



Fast Fibres Poetry 3

Edited by Piet Nieuwland and Martin Porter

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The logo for Creative Communities NZ. It features a stylized 'c' symbol on the left, followed by the word 'creative' in a bold, lowercase sans-serif font. Below 'creative' is the word 'COMMUNITIES' in a smaller, all-caps sans-serif font. To the right of 'creative' is the letters 'nz' in a large, elegant, cursive script font.

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Sarah Angus

Bernard

Hirawani, fearless warrior
who promoted good relations
between Maori and European,
stares at me
impassively from behind the glass.
His feathered cloak and moustache
delicately worked in pencil grey.

Captain James Cook hangs on
the other side of the door,
equally serious
understanding the weight of historical responsibility.

Bernard, with his red rimmed clear blue eyes and white moustache,
greeted me explaining, with slight apology,
that he is the youngest resident.
Still in his sixties
he served at sea.
They had desperate times
and he treated a fellow sailor's broken leg
by cutting it right off.

He showed me the clock in his room
then a second in the corridor.
"One, two, three, four, five, six.
They are exactly the same,"
he said in hushed tones,
as if personally responsible
for this extraordinary occurrence.

I examined his artwork flanking the door,
and showed him his name
inscribed at the base of the pictures.
"They must have given them to me,"
he replied nodding.

He told me he was sorry
his wife was not able to stay with him.
She had to live somewhere else.
The room was small.
There was only space for one bed.

Bernard.

Polite.

Dignified.

Gentle.

Possibly a sailor.

Definitely an artist.

I will never forget our meeting.

Bridie Bergin-Southall

Beauty That Sustains Me In A Way That Wages Can't

Rain drops on manuka bending her bough
Sunlight of prisms, like diamonds
Encouraged to fall in the breezes
No choice but to let go.

Birds hopping from branch to branch
In their element
Shaking the diamond rain drops of prisms to
fall and nurture what lies beneath.
Like the breezes, easing the weight of the tree,
less spectacular without them.

I too wish the prisms of rain drop
In morning sunlight
could last forever
Turning the beautiful manuka
Into a tree of diamonds.

Sadly
I think someone would figure out
how to harvest those diamonds
for profit.

Veronica Cleary

Pataua / Bola Jan 87

*Dewi Laut**

Yesterday a gannet
depth-sounding
off-course luminary
landed in the river:

last night a big sea
took the point away:

as we are beset
this month
by a concatenation of signs
a rolling of Newtonian apples

so a southern queen wearing
tides like a green veil comes
filling the river
with serpentine.

** Javanese Sea Goddess*

Kylie Connell

Elemental

Hear the winds speak to sovereignty of soul

Bathe in waters clear and brine

To wash all burden from the mind

Fire your belly and let created seeds spill forth

While earth anchors your aura and binds you north

From her core to heavens stars

It's elemental, herald all four.

Geraldine Crow

The Proposal

Rugged peaks
Stand alone.
He proposed to me out there
On the top one.

Still air that day
Not the normal shifting updrafts,
Searching
Eroding, carving,
Resting from their business that day.

Making the walk out
Easy.
A bottle of wine
A celebration

Drinking in not just the wine
But the view, exalted.
Inhaling
Deep breathes of joy
And anticipation of the
Future.

Today
The goats walk out
Snipping and cropping the grasses.
I wonder if they wonder
At the strange green object
Carefully placed
As a memory
A memento
A stake in the ground.

David Crewe

No resistance

I've got no resistance to you,
I can't keep my distance from you,
You break down my fences,
Undoing my senses,
I've got no resistance to you.

I can't keep my eyes off of you,
I get all my highs off of you,
Your glance sends me reeling,
No hiding this feeling,
I can't keep my distance,
I've got no resistance to you.

When night comes I'm yearning for you,
For things that I'm learning from you,
Your arms so inviting,
Your touch so exciting,
In want that insistence,
I can't keep my distance,
I've got no resistance,

Now all my existence - is you.

Lola Elvy

The thought of you is frozen

The thought of you is frozen
like a favoured word you can't pronounce
or a promise you can't keep

Garden chairs lying broken outside. The air looks colder
than their time-stopped metal curves. Grey,
like the sky
Iron,
like sea

I hear them, always. I don't know what they're saying. I don't
know how to answer.

