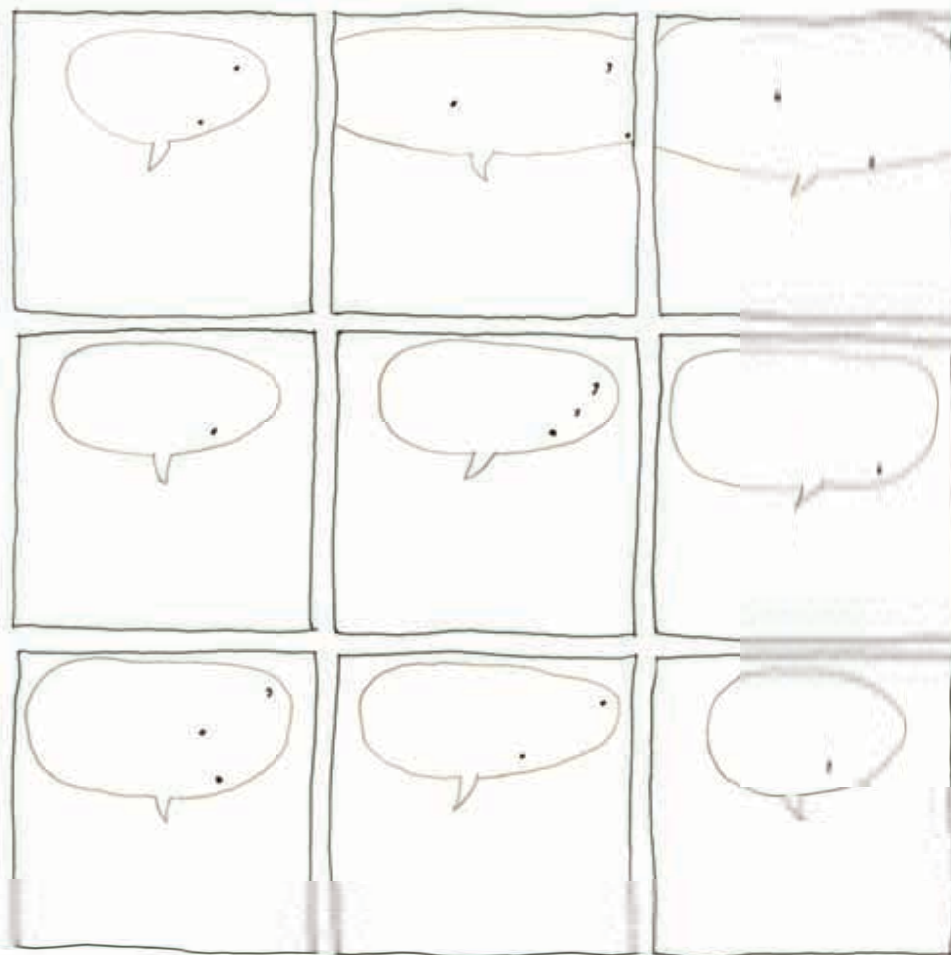


# WordsFestZine

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# Introduction

**W**elcome to WordsFestZine, an ‘instant’ publication born out of a partnership among Words, Poetry London, and Insomniac Press. Our goal with this zine was to capture the energy, dynamism, and diversity of Words Literary and Arts Festival by putting together a collection of reactions and responses to the festival, while it was happening. Our call was simple: Visit the Festival. Write About It. Get Published. We asked festival goers and our esteemed writers to send us poems, twitterverse, creative non-fiction and fiction pieces. These are not works “recollected in tranquility” — indeed, the ink may still be drying as you read this preface.

So how did we pull this off? With a team of tireless editors and producers working around the clock to edit, compile, design and, finally, print the zine within 24 hours of receiving the final submissions. Of course, none of this would have been possible without the participation of the public: this is London’s WordsFest; this is London’s WordsFestZine.

We have divided the WordsFestZine into 3 sections: “Happenings and Responses,” “Poetry OutLoud,” and “Heterogeneities and Rhinos.” The “Happenings and Responses” section contains pieces responding to and involved with events at the festival. “Poetry OutLoud” contains poems that were performed at the open mic night at the festival. And the “Heterogeneities and Rhinos” section contains the oddments and tidbits that collect around a major literary event.

