realise its true self. Although he used nature to inform social experiments for himself, viewing the natural world alongside analogies and metaphors for everything else going on in society (think “I’d rather be thy child and pupil, in the forest wild, than be the king of men elsewhere”), his musings on nature still form a huge body of work.

Thinking on this habit of using nature to present - or understand - human nature, one also looks at Robert Frost. In ‘The Wood-Pile’ he presents again that idea of nature intertwining with human destiny. Is he more aware of nature, being distant from home, or is nature trying to guide him? With ‘Birches’ the trees and nature he observes are particularly apposite to the imagination. In ‘A Prayer In Spring’ he gushes over nature in prayer format, communicating with us, his fellow nature dwellers, whilst appreciating that nature is “reserved for God above”. Again we see the way that poets observe love and nature as one, “for this is love and nothing else is love”.

Finally, in the modern day, we can look towards nature within poetry as visible everywhere. Author, thinker and environmentalist Paul Kingsnorth won the 2012 Wenlock Poetry Prize with his nature paean ‘Vodadahue Mountain’. Scottish poet Don Paterson, twice winner of the T.S. Eliot Prize, frequently questions nature’s true purpose (see ‘The Dead’) and touches upon the transcendental. Alice Oswald has extensively explored ecology and nature (*Dart*, a collection based around Devon’s River Dart; *Weeds and Wild Flowers*). Nature is omnipresent, always changing. And there will always be different sets of eyes being woken up to its ability to feed our thinking, represent our emotions or simply just ‘be’ - maybe one of the only consistent beings of our conscious experience.

Ceinwen E Cariad Haydon

Ceinwen lives in Newcastle upon Tyne, UK, and writes short stories and poetry. She was Highly Commended in the Blue Nib Chapbook Competition [Spring 2018], won the Hedgehog Press Poetry Competition 'Songs to Learn and Sing'. [August 2018] and was shortlisted for the Neatly Folded Paper Pamphlet Competition, Hedgehog Press [October 2018]. She has an MA in Creative Writing from Newcastle University (2017). She believes everyone's voice counts.

The Welsh Marches

my heart pounds
then steadies,
pounds then
steadies

I walk up
steep paths high
above flocks of sheep
busy with baas I reply
with baas of my own
baa baa baa

I sweat tread
pockmarked flagstones
I salivate –
conjure crumbly Caerphilly
crusty fresh bread
salt crisps
acid orange and
bitter chocolate
it won't be long now

sated on Long Mynd
Albion and *Cymru*
both mine

I gaze wide and far
raise my water bottle
cheers and *Iechyd da*

Cymru – Welsh – Wales (pron. approx.. ‘Cumree’)

iechyd da - Welsh – good health (pron. approx. ‘yakki dah’)

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Suchetana Day

Suchetana is a doctorate student from Kolkata, India and primarily writes poetry in her native Hindi. She works part-time as a teacher and spends most of her time writing. Poetry gives her life to live.

The Moon Kissed Candlelight

(1)

The drenched rainy night

The two bloomed flowers were
talking

Mystic aroma aroused the
insane love

The breath escalated with the
closeness call

The moonlight witnessed the
unknown evening

The destiny walked the path of
the dream

The heavens have much more
than the dreams

The showers of golden spring
answers all dream

The meta-closeness of the scars
of the birth

In the clouds are the witness of
pure love

Far away the twinkling stars

The strong cold winds blow
gently on



(2)

The buds are smiling with the
murmur sound

The madness of young lady is all
around

The sweet smile bestows the nature's
heart

The honey kissed words are so
fondly mine

The kites would be unleashed in the
open air

Time time of throwing fresh petals
are on

The symphony of sound plays all
around

The paper boats swim across the
swampy pond

It time to change the ore in the boat

The ocean dances the tune of dawn



(3)

Sultry evening of love

The young lady has turned 14 at the
dawn

The blood flows warm under her
flesh

The lantern is burnt with the
stained match stick

The appeal of she unleashes the
desires of moon

The curtain falls with the energy
of love

The beauty of calmness of soul
gently being released

The web of spiders have all the
belief

Tender coconut leaves kiss the
fresh dew

The heart is safe in the treasure of
new



(4)

The blood stained satin white
bedsheet

The fire garland on the neck
burns the skin along

Humiliated soul is left with the
body behind

The game of love has left her on
the broken bridge

The sound of cry has the
question of this disaster

The life filled body has turned
into a broken wooden doll

The dark night has scarred the
heart

The blue eyes drown in the pearls
of sorrow

Love has answered lust as
shackles of the desired times

The window is closed with
heaviness in heart



(5)

Red roses are expensive on the
blood kissed bosom

The bracelet sounds sharp on the
grip of bottles of wine

The time of sand dissolves in the
air

A gardener stitch the broken
heart with the golden needle

The sweat on the forehead has
the answers

The crushed root can't be healed
with any bundle of song

The thunder storm will now
change the season of dark

The soul shouts out loud the pain
of pricking needle of love.