The crux of their backs crowns the horizon like concrete bent to
mould
around crooked skin
Don't stop now
We've barely started

I want to tell you, a—
—rush
of
 tactile sound and manmade
edges
Listenlisten,
wind hissing through grass

freshly cut

A girl, green dress
beneath dark sweater. Goes from one
place to the next like it doesn't matter
She hasn't learned to recognize boundaries yet

Stiff fingers
Can't feel a damn word you're writing, but you run your hands
over the page like braille. It's getting dark. *Stay a little longer,
won't you?*

Her gloves are yellow.

Car made to cut through sand. *In this weather?* You hear your
mother curse.

You miss the sand. You do.

II

I can almost touch it. I can almost feel it breathe.

Close your eyes. The dark reminds you of quiet.

Black shoes on freezing grass, just before the dawn, and you sit
and watch

And the sun rests just shy on the highest
hill, the steady
arch of the road reminding you
of wind

It tastes like sky

But it's not home

III

Air staining window glass like a pulled exhale in reverse. You're done now. And you know it. Lying bare and spent on the tiled floor, you lay your hands back and imagine it tipping, tipping forward, spilling you over and down its edge like rain over ice, rock, steel. You run your fingers down its surface, imagine tracing a line through the dust that has collected there; ash, streaking earth and skin and hands, sifting over you like snow.

You were done aeons ago.

IV

Paper cuts from grass when you were eight years old. Press thumb to blade now, try to picture the blood rising from your broiling veins, rising, and then falling, falling, from skin to stone, splaying itself across the soil with dirt-sweet release, fertile, growing into something new, an array of colour, streaked with time and possibility, right before your eyes—

It doesn't work that way, she said.

It doesn't.

V

The heavens tasted like hail

The oceans like corrugated summer

Shatter, shatter

like you used to

Rush, rush, *stay*

Tipping

cold, tile celadon sky

falling

Like silence

in bone

Arthur Fairley

Sign of the times

I write
post post-modernist poetry.

I post poems
to the publishers

and the publishers
they post them right back.

Tony from the tip

It was Tony from the tip.
He said he had something for us.
He would leave it at the front gate.
He said he had heard we were interested
in that sort of thing. He could think of no one else.
People talk. So do words. Because we are from a time
when it was polite to be polite we said yes.
Even our no would have been a yes.
What then a surprise. A surprise to find it wasn't Tony
after all, but the sound of somebody else.

From Lithuanian Languages

1

Daylight *up there*
in large print

darkness can take it
or leave it

meaning unmeasured

2

somewhere in the hours left to us
eyes are drenched in love

delicate deference's
softly on a skin

don't sit at the corner
of the table
if you wish to marry in the morning.

3

Aušra.
In my country at dawn
we eat Kūčiukai the biscuit. like cake,
nothing will harm us.

4

I hope our language
welcomes you in
on this actual day

talk of family campfires pervade
tributes hang on every tree moisture mists
surround the intricacies of our lakes

the feast confined to
guava apricots and loquat
an assurance *something else* will follow.

5

This taken language
sanctuaries of disquiet
beyond the lines of our masters

each syllable a consulate
to clamped faces,
our daughters
solemnly beyond
 your startled good lucks.

Kirsten Fathers

Woot

My son and his homey-geeks
made a word on Sunday
woot.

Unassigned any meaning
they play:
wootage, wootology, wooting,
happy woot

It flies!
We giggle, private joke.
English grads & geeks
woot-greet.

Family dinner:
Unfortunately the cousins,
childfree,
are woot intolerant

Poet's Corner, Bay of Plenty Times, 2005

Malcolm Ford

Aussie Meets Neptune

The cat had rolled himself to sleep
On the liners cane deck-chair;
Purring softly to the rhythm
Of someone's affectionate care:
They had named him 'Aussie',
Because the moggy, came from there.

What was he dreaming of as he slept?
Was it where he roamed the deck?
He knew the ship-shape end-to-end:
The galley, stairs, bunks and beds;
Ladders, lockers, and life-boats,
And where the rat's trails led.

