

# Sideways

poetry magazine



*Issue Three*  
*July 2020*

# Sideways Poetry Magazine

London & Manchester, UK

Issue Three

Founders/Editors:

Richard Gilbert-Cross

&

Richy Campbell

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

Please support poetry and the poets in this issue by sending around copies to your friends and discussing your favourites. Whilst all poets in this issue own the rights to their poems, you are free to print and distribute the magazine yourself.

Or you could web search the poets and reach out to them if you especially enjoyed something.

'In quietness are all things answered'

– *A Course in Miracles*

# Poems

Marka Rifat - 'Dear enemy' & 'Green Memory'

Ed Limb - 'Joy, We Win', 'Snow', 'Attic' & 'Rented World'

Bobbi Sinha-Morey - 'Hulio', 'Legacy' & 'Prairie'

Grant Tarbard - extract of 'dog'

Madelaine Smith - 'Christminster', 'Circle Dancing'

Daniel Sollé - 'Dawn' & 'My Boy'

William Cotter - 'Sputnik'

Kathryn Southworth - 'Scissors...' & 'Building'

A C Clarke - 'In Praise of Winter'

## Marka Rifat

Marka Rifat lives in Scotland and has prizes in poetry and fiction. Last year, she performed at the crime festival Granite Noir and at two folk festivals. She published stories in 'Noon' (Arachne Press) and The Eildon Tree, and poems in Black Bough Poetry and Grey Hen Press.

### **Dear enemy**

Dear enemy, I am lost with you and lost without.  
Your caresses make me weep, the tiniest touch  
and I am red-rimmed, lashes hanging with tears,  
nostrils aflame, running clear and copiously.

How you dance in the air, from field and tree  
and flower beds, joyously free from winter,  
a careless army launching fine weather war,  
heedlessly sparking Immunoglobulin E,  
devastating my capacity  
to do anything  
except care for my vital, my only airways.

My counter-attack is over the counter,  
the sprays and pills, the chemical strafing  
of this body's heaving, sneezing land.  
I must endure. You save us  
from ultimate starvation.  
Dear enemy, lost with you and lost without.

## Green Memory

Strange in my hand,  
green pod fingers lie on my palm,  
unnatural, almost,  
meagre contents  
held  
at regular intervals.  
My thumbnails invade.  
The vast foam casing  
holds  
each pale jade piece,  
tethered gently.  
Gathering these few, and more,  
is more work than it should merit  
and they will taste metallic,  
unnatural,  
to my tongue,  
but they will speak of him,  
*Vicia faba*,  
his garden love.

He longed for them each year,  
a simple pleasure.  
I would resent the stains  
they left on my skin,  
but now they join the keepsakes,  
The small ones that catch me  
unexpected, whipping *then* and *now*  
Together  
With fragile tendrils.

## Ed Limb

Ed grew up in Nottingham and recently graduated from Pembroke College, Cambridge, where he studied English, acted, and wrote. He currently lives in Kings Cross, London, and writes around his 9-5

### Joy, We Win

As I lie in the ambulance, self and sense  
pooling in the pain of my feet, I hear  
the paramedic say, 'we have to keep you  
*supine*.' I race my mind to the word.

The opposite is -

mouth full of dirt, oh god, what was his  
name? Panic waves - ran the first  
marathon? The word, *world* -

above my head, a cardiogram keeps  
its monotone. I let it beat my heart,  
which calms, then calms the lifeline pulse -

until it seems a man on elbows and knees.

## Snow

Imagine: looking out the window of your  
bathysphere,  
deep, deep in the ocean, soundless deep,  
and seeing...  
snow. Marine snow: organic matter falling  
down  
the water column. Old plant, old fish, feeding  
the abyss.  
Things descend; moment turns to memory.  
In time,  
the light forgets. I, from my bedroom window  
watch  
the past go by in scraps of scenes, lost  
history.  
Remember: when creatures fell through our  
cellar  
grates, creating strange terrariums of newts,  
frogs, toads.  
Sometimes, I swim in the dark, a glass-eyed  
mouth,  
not watching but feasting, forgetting how  
nostalgia  
was once a disease. I wish I would not fall –  
neither be  
alone in the deep, of the dark, or worst of all,  
the snow.

## Attic

The smell of mulberries is ancient  
as Rome. Babylon bloomed  
when dad lost his hair.

