

**Fly on the Wall Poetry Presents:**

**WEBZINE ISSUE 1**

*Theme: Mental Health and 'Outsiders'*

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## **Shrinking**

**By Kristin Garth**

Black leather jacket, helmet, cluttered desk,  
recline, supine, brown couch, confess — his kind  
forbidden Florida. Flesh Kafkaesque  
decreasing — school psych request dad won't sign.

No shrinks for shrinking — mint chip ice cream? Prayer?  
Utah humdrum unhappiness becomes  
arid despair — choked body, hyperaware,  
until blue pills, mental health care goes numb.

You swallow, listen another hour deep.  
He's telling you secrets doctors should keep.  
He says he could call you, soothe you to sleep.  
You feel a year younger each time you weep.

He scoots his chair closer, softer he speaks.  
You're growing smaller though he is the shrink.

**Generational**  
**By Katie Lewington**

i think it is fucked up  
that there were generations  
of children  
not encouraged to speak their minds  
that if you asked them to write a poem  
they would reply  
how, what about  
and i say  
how you feel  
and they would wrinkle their nose  
and say in disgust  
how i feel  
like they packed in identifying  
what they feel long ago  
that they don't realise  
one incident will lead  
to another until  
it snowballs  
into chaos

psychologically fucked up  
with the emotional depth  
of a rubber duck

these were the people that raised us  
and maybe Larkin was right  
they fuck us up  
our mum and dad  
who in turn were fucked up by –

## **I get out of bed**

**By Elisabeth Horan**

breathing in a way becomes so tiresome; the way in which I waste the air given to me, with which in turn - I contaminate the world; my sons. The way I play Gardenscapes in a coma as they call out mom, mom! look at this - momma, momma! come see what we've done –

*In a minute* - I groan, I feel my ulcer percolating; I feel my stomach lining castigating me for all the Pabst, all the stupid junk merlot; the coffee, the Camels, and gallons of Diet Coke - I'll be right there babies...

Yet, no, I don't go - for I can't get out of bed; I am the world's worst mother; the worst mom God has invented; I often scream and throw burned toast; I yell fucking cunt at the woman driving - she is so calm and pretty - jovial, really, chatting with her preteen son in the back seat, in the passenger seat the handsome dad is grinning like an idiot -

he must love her dinners, she must give amazing head - imagine that - after so many long years of marriage: blow jobs, steak and apple torte; zinfandel, cashews, cheddar cheese on the porch - a quick getaway to the Cape, Fire Island - no credit check required.

I rise to my feet... I'm sweaty, suddenly dizzy. I grip the side of the bed, pull on my fat-ass sweatpants. Momma's coming babies, please be patient - and my God, they are so patient waiting all of their little lives for me to finally arrive...

this time I might actually succeed - I might really make it there - not collapse in the hallway crying about how messy the house is, what a failure I am, how I will never feel better - till they come to my aid; these tiny therapists as always, by my side: we love you momma, don't cry, don't cry, we love you momma, please don't cry---

## **Non compos mentis**

**By Jennifer Wilson**

Witches are marked by madness,  
standing out by night  
consulting with stars  
as if they too know  
the moon in intimacy  
like a lover they would reach  
if only dances and gatherings  
of herbs were enough  
to garner reciprocation  
from far and distant Gods.

Matters of the heart are wild  
and cause women to break  
like waves, bending beyond  
the natural with screaming  
songs of love, their limbs  
elliptically strong and making  
signs as smooth as light.

These instead elicit looks  
from men, neighbours strangely  
pale who orbit greedy-eyed  
the moon's full face  
in the aspect of ill will.  
They see lunacy, the waste  
of women gone mad  
before the moon  
and taking from themselves  
their bodies, stripped,  
and their minds a mess  
of moon.

It is all encompassing,  
the self as it calls  
through sky. Women dance

in circles, spinning  
close and perilous  
to water that would swallow,  
roll and hide in its depths  
the madness for which the lunatics  
are come like death  
and flowers, with ablutions  
of darkened eyes.