The raider's mines were shallow laid
To nudge and scratch a liner's hull!
Niagara tickled the tender horns --
With a gash the steel plates opened!
The sea rushed in; the boats were readied
And "Abandon ship!" was spoken.

The crew and passengers disembarked
As the liner was slowly listing
And someone had thrown the cat in a boat,
But back to his home ship he bound;
They gave the captain some room to get in
But loyal to his ship, Aussie drowned.

Down in the depths of Pacific's waves
Just off Northland's eastern coast
There lies the wreck in *Niagara's* grave:
And amongst the ingots of burnished gold
Are the sea-weed bones of a loyal ship's cat
Somewhere down in the rusting hold.

Rata Gordon

The pregnant pioneer takes a seat

I am sipping from the lip
of a huia egg it's
fine like bone china the yoke
slides down my throat my son's
spine is unfurling the ferns are
sniffing the cows whose tails
are curling in spirals the
tui twist warbles around
the trees it's Sunday I need
to preserve this forest
in a Mason jar yes pickle
the angels then scrub the
potatoes for tea

Vaughan Gunson

Trip

We began in Nelson, the sun like a promise,
a blanket spread over the land

the Buller Gorge didn't tax us, early on

Westport to Greymouth at night in the rain,
working hard through the gears

water seeps into cracks, gouging, enlarging,
until in need of repair

we've been like a glacier
retreating from the valley floor
back to an alpine coldness

where, my love, we'll melt more slowly I'm sure
and minimise our losses

still time for high peaks, traveling through a pass
from grey shadowless day

to lake blue skies, blue sky lakes
and amber-glow mountains
casting great purple shadows

a long way from Invercargill,
where dull town is married to dull country
by straight roads

we're more like Bluff, the old pillared Post Office
made over in yellow, orange and lime green

a detour too late in the day round The Catlins;
the beauty of sun-struck wetland grasses

turns to regret on unfamiliar roads in the dark,
nothing to see, until finally the lights

of Balclutha and a generous solid brick
and warm carpet welcome

forget Dunedin in a storm, the confusion
of one-way streets

and skip through to Oamaru,
where the sun came out again, illuminating

the white stone buildings,
which we walked between,
sophisticated and elegant, transported

back in time to would-be-lovers, tangling
in a nineteenth century novel

what was damaged, if not by the big quake,
the aftershocks, we can rebuild

we're aiming for the best
heading to Akaroa, our last stop

a cloud draped over Mount Sinclair
like icing on a cake.

Steve Herbert

Haiku

new taonga
rumbles along country roads
scarred hills bear witness

~”~”~”~

new-born calf
stumbles on spindle legs
drunken stilt walker

~”~”~”~

mid-winter sunshine
amidst harried rush-hour crowds
your smiling face

Tim Howard

Making pathways

hen pheasants, five of them, cut across
our morning driveway, making their own path – often this way -
under fence, around persimmon and
centre garden, past the green and the fruit trees, within
the shelter of low boughs, to pause, graze
and move on

Israeli soldiers, seven, avoid the Gazan night street,
making their own path – often this way – through house
door, welcoming room, wall (broken), sleeping area,
past screaming and cowering fear, back wall (smashed),
to define, mark
and move on

we each make paths by walking

i make a move, the hens explode away

Jac Jenkins

The Sword In The Stone

arThur how we
danced oh How we
dancEd it was

gracelesS less grace
than sWans but glorious
arthur hOW we
dReamed oh how we
dreameD it was

flawless I flew you
saNg your song flew

on i fell arThur how
you flew now How
timE

rideS your shoulders
you are grey graniTe time
slides acutely On
me i am sharpeNed
stEel

Leigh Jolly

Journey through the night

Come home to me,
I've got a pocket full of nightmares I want to share with you,
Come home to me,
The morepork's saying something about your hair to me,
Come home to me,
The rivers crying out your name, it's not fair you see,
Come home to me,
My love is like a candle in the dark baby.

The fires glowing,
The drinks are flowing,
The feelings growing,
My teeth are showing.

Come home to me,
Orion's' in the clear, black, eastern sky tonight,
Come home to me,
I want to wake up with you in the suns first light,
Come home to me,
You know our future looks so rosy, shining bright,
Come home to me,
Like Damascus steel in the windows of a Northland night.