Illustrations by: Bansory Chakraborti

Linda M. Crate

Linda has five published chapbooks: *A Mermaid Crashing Into Dawn* (Fowlpox Press, 2013), *Less Than A Man* (The Camel Saloon, 2014), *If Tomorrow Never Comes* (Scars Publications, 2016), *My Wings Were Made to Fly* (Flutter Press, 2017) and *splintered with terror* (Scars Publications, 2018), as well as one micro-chapbook *Heaven Instead* (Origami Poems Project, 2018). She is also the author of the novel *Phoenix Tears* (Czykmate Books, 2018).

Right As Rain

i stand in the heart of nature
peace dances in the trees,
it ripples in the whispers of the
wind,
and in the fading of last
autumn's leaves;
there's something calming in the
water's spell
lulling all the harm and hurt of
people
who can be an unforgiving
hell—
in the heart of nature
the crows tell me of their
majesty,
as the mushrooms tell me of
songs of
scarlet and white i hadn't yet
considered;
the faeries flutter by and the
birds sing
my dreams and hopes start to
take flight
on healed wings—
everyone overlooks nature
beauty, it seems,

but she is just forgiving and
welcoming with
open arms;
there's no shade of blue she
cannot make
right as rain.

Nature's Wild Daughter

all my life
i have envisioned myself
walking, running
barefoot in the wood
for my heart
is a wild thing that will never
be tamed;
only nature seems to
understand
my need to both be rose and
thorn all at once—
nature understands that
sometimes
it is cruel to be kind,

but she never makes me feel bad
for being who i am or saying
what i need
to say or feeling what i need to
feel;
she just listens and heals every
broken part of me
without having to say a word
her music is enough—
there's never confrontation or a
need to assert
any sort of dominance
there is only peace, there is only
forgiveness, there
is only healing;
and i lean into the touch of
sunlight or moonlight
more than any human hand
because nature has never tried
to wound me
simply because she could.

* * *

Richard Gilbert-Cross

Richard lives in Hackney, London and writes short stories and poetry. He was a student of the UK's first ever Performance Poetry module, at Brunel University, mentored by Benjamin Zephaniah. He is the editor of *Sideways*.

Wetlands

I first saw the battered sapling
slapped by its bald mistress

as the old Gods said goodbye

and the wind stepped up its
dancing

And some patterned plants
(names not known) (nobody
knows how long they've
grown)

whose seeds had blown away
and lay strewn on the ground in
rows of ellipses.

Whilst the tempest had revealed
what had previously been sealed
(like colonies of common reed
that seem to have been
curtained
for a century maybe)
I spied new gods in the rotting
vegetation.

Seems they arrived
when the estuary prised its
self from the river
in an act of regression

then covered itself in a thousand
soft
depressions
and exposed itself to me

when my mind was struggling

and I was
walking the wetlands
with some difficulty.

All the new Gods crawled
through the grass,
part nature-laid, part
man-made,
and Boreas peered from the
reed beds

(human influence at its
best - the heads were
ruined already. And they'd
warped
the lattice for no reason)

and Attis,
ruined at the roots,
directs the seasons

Finally to relax

to a state of
ataraxia.

The tranquillity this stoic
Sunday
is exactly that.

Besides the midday cuckoos and
common shrews

a seed died and split in two

A broken heart
from which an orchard grew,

next to a meadow,
followed
by a hedgerow

And there it is -

(where the heart of the ocean's
end)
(meets the closing of the mind)

~ . ~

* * *

Kyla Houbolt

Kyla Houbolt is nearing 70 years of age and can't remember when she started writing poems. She has published, to date, exactly three poems, having usually preferred to read to interested listeners. All of those venues are now extinct. New work is forthcoming in the summer issue of 'The Hellebore'. Kyla lives and writes in Wilmington, NC. Hurricane country. Hide from the wind, and run from the water.

Smith Creek After Hurricane Florence

In October
trees leaf out after the storm.
Flowers open, buds form.
The watercolor flesh of a deer
has all washed away and
disappeared into stomachs'
leaving its bones somewhere
and its skull,
with just enough meat on to
attract the dog,
in our path to the creek, that
used to be.

Oh, the creek is still there,
running low and quiet now,
and most of the trash that was
on the other side
has washed away as well,
probably into the sea.
To see the creek one must cut
through some brush,
the usual path filled with down
trees and branches.

I stand on the bank and drink
in sunlight,
still crystalline, still making
rainbows where it can,
beside this small water
with a big job.

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Call for submissions!

Get your poems about 'London' published in *Sideways*

We are seeking poems about 'London' for Issue 2 of our magazine.

We welcome poetry from both published and unpublished writers. All we ask is that each submission has not been previously published elsewhere.

Please take care that your poem(s) fall(s) into the 'theme' of the issue you are applying for.

Also, do include a brief biography/publication history.

Please email submissions to: sidewayspoetry@gmail.com

We are also seeking original drawings/sketches/illustrations.

With thanks to our contributors: Ceinwen Haydon, Suchetana Day, Linda M. Crate, Richard Gilbert-Cross, Kyla Houbolt, Bansory Chakraborti

Sideways is a themed online and print poetry magazine. Each issue features poets from around the world based on the issue's theme.

It is always an absolute pleasure welcoming submissions from established writers, and we especially encourage poems from those who are yet to be published.

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Hackney, London

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