**He Lived on a Lonely Road**  
**By Attracta Fahy**

He walked his path,  
counting stones  
rested on even numbers,  
paced the ball of his foot  
over dividing lines  
between slabs.

When he spoke it was  
rapid, jumping  
from sentence to sentence,  
splitting thoughts,  
his witty humour,  
unsure of trusting himself,  
fear to surpass boundaries.

Often  
he was gone, like a light from  
conversation,  
staring mid sentence  
into a galaxy, parallel worlds,  
numinous thresholds, caves between  
lands, his body a vehicle

There, he was silent, withdrawing,  
a place we could not know,  
every sound a vibration, unsaid words,  
the underbelly of ocean currents,  
streaming in silence.  
We knew he knew things,  
was anxious,' they said.

It was after he passed I knew,  
he was a wise man.

**Linen tulips**  
**By SM Jenkin**

My mother has walked in  
from her garden,  
the arms of the tulips on her  
cardigan writhing, like  
black flames against a  
pink sunset.  
And her eyes water,  
but there is no more smoke,  
no soot; her hands are clean.  
When she sits, she  
brings with her the memory  
of the roll-ups that she used  
to tap against the ashtrays,  
scattered around the house, tidied  
away for all guests except her sister  
Katherine. The one who sneaked fags  
and whiskey on the sly,  
the one we don't talk about.  
Later, mum tells me about  
the starched headdress she wore,  
branded with the Lyons teahouse logo,  
crossed against her brow.

But this is not what she was wearing  
for Robert Mitchum,  
the time she served him in the  
West End. Selfridges, or was it  
John Lewis? Details blur  
at this distance, without landmarks.  
Pale green with a tan apron,  
as she stood to his left,  
so as not to tarnish the gleam  
of the silver spoon  
hovering above his white  
plate.

The kind of place where  
the well of stilton was filled  
by port, and hollowed out  
in circles.

He tipped well.

This was after the time  
she bought two eggs on the  
ration, and the shopkeeper  
asked her where the party was.

Before she earned her nurses  
fob; took the three buses  
across a patchwork London  
and lost the brand on her  
starched nurses headscarf,  
cleared her apron.

Just a little down the food chain,  
after all that from her own  
bog-bound mother, picking potatoes  
beneath Scotland's pencilled clouds  
in the summer,  
scarf tucked under chin.

The decency of it all,  
of what those girls were  
asked to do.

The photographs are ashes;  
she's not ashamed  
now, but for the loss of it.

The mirror of her mothers face,  
younger, smiling.

The only picture of her  
mother is of the time she  
married the UN pilot.

Her mother standing before  
a blank wall, next to her  
daddy. His eyes shut.

Her own eyes shut.

My mothers silver service badge

lost somewhere between  
the rocks of one coast  
and the borders  
of another.

The place where she thought  
she had left the bonfires,  
has followed her  
and the edge of her sleeve,  
her cardigan for best,  
is gone.

## **Blood Sports**

**By Sarah Battison**

Writing is my self-harm  
the metaphorical need  
to cut myself open and bleed  
blood replaced with ink  
on nice smooth pages  
defaced with sharp words  
from vicious tongues.

Writing is my escape  
from the darkness  
that surrounds me  
and the black holes  
that ground me and  
tastes of darkness embed  
themselves on scarlet lips.

Writing is admitting  
all of my deepest fears  
amidst painful tears  
whilst writing with the stolen  
ink from my depleted heart.

Writing is my self-harm  
the metaphorical need  
to cut myself open and bleed  
blood replaced with ink  
on nice smooth pages  
defaced with sharp words  
from vicious tongues.

Scribbles from ballpoints  
and doodles from pencils  
writing is the clarity  
the crystal clear lakes  
of my unconscious.