Our gravel path was the ruined  
stone of druid circles,  
and crackled like Zeus' thunder.

Those early days, a world  
ago, are our antiquity,  
buried in attic shoeboxes.

Dig in the rubble,  
kneeling among domestic stuff -  
furniture, luggage, frames.

This photo always gets me.  
You in a smock,  
clutching a toy, a vision

of the seraphim. Over-exposed,  
the winter sun whites out  
your face; untouched

by smoke from the library.  
Behind your head:  
suggestion

of a Christmas tree,  
and, on your left, the rocking-  
horse, that once defeated Troy.

## **Rented World**

Rain slaps down from broken gutters  
in our numb-foot house.

We have cicadas in the plumbing,  
wooden floorboards to startle guests,  
pests, and piles of letters addressed  
to ghosts, generations gone.

# Bobbi Sinha-Morey

Bobbi Sinha-Morey lives in Central Point, Oregon, and there she writes poetry at her leisure. Her poetry has appeared in a variety of places such as *Plainsongs*, *Pirene's Fountain*, *The Wayfarer*, *Helix Magazine*, *Woods Reader*, and *The Tau*. Her books of poetry are available at Amazon.com.

## Hulio

The streetlamps pulsed  
like heartbeats in the evening  
shadows whenever I'd seen  
him--Hulio, the only American  
Indian I'd ever known, who used  
to take his walks around Warner  
Hot Springs with his favorite  
laurel root cane, a kindly man  
who nearly made it to a hundred  
and three. I knew him when  
I was a child, remembered him  
talking to me and his face, such  
red brown skin. His home was  
never too far away, and he'd  
always grown his backyard  
garden with his own hands.  
A man with few belongings like  
the stained glass dreamcatcher  
outside on his patio and *The Call  
of the Wild* by Jack London.  
It was when he had died I helped  
my father paint Hulio's bedroom  
in memory of him; his spirit  
a growing diamond of light he  
left behind him.

## Legacy

Without allowing myself to think  
I lifted the hinged lid, the aroma of  
old cigars and something else wafting  
out of it. I sneezed twice, then peered  
inside the box. Scattered throughout  
were dried rose petals, detached from  
the stem most likely from a hand that  
had carelessly removed them. Nestled  
amid the petals was a canister of old  
120 roll film and beneath it an ivory  
envelope, still sealed. After hesitating  
briefly, I reached in and pulled it out,  
breathing in deeply when I saw  
the underlined name on the front,  
the elegant cursive writing of  
a gentleman's hand. Feeling the soft  
ivory vellum between my fingers,  
it was from my paternal grandfather  
I'd never seen. Carefully I opened  
the envelope and read the message,  
ending with the words *Cerca Trova:*  
*Seek and ye shall find.* Hidden  
somewhere in the depths of my  
house was a legacy of diamonds.  
One day I'd found a humidor they  
were in, and a flawless diamond  
slipped effortlessly into my hand.

The sun hit the brilliant-cut stone,  
prisms of light exploding from  
the gem like a shout of freedom.

## Prairie

The pale sun rises the next day; it does not see the crow that visited my home and flew away before the morning rain. My clothes still hang on the line, lightly wet, a trembling in my heart that I need a tiny cross for my bare soul, a whisper in the wind that maybe I shouldn't be here, no land of honey in this life on the prairie. Wolves under the empty sky; oil lamps that burn only halfway through the night. I burn the tarot cards stolen from under my youngest daughter's bed, sleep with my dear nana's bible, pray for the edge of light to wake me while the rest of my family peacefully sleeps. By day I carry a gun wishing for my husband's return, my eyes roving the desolate land, occupying my mind with a tidy sum of books. No game or trickery will work on me. Only a god can shy away the darkness, wrap an angel's

# Grant Tarbard

Grant Tarbard is the author of 'Loneliness is the Machine that Drives the World' (Platypus Press) and 'Rosary of Ghosts' (Indigo Dreams). His new pamphlet 'This is the Carousel Mother Warned You About' (Three Drops Press) and new collection 'dog' (Gatehouse Press) will be out this year.

## Extract from **dog**

38.