You drive me crazy,
Tie me up, taser me,
Interest, amaze me,
You always save me.

Come home to me,
I'm tired of loving you via satellite..... and
I'm missing your cold feet.

Dennis Krebs

Fly little Swallows

Your heart
The pain I prepared for.
My love
In your hands.
Our thoughts,
Who cares.
What next,
Who dares,
Or needs to think.
Not me,
Nor you.
Too confused
So many channels.
Touch me
Then I know I'm alive,
And lost,
In love,
with you.

Audrey Lappin

Early Beach

Sky's overcast, leaden, sun not up yet,
Sluggish tide, slowly, lapping over mud,

That is covered in fragments of broken shell,
Glad of my beach feet
Protecting feet from cuts,

Walking through sea grass,
Growing in soft mud,

Lazy swells of water,
Washing up beach,
Paddling slowly in gentle cool water,

Shags standing in water, inspecting shallows,
Seagulls walking around, beaks busy in eddies

Blue heron skims water,
Disappearing into mist,
Covering other side of estuary.

Olivia Macassey

Hypocritical haiku

I meet him online
he writes terrible haiku
we will not be friends

Untitled

When I die, I will not haunt you. My ghost will walk
in silence on the surface of the sun,
and it will not scorch or burn my skin

as you have done.

I will haunt the green dark kelp beds where
the swell-sharks hatch their young.
But the water will not enter me

as you have done.

Sen McGlinn

Selentropy

The tide strides to the moon's measure,
the resounding sorority of waves
chase, around the ragged rock,
our sister world, unceasingly.

Their shawls are all tatters, white in the wind;
they bruise us in their haste
tearing off our substance,
Every seventh wave, a grain of sand.

Jack McKerchar

warm summer rain

i would be better off naked
than walking around - buttoned up -
in this waterproof jacket
to keep my clothes dry
even if it did not let water in at the neck
trickling down my spine -
down my chest - to the belt at my waist
tickling and trickling into my crotch
sticky clothes soaking wet
walking – so fast in rain -
tickling and trickling - sweating and soaking -
naked walking would be sublime
but may alter jim baxter's list of crimes
to get you arrested in auckland's queen street

Rehutai

up on vegetated dunes -
Taupo's rush through Waikato and Tangaroa -
translucent mesh slung over this vineyard
of grains of sand and pearl white waves
inside - sand and waves glow
in eerily muted sunlight
vision's distance reduced
mind's distance magnified -
gambrels of the sky -
fishers wheeled vessels
magically float through mist
swirling seabirds disappear and re-appear
emptiness returns
only muffled waves calling
touching our feet
retreating
memory of vessels erased

Gregory McNeill

Up on the urupa

They should have cut the grass
never get a tractor
up this side of the hill
on a track snaking back on itself

A bridal train of fine gold
swaying with the wind
you ahead, stopping occasionally
to see if I was looking
I thought of taking a photo
up on the urupa

Where your grandmother
has been now sixty years
a square of fence to keep the sheep out
nearby broken toys, a bicycle bell
mark a child's grave, whose parents' grief
never cleared the weeds

Away in the top paddock
the farmer is shepherding on a quad
oblivious to us sat soaking in the years:
up on the urupa the memory of your tupuna
waits to be stirred

Piet Nieuwland

Sing the kahikatea

In foliage's of sound a rooster tranche
Spring ventriloquisms from the indigo night
Farewell the moon and its lucky stars
With rhythms of log laden trains crossing bridges
Bleeding like dripping persimmons,
Dawn tears open, a flourish of smiling children
Busy at play, a play for today

With nano-neuron fibres braided into a factorial jive
With oxytocin kicks, flooding our brains
In puberties of oysters and soft sugars
Smoked grey mullet on yeasty breads
Tui black shades fecund with gravity
And swollen feijoa fig apple and avocado

The ancient scents of our relatives in you,
Papatuanuku, in the waterfront coffee kitchens
In open hill country, among gravitational waves
With proteins folding and matching
They don't live, except in us, now.