Writing is my self- harm  
the metaphorical need  
to cut myself open and bleed  
Blood replaced with ink  
on nice smooth pages  
defaced with sharp words  
from vicious tongues.

**Rude Boy Ruminations**  
**By Gemma June Howell**

He spits-  
thick green flob  
sours concrete floor.  
Nicotine tongue licks  
silenced lips  
in a desperate attempt  
for some moisture.  
His puffing muckers  
huddle in the harsh light  
of the flats,  
where they hang.

Outside, slag-heaps soften his  
pebble-dash prison. A wasteland,  
built to ensnare his grandfather.  
A miner, who'd slogged  
to make his country great.  
To give his kids the chance  
he never had.

The wasteland: a law-unto-itself.  
Aptly named the Rock.  
With a patronising nod to the Classic  
Greats: Dickens, Milton and Keble  
in the street name signage.

Great Expectations, a shit school book.  
He only knows of Hard Times and the  
Dickens Court Flats.  
The place to go  
to smoke,  
to drink,  
to forget...

His eyes, shot blind,

see no more than a  
concrete wall,  
a graffitied graveyard  
scratched  
with the rapper boy tags  
who had lost before  
they were even born.

The Rock-  
one way in, and one way out.  
Damage control.  
Built to contain the blue-bloodthirsty  
miner masses and now, a ghetto,  
for their wasted grandchildren.

Rude Boy waits  
for his toké on the  
circulating bong as  
Tupac's truths boom  
from the Beat-box.  
This brother from  
another mother sets  
his mind on fire.

All eyez on him.

He exhales

and his trainer sole slips  
from the dirty foot stripe  
printed on the wall.

His thoughts,  
once sat in smog,  
grow large.  
And he spits again  
on a step iced  
with phlegm.  
He jumps the heap of

empty flagons and  
blown spew-chunks.  
High and wired-  
he inflates  
a master spirit.  
Then pushes through  
the beat-up door.

A fresh blast hits him,  
sharp-  
like the nub  
of a nunchuck.

He looks up to the stars  
then beyond the sagging  
slag-heaps  
    still proud and black  
on the landscape.

## Functioning Dysfunctional

By Connor Ovenden

It's 5am as I bathe in the dark  
My mind moves like a train at full speed  
I can't sleep  
I can't think  
I can't

Function.

That's what we are supposed to do?  
What mum raised me for  
What does a father proud  
For me to

Function.

But what does that mean?  
How do I function?  
What is the correct way to walk  
How do you thank someone politely  
But not to politely  
Yet not to rudely either  
How do you eat in front of others without looking like a fat ass  
How do you breathe quieter  
What is grief  
What if I don't feel like sex  
Is that normal  
Right now that isn't a priority  
I've got other things going on.  
But can I just not have sex  
Is that

Functioning?

Because when my mind is wrapped up by the suppression of thoughts  
By trying to not think about wanting to die

Or every word I should have said  
Every step I didn't take  
It gets hard to take any more steps  
Speak any more words  
It gets hard to

Function

So excuse me if I cry  
Or if I fidget  
If our conversations end in a long silence  
If I analyse a look  
A word  
If I run it over in my head a thousand times  
If I seem 'cold'  
Or

'distant'

If my smile seems like nothing more than  
A brittle lie stretched across  
Rotten veneers

Know that  
I'm  
I'm just Processing things  
It's just how I

*Function* I guess

## **Pole Opposites**

**By Bethan Rees**

Stuck to tongue and peel back  
delicate flecks of red dots blending  
into the clear.

She walks to the end of it, and peers over the edge -  
eternity's eye in a whisper-less wind.  
Tip of the universe on a cold underfoot.  
Sliding soliloquies of rime.  
Pulling her jacket around her bare skin  
she shudders around the corner's edge and into  
the unknown.

A single block lays before her on a black pedestal,  
stuck like glue, she deftly flicks it.  
Ping and crack, it crashes against the wall  
and then everything begins tumbling.  
So does she.  
Backwards.  
The jacket flies away, she grabs  
desperately, but it is soon gone.

