

**POEMS ON THE MOVE**  
**Guernsey's International Poetry Competition 2019**  
**Judge: Maura Dooley**



**List of Winning Poems**

**OPEN CATEGORY**

1st prize:

*PASSING IT ON*, **Sharon Black**, France

Poems on the Move & Poems on the Buses Exhibitions, £1000

[www.sharonblack.co.uk](http://www.sharonblack.co.uk)

**Passing It On**

I bring my blue to the island.

I leave it along the path to the Community Shop,  
the abbey, the graveyard, the new-builds and the Spar.

I lay it at the old stone cross,  
scatter handfuls of it on wild garlic at the rookery.

The more I give away, the bluer I get.

I knit it into socks and scarves, paint it  
into coastal scenes on canvas and on craft shop mugs.

One morning after breakfast I walk into the sea.

Nobody notices I'm gone.  
Nobody sees the horizon breaking.

2nd prize:

*JACOB*, **Chris Hardy**, London

Poems on the Move & Poems on the Buses Exhibitions, £500

[www.poetrypf.co.uk/chrishardybiog.shtml](http://www.poetrypf.co.uk/chrishardybiog.shtml)

## **JACOB**

Some early morning  
when you wake  
a ladder of light

up the wall  
where the shutter  
is still closed.

A bird,  
maybe a dog far off  
and quiet waves.

What you hear  
is the sun  
holding its breath.

3rd prize:

*WHEN I FOUND SOME WOMEN WITH BELLIES,*

**Holly Hopkins**, Manchester

Poems on the Move & Poems on the Buses Exhibitions, £250

[www.HollyHopkins.co.uk](http://www.HollyHopkins.co.uk)

twitter: @HRHopkins

### **When I found some women with bellies**

They were in the National Gallery  
wearing dolphin smooth skin  
and only the airiest net at their hips,  
stomachs round but childless  
snug with grapes and game.

Women with necks like glasses of milk  
and impossible jelly-mould breasts  
carry confidence in their bellies.  
If you plugged them to a socket  
their abdomens would shine like bulbs.

## CHANNEL ISLANDS CATEGORY

1st place:

*SMALL WORLDS*, **Judy Mantle**, Jersey

Poems on the Move & Poems on the Buses Exhibitions

### **Small worlds**

This is the beach where I grew up, learnt to swim  
nearly drowned, watched my nut-brown father  
home on leave, walk on his hands  
along the water's edge, his path traced  
by wet indentations in the sand.

That granite crag, our Peak in Darien  
I recognise each handhold, plateau, cleft  
but where my small foot found a perfect fit  
there is no space for feet the size of mine.

Grandchildren search for shells and fish for shrimps  
in pools which seemed so bottomless to me  
I close my eyes and shrink to share their view  
feel seaweed fronds wrap round my heels  
to peel back all the years from then to now.

2nd place:

*LETTING GO*, **Juliette Hart**, Jersey

Poems on the Move & Poems on the Buses Exhibitions

### **letting go**

a mother's eye never blinks  
thinks it knows best

he relents  
brings his washing  
to launder  
and hang out to dry

she stands at the window  
watching

pale blue sheets  
writhe in the sky  
wrenching the line  
pulling to be free

3rd place:

*TECHNICAL ADVANCE*, **Susie Gallienne**, Guernsey  
Poems on the Move & Poems on the Buses Exhibitions

### **Technical advance**

The internet connects me,  
With friends across the world,  
Their every photo shown me,  
Their every thought unfurled.  
And with this global marvel,  
So much better than the phone,  
I now have words and pictures,  
To remind me I'm alone.

## YOUNG PEOPLE'S CATEGORY

1st place:

*REFLECTIONS*, **E Wen Wong**, New Zealand  
Poems on the Move & Poems on the Buses Exhibitions

### **Reflections**

dawn                    the sky is splattered  
by my juicy mandarin,  
the sea                    a mirror  
of tears soon to fall.

watching —  
we capture the skyline,  
grey lines folding like pursed lips.

wrapped in thick ash and two woven wings,  
the sun sets a foot on our city  
one eye blending  
across                    an open sea.

2nd place:

*TRAVELS ACROSS TIME*, **E Wen Wong**, New Zealand  
Poems on the Move & Poems on the Buses Exhibitions

### **Travels Across Time**

Scattered across a full plane we move like  
the city lights of San Francisco  
everything is moving, everyone is talking  
even nothingness, even time. From the sky it is as if  
we are all just birds  
here on some foreign flight, time zones teasing us  
across this winding maze, an incomplete puzzle  
skimming across the tarmac.

Suitcases are wheeled across the dark, moving  
as always. Preoccupied, disconnected  
this world turns  
too fast to wonder—  
if birds even know of *foreign*  
or if they know it all too well.

## **POEMS ON THE BUSES**

(13 poems listed *alphabetically* by poet's surname)

*EVERY TIME I CAME HOME*, **Alison Binney**, Cambridge  
Poems on the Buses Exhibition

### **Every time I came home**

someone I didn't know, or knew a little,  
or perhaps quite well, was getting married.

Even the couples my parents didn't know  
were enough for endless musings over tea:

how they met, what she might wear,  
whether the height difference mattered

(less than living together, more than baldness).

Soon, every time I came home  
someone was having a baby, a crop

of grinning children on the fridge. I had nothing  
to bring to that table. I pushed their questions

around my plate, going to bed hungry,  
dreaming of other women's kitchens.

*STORM IN A TEACUP*, **Alison Binney**, Cambridge  
Poems on the Buses Exhibition

**Storm in a teacup**

She'd sucked it up bucked up buttoned up bottled it up  
lightened up shut up snapped herself out of it

kept her pecker up head down hair on kept schtum  
counted blessings silver linings worse things happening

at sea knew it might never happen and even if it did  
it wouldn't be the end of the world.