Feel the wind, wind in your hair
Wind in your face, at your back
Warm wet rain running down
Divine clouds meeting and greeting
The ocean, a grape flush of sea waves
Sunlit orchestral movements, sacred moments
Planting, Kauri Ki Uta Kauri Ki Tai

Coves

The mermaids at Lang's Beach
Slip and dive into the high tide
Speaking Swedish in pink, multicultural Maori
Singing black Californian, polka dot Dutch
Laughing French coffee accents and hints of Chinese spice
Scarlet English blondes and Indian ebony golds
In a breeze as warm as Bream Bay waves
Through tangled pohutukawa shade
The summer altar of beach ritual and display
Inclines in to shelly sand recline
Scent of salt, soft sweet spot of sun on the back
Sunglass peering, sunscreen spreading all over
The islands just over the horizon
Curves curve away just enough to
Sea foam hiss and turquoise blues

Pure Slush Vol.12, Summer 2016

Margaret Northey

Night thief

Like a whisper of silk
you slipped into my dream,
quoted Tuwhare
then faded away.

How curiously Shakespearean of you-
a dream within a dream.

I trace the outline
of your face
strain to hear
your voice again,
sense your presence
on the breath of a butterfly's wing.

But you elude me
a gossamer gauze
mere slip of a memory.
My night thief-
no ordinary son.

Martin Porter

shell

her father unfolded the concertina
map, laying it in dunes on the table
she googled it, name in box, click
of a button, eyes on the screen
and zoomed in to see

every grain of sand,
a hermit crab caught, mid-
scuttle,

the met report told them it was
comfortable yesterday
comfortable today and
it will be...

i gently rest my finger on the sand,
raise it to my face, observe
the Single Fragment of Shell adhered
and rub it, abrasively, across my open palm

Remains

Could they ever please one another -
him, androcentric, strong and always right,
her, neurotic, her only imperfection her perfectionism?

While he strode the moors, did she wander the valleys,
following her lonely train of thought (say nothing),
wonder if he was going to shoot that ailing horse,

or take the lambs to slaughter?
Did she listen to the whispering of his infidelities,
while cradling the wind?

Did he speak about her to the harrier,
hovering above that accidental road-kill,
or did he say nothing (say nothing)

while he trod out the rough stony paths,
striding to outpace the encroaching damp,
the oncoming hatred of winter?

We do not know (say nothing); only that she loved horses,
and the train ran through her fragility
and there were sheep, and there was fog.

Aaron Robertson

Fighting Blackbirds

The surreptitious joy of sun
on skin after winter rain will quickly
dissipate, ceding its tenure
long before we catalogue the loss.

Welcome the old bugbear, perhaps
the only one that's haunted our dreaming,
yet each meeting hangs in the gut.
Strange that we've no memory of our folly.

Slipping, turning, stealing a path
through labyrinths of faded projections,
here is the epoch where doubt and graft
diminish the light of all we know.

With the baggage a delicate blindness.
For all our declarations of faith,
we search, obsessively, for some escape
from the bonds imposed by this inheritance.

Alone, the blood's failings will baptise
us afresh in the obstinate round; consumed
in an iridescence of kukupa on loquat
and the fire that breaks from manuka in flower.

Natascha Rodenburg

Historical knowledge emerging out of the bank of Kawakawa River, New Zealand 1999

passing in silence silent observing

being present

rhythmical cyclical seasonal

being present

going out coming in standstill

being present

receiving letting go changing

being present

infinity eternity in between

being present

and so the historical knowledge emerges

Ila Selwyn

two night skies

i)

at the bach in Tutukaka
Doug goes outside
in the black
stands dumbstruck

a cloud of milk
poured across the sky
show him Orion
hanging upside-down

like a pot
the Southern Cross
its pointers
the millions and billions of stars

ii)

on a deserted gravel road
after a potlatch ceremony
see stars, cry
please stop

Doug pulls over
we clamber out
look up, the Big Bear growls
the Little Bear

flips his raccoon tail
point to the Pole Star, laugh
throw my arms around
my big brother

Alex Staines

For Francesca

Like other ambiguous progeny in the nth
year of redemption, their awkwardly ardent,
mismatched journeys toward mundane dishonesty
find inspiration in the brazenly posted
shadows. The silence kept by the field, nothing much
has changed. These bodies, voyaging, by staring at
them, while grasping nothing about the subject, to
see the places no-one ever knows.