She lands on a pile of bodies,  
then falls asleep.

When she wakes, they are all wearing jackets  
identical to her own. Brown on flecks of black, white fur trimmed skin.  
They are sodden with the melted ground below them.

One of them appears before her. Holds a  
small plastic tray. Cracking like bones  
out they tumble to her feet.  
She picks up a cube.  
Her fingers numb.  
She places it on her lips.

Stuck to tongue and peel back  
delicate flecks of red dots blending  
into the clear.

**Flower Girl by the Roadside**  
**By Rachel Burns**

In the layby next to a motorway  
a young girl wearing a blue anorak sits in the rain  
she texts on her phone  
hunched over a make-shift table.  
I see her from the car window as we speed past.  
The girl is surrounded by aluminium buckets  
filled with pink carnations  
wrapped in cellophane.  
There is something disturbing  
about pink flowers laid out bare  
on grey tarmac like that.

## The Heel of My Every Unknowing By Jerrod Schwarz

I know one thing about my biological father:  
if he's alive, we are both painting over a limp.

The podiatrist says *genetic tumor*,  
but she means ice bridge and fresh lava  
and every snakeskin crackling itself  
into fertilizer.

*Probably Ledderhose disease.*  
*I assume your father has it, too?*

She presses her gloved thumbs  
into my arch and manipulates  
the scar tissue of two failed surgeries.

*Oh, adopted. Well either way*  
*we should remove the whole tendon,*

but what she means is souvenir and DNA  
and maybe if I mix someone else's growths  
with partial custody and the softest bible verses,  
a dad's mouth will appear:

*Try the hex wrench, Jerrod.*

*Did you make your mother's birthday card yet?*

*My foot stings too, and we can share an icepack.*

## A POEM ABOUT GROWING UP POOR

By David Slater

I am sorry, I was admiring  
the brutality of the sky.  
Where was I? Then, and later  
the perambulator rolled squeaking  
past our living-room window.  
It is not so much the fire spitting  
in the grate that makes me think  
of my Uncle Jim's iron lung,  
as the soot on his vest left to air  
on a wooden rack over the range.  
The name for his complaint  
was poverty, said the man  
with the creased leather satchel  
and the old and dyed greatcoat,  
who came to collect the previous  
week's rent, which was overdue.

## UNIVERSAL CREDIT

By Frank McMahon

Learn this lesson: assume the supplicant's  
position, low before the arbiter.  
Hang your petition on the ox's horn and  
pray as it turns and plods inside the keep.  
Forty two days in the wilderness, longer  
than Christ's self-chosen stay. Time to go home  
and count the copper pennies in your palm, time  
to scour the bins for corn cobs overlooked,  
scraps on bones, nubs of bread, hide candles  
and kindling, beg remission on your rent.  
Time to forage hedgerows, scrape bark for baking  
bread, claw the furrows for potatoes, hush  
the hungry child while you lie clamped and clemmed,  
fashioning hope from feathers and dung.

You may be lucky: beneficence  
parsimonious may be granted or  
day on day on days delays will find you  
in winter's shadow outside the castle walls.

*Originally published in Riggwelter in July 2018*



**Ophelias are coming out of the woods** (After Tishani Doshi)

**By Bethany Rivers**

they're coming out of the woods, they're destroying  
their chaplets and picking up bramble bruises,  
they're crushing red roses underfoot and picking up  
thorns, they're holding hands in a long chain,  
ignoring the sermons of their fathers, those who call  
from behind the tapestries of trees, they're blindsiding  
their old lovers who were never lovers, jumping over their graves,  
their carnival has no more clowns

the Ophelias are coming out of the woods  
their hair is no longer manicured and shiny  
old birds' nests fall out of tangled tendrils  
their nails are too long & too bitten