When it happened no one cried over spilt milk.  
It's what she would have wanted.

*THE GUN WAS ONE THING*, **Carole Bromley**, North Yorkshire  
Poems on the Buses Exhibition  
[www.carolebromleypoetry.co.uk](http://www.carolebromleypoetry.co.uk)

### **The gun was one thing**

securing its case to the wall,  
removing the bullets,  
lying to the kids about its purpose.

Now here you are, the rain  
the only sound on this Scottish moor  
and you on your belly, wriggling.

How gentle the doe is,  
nervously testing the air  
which carries no scent of you.

In your sights now,  
she pauses to flinch off a horsefly,  
lowers her head to the heather.

*DREAMTIME*, **Christina Buckton**, Cambridge  
Poems on the Buses Exhibition

### **Dreamtime**

I've only just realised who it is  
that I drive ninety miles to meet  
in a gravel layby at the corner of a barley field.

And we lay by  
and listen to Rosalyn Tureck  
playing her well tempered clavier

It's William that's who it is  
the man whose hand explored my hand  
at a personal awareness course in 1989

Only our hands,  
but when I'm sleeping I drive there  
we listen and say see you next year

That's it  
Only our hands

1960, **Valerie Darville**, London  
Poems on the Buses Exhibition

## **1960**

A heatwave summer.  
I, fifteen years old,  
in a gathered skirt,  
a clean white blouse  
and my first high heels.  
Haunting the park;  
hunting for boys.  
The scent of the grass;  
the ache in my heart.

*BARN*, **Ian Enters**, Somerset  
Poems on the Buses Exhibition

## **Barn**

Behind a moat of bleached hay  
A ladder leads to wisps and loft-dust.  
In the corner, one coke bottle – shared;  
A single sandal – where is the other?  
Across the back wall in chalk,  
Now smudged, unclear,  
Your funny fond words for me alone.

Through the slats I view the yard,  
The gates, the field, the sea beyond  
And, stretching out my fingers,  
I can touch the broken waves  
Where we swam. Ah there you are,  
And I will wait. You know where I am.

*BULL MALE, SLEEPING*, **Abigail Ottley**, Cornwall  
Poems on the Buses Exhibition  
[abigailizabethwyatt.wordpress.com](http://abigailizabethwyatt.wordpress.com)

### **Bull Male, Sleeping**

Despite my glazed, black eye, not dead, not I.  
A whaling man would know better.

A kittiwake spoke and by the power of my flukes  
I heaved my scarred bulk at the the sky.

Now blow-hole to the surface I am perpendicular,  
at peace with my own slap and wallow.

Between the music that lulls me and the tide's sharp tug  
slides the shadow of the she-whale that suckled me.

How perfectly we swam, my smaller belly nudging hers.  
I learned worship at the altar of her mouth.

Now time makes me master of this brooding estate.  
Only man and the orca oppose me .

My desire is to swim. I will father many children.  
My great purpose is to breach and blow.

*STILL*, **Jane Pearn**, Scottish Borders  
Poems on the Buses Exhibition

## **STILL**

The shrill alarm has razored sleep,  
torn the fabric of my dreams.

I lie still, consider the slanting skylight,  
its edges a frame for itinerant clouds.

*Letting the world manage, as it does, without me.*

The sky's light is in the room. It falls  
on the drawer not shut, on the waiting clothes,

on the mirror framing the frame. The glass  
contains the same unhurried clouds.

Sparrows squabble. Uneven footfalls - high heels in a hurry.  
A lorry reverses. Voices are loud then fade.

*Thinking how busy it all is, how we go on with the necessary things.*

A dog barks twice. Somewhere  
beyond the edge of the page, a door closes.

*TABLE, WINDOW*, **Simon Richey**, London  
Poems on the Buses Exhibition

**Table, window**

She began to forget words.  
The word for trellis.  
The word for sparrow.

And then for table.  
And then for window.  
They fell from her life

like leaves. In the end  
she was almost silent,  
sitting at this nameless thing

in her front room,  
gazing at the sunlight  
as it poured through the wall.



*LISTEN*, **Peter Wallis**, Norfolk  
Poems on the Buses Exhibition  
[www.peterwallis.co.uk](http://www.peterwallis.co.uk)

LISTEN

Lang Lang's playing an outline map of Africa,  
like toying with a croc.

Finghin is hygienist to the Yankee smile  
of his instrument.

Barenboim is at the helm  
behind a wherry's slanting sail. Meanwhile

the nonchalant piano's leaning on its elbow  
like a mermaid on her rock.

*BLACKBERRIES*, **Richard Westcott**, Devon  
Poems on the Buses Exhibition  
[www.richardwestcottspoetry.com](http://www.richardwestcottspoetry.com)

## BLACKBERRIES

Nothing bulges like a blackberry bundle  
of blown up balloons fit to burst  
in purple laughter boiling over...  
jam juice joke already enjoyed  
by the blackbird to be shared by me.  
Join the party he sings, and pass it on.

*CEMETERY, WITH CHILDREN*, **Susan Wicks**, Kent  
Poems on the Buses Exhibition  
[literature.britishcouncil.org/writer/susan-wicks](http://literature.britishcouncil.org/writer/susan-wicks)

### **Cemetery, with Children**

Some of these people died standing up  
and some were leaning. Some  
toddled and fell face forward in the grass.  
Some climbed the slope  
and let themselves roll down  
in sunlight, laughing; some died in their stone beds  
flushed with cyclamen or primroses.  
Some hunched in shadow under the dark yews  
while someone younger  
crawled to the centre of the rhododendron's maze.  
And almost all of them  
have disappeared. The last,  
high on this bank under the stars,  
left us his sodden tennis-ball, his underclothes.