Leave a key under the doormat for hopeful nuance.
Smirks back – simply the other side, behind the scream,
remnants of the founding engine, the impression
that clings to the walls, lights switched on day and night,
no single room was white enough for the perfect
waves. There were few controls, valleys and summits
fastened by a cord, a tense shimmer flares up, and melts
into the camera rather than say.

Maureen Sudlow

Walking the dog

In the mist
wood smoke and damp grass,
spiciness of wild fennel.

The dog sniffs other things,
stories on lamp-posts of who's been where and doing what.
The sudden excitement of recognition.
Logging trucks and diesel.

Another walker leaves a whiff of aftershave,
and I wonder if he's on his way to her
or leaving her.

By the old cattle yards
pungency of manure

Is it possible that fear has a smell.

And over all
the rich aroma of the estuary,
salt and mudflats
under the autumn sun.

David Taylor

Time and the world

Time and the world stood outside the backdoor veranda
Pagan fires burn within
And upon the broken cog of this watchmakers severance
Atoms split and fly
The nick of metal on bone
Song on drum
Wish on pray
Curiously dissects a shimmer from a shadow
I rake up the leaves of summers past
And arrange them into patterns on winter's lithe twigs
The feeling of rope bites up between my toes
And a massive easterly is merging with a west Antarctic blast
It's shaping up !
Yeah
It's shaping up alright
A blue grey morning
Light cracking these huge clouds of granite
Foo !
Tawhirimatea, tuakana !
Pukanas a rumbling bellicose " 'TENAKOE" !
Lead on cuz, lead on through to bluer havens
Whilst my leaves arrange themselves into sails that beckon a new
dawn
Tawhiri
You carry your brother to my door
Tangaroa, Ehoa ! What are ya ?
Searching for a desert ?
A sheet of sand ?

Parched riverbed close at hand
Whangaitia ra e nuku wiriwiri
Nourish this quivering planet
These muddy footsteps, this quantum dichotomy of flesh and
spirit
Nourish this quivering sky
Mihi nui atu ai tipua
Mihi nui atu ai

Slow Beating Heart

Sunshine breakthrough
The dense canopy
And light a window to the slow beating heart
Radiate the centuries
And let me embrace you for just one more
People
For Tane Mahuta
For the Kauri I implore
Nurture the forest floor
For generations to contemplate life vibrations
To explore
The many tranquil quiet places
And breath
And play
And listen, for your part
In this slow beating heart

Leena Taylor

Doubtless Bay

Grey shadow darkened sea
Silver threads a distant shore
Patchwork houses frame the bay
Broken shells track four-wheel drive.

Empty scallops fan dusty sand
Fish bones poke from sooty wood
Amber glass still unsmoothed
By waves, wait for unsuspecting feet.

Gulls scream curses at interlopers
No doubt who owns the sparkling bay.
Gathering our share of the bounty,
We head hungrily for home.

Vivian Thonger

We must not always talk in the market-place of what happens

In a green wood
tunnel thin fury
through dark slow water:

litter with heavy desire
power with rain blades
earth with imagined antlers
trail with bright, broken purpose –

drenched, darkened, deliberate.

Eric Wagener

Simplicity

To work or not to work
Is one of life's great questions
To eat or not to eat
Is life's most realistic answer

Ancestors 1

Over time I grew to know you
Age differences growing smaller
With our advancing years
The sharing of the good times
And the sharing of the tears
Sadly now you have passed on
But your spirit with me remains
With just a thought or action to remind me
How it was just yesterday
I wish that it could have just gone on
The way it always was
But that was yesterday years
When we were all young and strong

Mercedes Webb-Pullman

Can't go home

Totara stands defiant.
Behind him, my old home;
he still shadows night onto day,
my father the night man
my mother ruler of light.
Tree roots make caves for play.
My sister climbs up, away
as new baby cries. The tree stays
doesn't go rushing inside.
We sneak from the yard.
No earthquakes happen, no fires.