they're coming out of the woods, holding hands,  
their first friendly touch in centuries, these palms  
sweating into each other's life lines & love lines  
they've seen into each other's green & blue eyes  
& know the depths of what lurks there, now they're  
climbing towards the light, gulping forest air  
soon there will be cow & sheep air, soon there will be  
road air & car air, eventually there will be city air  
& country air, no more bubble air

they will build bird nests in our hair  
look unflinchingly into our eyes  
we will ignore the sermons of our fathers  
we will jump over the graves of old relationships  
we will be forced to see the depths we've ignored for centuries

the Ophelias are coming out of the woods  
they're holding hands in a chain  
not like a daisy chain  
not like the shackles at our ankles  
a human chain

repealing the lies we've been telling ourselves for centuries

the Ophelias are coming out of the woods

*(Originally published by Bare Fiction)*

**Plant a foot**  
**By Gail Aldwin**

His paper face is threaded with red lines, a result of drinking wine served in large glasses. Discretion makes him order a small one, this time. My husband jostles through the crowds to reach the bar. The man coughs into curled fingers then wipes his hand on the back of his jeans. I look at the floor. *Don't mind me*, he says. I twist my lips into a smile, trying to be friendly with someone I'd rather not know. *Your other half's not a bad cricketer*. I lean against the wall, my spine's ready to collapse. A full day of sitting on the boundary has me exhausted. *Best score of the match, he got*. The man drains his glass and places it on the shelf beside me. I shuffle sideways for a breath of air and he stares. *So what are you doing, these days?* He taps his foot, waiting for an answer. *I work with refugee children*. Beads of sweat slide from his temples. *Didn't you used to be a teacher? What are you doing wasting your time with them?* The vein on his neck pulses. *I am a teacher. The kids need to learn English, get some qualifications, help them to find a job*. He shakes his head then flattens the fallen strands of hair back into place. *You've got to be kidding me*. The tirade begins: we're overrun with them, can't cope with more people. We live on a tiny island. I fix my eyes to stare at him, all puffy and sweating. Blotting out the words, I watch his lips move. He sneers and sniffs. If for one moment, he could plant a foot in their shoes, he might feel differently. *God love you, mate*. He reaches for the glass my husband passes.

**Leaving the hospital**  
**By Kirstin McWhorter**

everyone always says how brave I was to speak up  
no one ever mentions how  
a g o n i z i n g  
it was  
to not be heard.

i had to force myself to go against my instincts  
i had to stop the thoughts from flooding my brain  
if i hadn't done that, would i still be here?  
if i hadn't done that, would it end the pain?

this warrior has seen too many battles  
ones with dotted red lines  
s i g n  
here, here, and here  
and you're a free woman.

signing out is never half the battle  
instead it's just a way of saying you're done  
the war is over  
but have you won?

## **Biographies: (in order of appearance)**

### **Kristin Garth**

Kristin Garth is a Pushcart & Best of the Net nominated sonnet stalker. Her poetry has stalked magazines like Glass, Yes, Five:2: One, Anti-Heroin Chic, Former Cactus, Occulum, Luna Luna, & many more. She has a chapbook Pink Plastic House (Maverick Duck Press), three forthcoming: Pensacola Girls (Bone & Ink Press, Sept 2018) and Shakespeare for Sociopaths (The Hedgehog Poetry Press Jan 2019), Puritan U (Rhythm & Bones Lit March 2019) Her full length, Candy Cigarette, is forthcoming April 2019 (The Hedgehog Poetry Press). Follow her on Twitter: (@lolaandjolie), her weekly poetry column (<https://www.rhythmnbone.com/sonnetarium>) and her website ([kristingarth.wordpress.com](http://kristingarth.wordpress.com)).

### **Katie Lewington**

Katie writes with her particular brand of poetic insights, based loosely on the subjects of belonging, loss, mental illness, and hope. You can read more snippets of her writing on her Patreon, or in her books available on Amazon.com. Katie also runs a book blog, where she reviews small press books, and interviews writers.