Dog thought of Christmas as his dizzy child worshipped in bouncing temples, feeling elastic by the great shaking belly of the city's morning bells and its thousand replying inflections. Dog made us stand on Primrose Hill for the early, as he called it, exfoliating of the grand ding-dong whilst we dressed as barnyard animals, as his father had taught him. Then dog ate oysters while we'd clothe the shells with a dosage of music.

After that we would shoot love notes into trees, drag a trolley of booze to the old people's home and drink until gravity didn't work and stingrays hovered above the central reservation in serious thought.

Gladys, the tattooed lady, turned into a pillar of blue bath salts, all tube stations morphed into a green harmonium and wheezed in unison "It Came Upon a Midnight Clear."

All the wounded animals sang along, all paintings of ships at sea found their ports. When it was time and not before, dog would scoop up the day's collection of sleepy voices and boil in a gentleman's hat. The electricity in dog's jaws locked, his teeth flickered like moths as he hiccupped with liquor in his paunch—

It's time that intoxicates us, not the puff  
of smoke and the rattling of the tambourine.  
Christmas snaked away a model  
of the universe, framed in the frost  
of our window. Dog asked of the snow  
to speak softly now or he may forget.

# Madelaine Smith

Madelaine Smith has had a few poems published online and in journals including Ink, Sweat & Tears, The South, Paper Swans anthologies (real and virtual), and Perverse Poems. Some have been included in local exhibitions. Some will never see the light of day. In a drawer she has three unpublished novels.

Twitter: @MadelaineCSmith

## Christminster

I showed you the city as if it were mine  
spouting my imperfect knowledge  
with the confidence of a tour guide,  
sharing with you snippets of my  
history as if the two were  
interwoven, as our lives  
had been when we were still forming,  
still building the people we had become.  
These stones soak me up  
even as walls keep me out.  
It wasn't silence we shared  
while we were together  
daring to face the past.  
I felt your tingle of excitement  
every alleyway we went down,  
every squint we looked through,  
and although the sun hid itself all day  
you felt the warmth of the stones.  
You too know the pain of striking  
the cricks of the past.

\*\*\*\*\*

Crick - A fissure through a block of stone, often invisible until the stone has been cut.

## Circle Dancing

Late evening birds chatter  
at the top of mid-summer hill.  
We picnic, share sandwiches  
and stories of long dead hill dwellers,  
midnight blacksmiths,  
silver horseshoes.

Below, wheat fields ripple  
as gentle touch of giant hand  
brushes across the down.

Crop circles come to mind;  
we could dance  
a new one into being.  
Holding hands we form a ring  
grin at our folly as  
the thought hovers above us.

... we very nearly dare.

# Daniel Sollé

Daniel Sollé is a British-born creative artist based in Istanbul. His journalism has been published in the UK in The Guardian, The New European, History Today and Drum. He has recently completed a children's book, The Adventures of Kosmokot and is working on his first adult novel Of Thee We Sing.

## **Dawn**

Dawn, again, doesn't break –  
it crawls, scarab-like,  
across my sunken chest.  
Pulling the sheet higher  
I blush at its charms  
and I ask myself  
again  
whether today will be the day  
that I decide  
to break.

## **My Boy**

My boy,  
more precious than I will ever be -  
this day has been long.  
Too long.  
Say no more,  
choose sleep,  
let go.

My boy,  
embrace the reddening sky.  
Pull that blanket  
to your neck.  
Tuck it over your toes  
and under your heels.  
Give way.

My boy, please  
be silent.  
Choose a star.  
Close your eyes.  
Take the tide.  
Let go.  
Let me live.

## William Cotter

Bill Cotter's poems have appeared in Australia, New Zealand, England and India. He has won a number of literary awards, including the Melbourne Shakespeare Society's sonnet competition. He has also published a novel exploring the gold rushes in Victoria in the 1850s, a collection of short stories and a short play for voices. He has conducted creative writing classes for adults and children. He lives with his wife, Kaylene, in Bairnsdale, a country town in Victoria, Australia.

### Sputnik

The old farmer smells the mown hay in the paddock,  
Feels the sweat growing cold on his face  
And hears, behind the rusty shed, his kelpie rattling her chain.  
There is comfort in the mist trickling along the creek,  
The windmill and the frogs creaking together,  
The blurred outlines of cattle slouched beneath the red gum  
He and his wife had planted sixty years ago.  
Even in the cacophony of possums coughing in the orchard.