From Reservoir Hill we
can see the tree. Home is
a dolls house, nappies flapping.
Ant people, pushing
toy prams, hurry along.
That can't be our mother!
She's so tiny! We lie
to roll down the hill laughing.
Clouds and ground swirl
in a giggly giddy dance.
We land in a helpless heap
at my mother's solid planted feet.
Anger picks us up, shakes us
makes us hold her skirt
tows us home again.

Kaitaia has changed but
the tree still stands there
larger, darker, my father and
my mother dead.
From Reservoir Hill
I watch as sunset
makes a shadow finger of me
pointing home.

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Adrian Whale

In the sacred footprints of Manaia

Two minutes away,
Still, we turned
Our backs,
Closed our eyes,
To the desecration
Of your taonga.

We became anxious
Of our actions,
Under the gaze
Of that mountain.
Fear, or exhaustion
Drove us downward.

The sacred is not
a safe place to tread
Unknown or unbidden.

Kathleen Wynn

My Grandmother coming to Australia from Berlin 1910

As a woman, venturing over the oceans
in a crowded ship feeling the strain
tug at her collar and the children cling heavy to her skirt
and all the sights, familiar in the city,
transformed and lost in the mystery
of the tossing salty seas,
suddenly stumbles on to the deck
she pauses alone, half –chilled with terror
at the immensity of the
unrealised.

Biographical Statements

Sarah Angus Born in England I settled eighteen years ago in Kerikeri, Bay of Islands with my West Auckland husband. We share ten acres of good growing land with our three sons, my mother in law, three chickens and an ever increasing population of pukeko.

Bridie Bergin-Southall, originally from the Manawatu. My husband and I have been in Whangarei forty three years where we have raised our five children and absolutely love the North. I have found that nature inspires me to write poetry and that there is a deep spiritual interplay around this.

Veronica Cleary Born and bred in Whangarei, Ngunguru. Life in Auckland and overseas with husband and family in Indonesia. Year in Europe, UK, Wales, Nederland and Dalmatia. Vaguely “eternal student”. Finished BA(Auck), Dip. Landscape Design (Unitec) and BASS NorthTec). Raised three excellent boys with ex-husband Jos. Worked in libraries and other jobs. Now back “home”, in Onerahi, Whangarei.

Kylie Connell has been writing since the age of 6 when she first published a story in the Christchurch Star. She is currently working on her first book *The Black Rabbit Hole* in between making websites and writing for others.

Geraldine Crow - writer, artist and poet - lives on the beautiful Tarai Station. She looks to the NZ mountains, countryside, birds and native bush as inspiration for her works.

David Crewe is a playwright and award winning songwriter and poet, now writing and living among the orange groves of Kerikeri, having moved to New Zealand from Australia, via Malta and the UK.

Lola Elvy lives on her forty-three foot sailboat Momo, currently located in Tanzania. She dabbles in music, song-writing, poetry, and forms of creative fiction and nonfiction. She is fourteen years old.

Arthur Fairley is a shareholder/director of Pure Pac Poetry Ltd a duly incorporated company having its registered office in Whangarei “if it’s not pure, it’s not poetry.”

Kirsten Fathers moved to beautiful Hikurangi in 2015, refugeeing from Auckland. She has been writing poems of varying quality since she was a teenager, a long, long time ago...

Malcolm Ford Most of my working life was spent as a teacher here in NZ and in Canada. Since retirement I have exhibited widely my quasi-mechanical sculptures using native manuka wood and copper.

Rata Gordon was born in Kaikohe in 1988. She now lives on Waiheke Island and leads a creative youth development project. Her poems have found homes in a number of literary journals including Landfall, JAAM, Sport and Poetry NZ.

Vaughan Gunson is a writer living in Hikurangi. His poems have been published in journals in NZ and Australia. He writes a regular column for the Northern Advocate. A new collection of poems titled 'Big Love Songs' can be purchased by emailing vgunson@vodafone.co.nz

Steve Herbert is a born and bred Northlander, who has spent most of his life elsewhere. Rather late in the journey, he has discovered that he enjoys writing poetry, and that Northland is home.

Tim Howard is a Whangarei-based community worker and grateful local resident. He is Pakeha of Irish and other ancestry who anticipates Te Tiriti o Waitangi being honoured in Taitokerau.