Blog <https://katielewingtonpoetry.wordpress.com/>  
Twitter / Instagram K\_lpoetry  
Patreon [https://www.patreon.com/k\\_lpoetry](https://www.patreon.com/k_lpoetry)

### **Elisabeth Horan**

Elisabeth Horan is a poet and mother from Vermont. She writes to let others know they are not alone in their struggles with mental illness and disability. She has work at Milk + Beans, The Mad River, formercactus, Feminine Collective and other wonderful places you enjoy. @ehoranpoet & [ehoranpoet.com](http://ehoranpoet.com)

### **Jennifer Wilson**

Jennifer Wilson lives in Somerset with her husband and spends her days as a faceless retail drone. She came top 10 in Molotov Cocktail's 2018 Shadow Poetry Award and is forthcoming in an anthology from Rhythm & Bones Lit.

### **Attracta Fahy**

Attracta Fahy's background is Nursing/Social Care. She works in private practice as an Integrative Psychotherapist/Supervisor. She lives in Co.Galway, and has three children. She completed her MA in Writing NUIG in 2017, and is participating in Over The Edge poetry workshops. Her poems have been published in magazines and journals, including Banshee, Poetry Ireland Review, The Blue Nib, PoetHead, North West Words, and several others.

### **SM Jenkin**

SM Jenkin has had work published in literary anthologies and magazines including: Anti-Heroin Chic, An Assemblance of Judicious Heretics, Blithe Spirit, Boyne Berries, City Without a Head, Confluence Magazine, Dissonance Magazine, The Interpreter's House, the Mermaid and Please Hear What I Am Not Saying.

### **Sarah Battison**

Sarah is a 28 year old woman from the West Midlands, UK. She is a mother of 3 and has been writing her whole life, she now hopes to inspire others through her poetry. Sarah is the author of 'The Journey to Happiness' which can be found here: <http://amzn.eu/d/a9EBd9v> . Sarah also has poems published in 'Further Within Darkness & Light, Paul B Morris'. Twitter: @BattisonSarah

### **Gemma June Howell**

Gemma June Howell's gritty and honest poetic voice has challenged literary norms in Wales. Her passion for politically-forthright poetry is firmly rooted in her commitment to the Red Poets Society, where at the age of 16 she shared her work

in the bygone social clubs and pubs of the Southern Valleys. She showed promise when in 1999 she won First runner up in the Rhymney Valley Poetry Competition, and with her debut publication 'Inside the Treacle Well,' (Hafan Books: 2009) she became recognised as a controversial writer of unconventional Anglo-Welsh literature.

Poet, playwright and author of experimental fiction, Gemma June Howell's work has appeared in various publications in Wales and in London. In 2010, she was a Finalist for the John Tripp Award for Spoken Word, and has since had poems appear in anthologies: 'Hallelujah for 50ft Women', (Bloodaxe Books 2015) and 'When the Young Dodo's Meet the Young Dragon's' (2015). In 2017, Gemma formed The Cardiff Sister's of Solidarity who were responsible for organising the Sister March in January, in opposition to Trump's inauguration. Since then, Gemma has read her work at various festivals including: The Trouble Maker's Festival in Swansea, Merthyr Rising for two consecutive years and more recently, Megaverse at Cardiff's HUB Festival. In October 2018 Gemma will begin her Doctorate in Creative & Critical Writing at Swansea University.

### **Connor Ovenden**

I am a young Queer Australian writer and illustrator, I am relatively new to actually composing my work, I previously worked as strictly a visual artist, having exhibitions in local and national galleries. I would make work about gender identity, femininity and heritage. These works begun to evolve into questioning my own identity and the experiences I have had. After finishing my Visual Arts degree I moved on into writing and illustrating work, having worked on 'Carnival Games' by D.E. Kerr and my own collection 'SledgeHammer'. I write often like a diary page, dealing with mental illness and abuse in a family unit. It is tough at times but I believe that with any medium for ideas, it is important to keep pushing the boundaries of how we think and view abuse, gender and illness.