But tonight,  
Above the sharp outline of his house  
He sees, almost with disbelief,  
A dot, silent, white and purposeful,  
Crossing the Milky Way.

# Kathryn Southworth

Kathryn Southworth is a retired academic living in London and the Cotswolds. Her first collection was *Someone Was Here* (Indigo Dreams) in 2018, followed by a pamphlet with Belinda Singleton, *Wavelengths* (Dempsey and Windle) in 2019. She has been published in many print and online journals and reads regularly in London venues.

## Scissors, paper, stone

I want to wrap up this morning,  
like a gift bought with care and love,  
a small bird winding the grasses around itself,  
like dim sum parcels  
sealing up the goodness within.

I want to cut out this morning  
from the confusion of night's dreaming,  
from the rest of the day and dilution  
of its particular pleasures,  
the low sun entering the room,  
the lulling rustle of the leaves.

I want to squeeze this morning  
into the shape of my palm  
and leave it to rest  
for millennia, just as it is,  
only smoothed by water,  
weighted by the freight  
of its own substance.

## Building

*A tribute to Renzo Piano*

River is sluggish at low tide,  
smart bars forlorn  
in down-time Monday morning.

Battersea grieves for its lost power —  
dying for a smoke,  
its towers are only sugar cigarettes.

The cranes wait, suspended,  
for the breeze to catch them;  
once in motion, they are boats in the wind,  
they mediate earth and sky,  
white necks swiveling slow but irresistible:  
as if they could repair the world.

Soon the mass of brick  
will be hidden in circling glass,  
a fancy costume of gauze,

for they are flirting with light,  
sharp glitter in the sun,  
vanishing into grey clouds,

they are flirting with air,  
shrugging off gravity,  
denying the pull of earth,

they are flirting with water,  
gradations of blue, the almost white of sky dissolving,  
indigo settling into the dark of river.

## A C Clarke

A C Clarke's fifth collection is *A Troubling Woman*. *War Baby* was a winner in the 2018 Cinnamon pamphlet competition. *Drochaid*, a pamphlet with Sheila Templeton and Maggie Rabatski is due out soon from Tapsalteerie and a solo pamphlet centred on Gala and Paul Éluard in 2021.

### **In Praise of Winter**

*Miss April delivers the kiss of life to a Silk Cut by the fire* Simon Armitage 'To the women of the Merrie England coffeehouses, Huddersfield'. This poem began as a Golden Shovel poem on this line and morphed into the shape below.

When December days roll themselves up like hedgehogs I never miss  
the lengthening light, the buds-in-waiting of fêted April.  
For me the season of candles and Santas delivers.  
It's not the giftwrapped disappointments, still less  
the looped insistence in stores of ersatz bonhomie,  
the drunken kiss under the mistletoe, that takes me  
clean out of the weight and hurry, this improbable life  
confectured from plastic and dreams. What takes me  
to the deep well at the core of my being is small:  
a particular shade in a rained-out sky, the crushed-silk sheen  
of a wet, crimson leaf, bales of cut hay  
stoic under barn roofs, apples unplucked by gales  
on a wintry branch, the sweet, sad scent of wood-fire.

## Credits

It was often emotional reading these poems, a lot of which were sent in the growing threat of Coronavirus around the world, and we would love to share our deep gratitude to all of those who contributed.

*Sideways x*

Cover Photo by Lucrezia Carnelos on Unsplash

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## Haiku Corner

By G.S.

A clock it has stopped  
All the time it has now lost  
Every second blocked

Feeling inspired?

Get your poems published in *Sideways!*

# Sideways

poetry magazine

We are hoping for Issue 4 to be our biggest - and best - yet.

Poems can be about any subject and in any form. Length-wise, most poems we view are up to 3 pages of A4 at the very maximum.

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

Also, do include a brief biography/publication history.

**Please email submissions to:** [sidewayspoetry@gmail.com](mailto:sidewayspoetry@gmail.com)

**With thanks to our contributors:**

Marka Rifat, Ed Limb, Bobbi Sinha-Morey, Grant Tarbard,  
Madelaine Smith, Daniel Sollé, William Cotter, Kathryn Southworth,  
A C Clarke

*Sideways* is an online poetry  
magazine. Each issue features  
poets from around the world,  
often based on an issue 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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