Jac Jenkins Nomadic, is currently in the Northern Territory writing flash fiction and poetry. She has had several writing successes in NZ such as winning the 2013 Takaha Poetry Competition and Northland Short Story of the Year twice for pieces of flash.

Leigh Jolly I am Australian born, living in Otangaroa with my lovely kiwi wife, loving life in inspirational Northland.

Dennis Krebs: Mostly a reluctant performing singer, songwriter. Have lived in Northland for the last thirty years and love it so much

Audrey Lappin Born on Northshore, kept moving north, live in Northland, I find the north inspiring, all my poems are written in Northland I love it here.

Olivia Macassey currently lives in Whangarei. Her poetry has appeared in various places including Poetry NZ, Landfall, and Brief. She also writes on cinema, and has a PhD in Film and Media. Her second book of poems, *The Burnt Hotel*, was published by Titus in 2015.

Sen McGlenn (b. 1956) is a sculptor, writer and translator, and lives in Kawakawa.

Jack Mc KERCHAR An old bugger whose poetry began on Northland's Ripiro Beach and is being built on at another beach. Still seeking the answers which are revealing themselves slowly

Gregory McNeill is a Northland poet who has returned to the Whangarei area after 50 years away. Love, loss and living in a rural setting are the strong themes in his writing. He is currently working on publishing a first book of his poetry.

Piet Nieuwland is editor of Fast Fibres and his poems appear in wide variety of journals including Landfall, Takahe, Poetry New Zealand, Mattoid, Brief, Pure Slush and Blue Notebook Review. He is a visual artist, writes book reviews and previously worked for Te Papa Atawhai.

Margaret Northey I am Whangarei born and bred, having lived here for all but seven of my 51 years. I am one of four daughters, I have three beautiful daughters of my own, and I teach in an all girls' school, so I guess you could say I am all about embracing being a woman!

Martin Porter born in Jersey, studied in London and Leeds before moving to Whangarei in 2005. He has published poetry and micro-prose in the UK, Jersey, USA and New Zealand. He is co-editor of Fast Fibres, and judge in the Whangarei Library flash fiction competition.

Aaron Robertson is a writer, visual artist and musician living in Hikurangi. His poems have previously appeared in Poetry NZ, Takahē, Otoliths, and Snorkel.

Natascha Rodenburg is a New Zealand/Dutch artist of Dutch, German and Slovenian descendant. Setting an intent. Catching the essence.

Ila Selwyn was an MC for Poetry Live for 4 years, then the MC of *rhythm & verse* in Titirangi, for 5 years. She completed her Masters of Creative Writing at Auckland University in 2014.

Alex Staines is a poet and professional writer living in Wellington, though he spent many formative years in Northland and often dreams about mangroves and kokako.

Maureen Sudlow has a Diploma in Creative Writing, and has published a small poetry collection 'Antipodes'. She has also written two rhyming children's picture books Fearless Fred and the Dragon (short-listed for Joy Cowley), and Fearless Fred and the Flood

David Taylor Always liked pissin around with descriptive language and stuff, was hopeless at English back in the day , but just wanted to have a tutu at painting pictures with words aye, nek minit, BAMM ! I'm doin it, hope someone gets a kick out of my stuff, but whatever. Still having fun, chur.

Leena Taylor Semi-retired educator in Doubtless Bay I write, read and garden most days; I've reached a perfect balance of life.

Vivian Thonger Lives in Kerikeri having moved to NZ in 2016. She hones most of her work in front of a Whangarei audience at the Old Stone Butter Factory's Dirty Word nights.

Eric Wagener I am 70, married with two boys. I am largely self-educated. A farmer, orchardist, past builder carpenter, registered Drain Layer, and inventor of equipment. In the main I have lived in Houhora since 1968.

Mercedes Webb-Pullman graduated from IIML Victoria University Wellington with MA in Creative Writing in 2011. Her poems, prose and short stories have appeared online and in print, world-wide.

Adrian Whale Fell in love with the beaches and maunga of Northland during his house-dad days that began a decade ago. He is currently Chair of Tai Tokerau Emergency Housing Charitable Trust.

Kathleen Wynn Born and educated in Australia, Kathleen loves Northland where she has lived for the past forty years but her interest in the indigenous people of her homeland has never waned.