### **Bethan Rees**

Bethan Rees lives in Swindon, England with her partner, Reese and her useless dog, Mitzie. She has been published in Three Drops from a Cauldron, Fly on the Wall, Amaryllis, Atrium, iamnotasilentpoet, Persephone's Daughters and Domestic

Cherry. She is currently studying an MSc in Creative Writing for Therapeutic Purposes through Middlesex University.

### **Jerrod Schwarz**

Jerrod Schwarz teaches creative writing at the University of Tampa and edits poetry for Driftwood Press. His work has appeared in PANK, Entropy, Opossum, The Fem, and new work is forthcoming from Abrams Books, Heavy Feather Review, and Thimble Magazine. His first chapbook, *The Crop*, was published by Rinky Dink Press in 2016. He lives in Tampa with his wife and twin daughters.

### **Rachel Burns**

Rachel Burns has poetry published in literary magazines *The Lake*, *South*, *Fenland Reed*, *Head Stuff*, *Lonesome October*, *South Bank Poetry*, *Smeuse*, *Southlight*, *The Herald Newspaper*, *Toasted Cheese* and *A Restricted View From Under The Hedge*. Poems anthologised in *#MeToo*, *Poems for Grenfell Tower* and *Please Hear What I'm Not Saying*.

### **David Slater**

David self-published a poetry collection in 2008, and had several poems published in *Northern Lines*. David has only recently begun submitting work again. This month, David has a poem in the first issue of *Marble*. He reads poetry regularly at a group he leads at the *Literary & Philosophical Society* in Newcastle. He has completed an MA in Creative Writing at Northumbria University in 2006.

### **Frank McMahon**

Frank has been published online in *I am not a Silent Poet*, *The Poet by Day*, *Riggwelter*, *The Cannon's Mouth* and *Cirencester Scene*. He has poems soon to be published in *The Curlew*. McMahon also writes plays and one will be broadcast in October on *Corinium Radio*. Frank also writes short stories and is working on a children's novel. He has another play to appear soon on *Soundworks*.

### **Rona Fitzgerald**

Rona Fitzgerald has poems in UK, Scottish, Irish and US publications both in print and online. Originally from Dublin, she now lives in Glasgow. Most recent publications are Poems for Grenfell Tower, Onslaught Press 2018, and #Me Too, Fair Acre Press, 2018.

### **Bethany Rivers**

Bethany Rivers' pamphlet, 'Off the wall', published by Indigo Dreams (2016). Previous publications include: Envoi, Cinnamon Press, Obsessed with Pipework, Three Drops from a Cauldron, The Ofi Press, Picaroon, Bare Fiction, The Lake, Tears in the fence, The Lampeter Review. She mentors the writing of memoir, novels and poetry: [www.writingyourvoice.org.uk](http://www.writingyourvoice.org.uk) Bethany is editor and founder of As Above So Below, a poetry ezine which explores spirituality.

### **Gail Aldwin**

Gail Aldwin's poetry is published by *Slamchop*, *Words for the Wild*, *The Five-Two* and *Underbridge*. Her poem 'After' was commended in the Mother's Milk Books Writing Prize 2016. Her work appears in the Beaumont Park permanent poetry trail in Huddersfield and at Flaghead Chine Seaside Garden in Poole. In 2016, she won first prize in the Bournemouth National Poetry Day competition with an entry titled 'Starlings'. A poetry pamphlet on the theme of siblings will be published by The Student Wordsmith in 2019. You can find Gail @gailaldwin and <http://gailaldwin.wordpress.com>

### **Kirstin McWhorter**

I'm a poet. I love writing poetry because it seems to make sense of my feelings *for* me. If it rhymes, then I'm in my zone. -**Kirstin McWhorter, author of Hope and Healing.**