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**words**  
THE LITERARY AND CREATIVE ARTS FESTIVAL



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# Happenings and Responses

## **War of the Words** **Lincoln McCardle**

The clicks of the keyboard cease  
replaced with a collective yawn.  
The writing instruments stretch and the thin  
sheets sit unmolested and reflect.  
Silence echoes.  
Then a slow wave of quiet yet discordant  
sounds:  
Sighs of amusement, the clinking of glasses,  
tittering, twittering and airings of delight.  
The almost-palpable inactivity of marking  
coherent words on paper and the  
composition of text.  
Suddenly a debate is sparked and an  
imagination ignited.  
It is a celebration of the inkwell and may the  
ink be well celebrated!

## **Panel of Thought** **Stefanie Tom**

Intelligence embraced itself on the stage,  
Meaning personified, in words  
Travelled through the vibrations,  
The black and white of the world was torn to  
shreds,  
And in place, varying and wide hues of grey  
formed.  
  
As the authors spoke, the chapters of life  
were illuminated.

The twinkling of truth laced and looped  
around their tongues.  
And their messages:

You cannot reduce a person into a category of  
bad or good,  
Writers are carpenters and words are their  
wood,  
Light peeks its way in through our cracks,  
Grey is much more realistic than white or  
black,  
No matter how steady you are, gravity will  
still make you fall,  
And most importantly, life's about the  
moments: make sure to seize them all.

## **The Circus is in Town** **Frank Beltrano**

I have run off  
often to the circus  
am circled now  
by magicians  
bareback riders  
jugglers of balls and knives and fire.  
Some say  
it is just a word game  
to which fools aspire  
but I lust to be circled  
by the circus folk  
'til my pen  
of many colours  
expires.

# “Home is where everything is green.”

— Heidi Choi

## **Green**

**Heidi Choi**

I think back to the place.  
With a green yard  
Green door  
Green garage  
Green sofa  
And a green mural across the wall of the  
    parlour,  
My parents' home stands tall and still.  
It hasn't aged a bit –  
Unlike all of us, who have.  
My flat is my leverage  
The alibi that I carry in my back pocket  
Bragging rights  
About being a grown-up  
Up, up, up  
The elevator takes me up  
To the floor  
And down the hall I go  
To the door  
“363”  
I call it my apartment, but not  
Home.  
They say home is where your heart is,  
But my heart is here,  
(It moves in sync with campus conundrum)  
But it's not my home –  
Not yet, anyway.  
Home is where everything is green.  
But I remember  
I signed up for adulthood.  
The alibi in my back pocket  
Tells me that the safe house

That I grew up in  
Shouldn't still be “my” home.  
Adulthood is a world of documents and  
    signatures.  
Now, the green place is my “parents' house.”  
Every time I leave  
My “parents' house”  
I wish I could stay longer  
To relish and revel in  
That greenness  
That years ago I thought could be replaced  
With a greener green  
On the other side  
After moving out of “my parents' house.”  
Maybe my contract should have warned me  
    in fine print:  
Not a smidge of the apartment,  
None of it will be green.

## **We brought our beloved books**

**Aileen House**

We brought our beloved books, our easy  
familiarity, our own best words to the corner  
in hopes of sharing our joys, labours and  
pleasures. I didn't think about the notion of  
an us – readers and speakers – and a them –  
listeners and critics. I didn't think about the  
privilege or the gifts. As the young man  
watched and heard, his hunger became  
obvious. Here is a man hungry for ideas,  
hungry for conversation, hungry for  
community. And to our potluck table he  
brought the magic. And we became us in the

# Celebrate the local authors who enrich our city because they **MUST** write just as they must breathe.

— Kym Wolfe

process of moving closer to hear a voice unfamiliar with speaking to the spaces in the crowds. We became us in the gentle aid of pronunciation and diction. Today, courage is a dog-eared paperback in the front zipper pocket of a backpack. Never doubt that there is hunger and community. Never doubt that your pot is full, that you always have something to give and something to receive. There is always time, and an abundance of gratitude.

## Local Authors Book Fair Kym Wolfe

Book Fair. Book Fare. Nibble on novels, juicy romance, meaty mystery. Poetry to please the palate. Autobiographies to whet the appetite. A handful of horror, a dash of drama, a cupful of conflict. Medieval to modern day. Sci-fi and fantasy simmer beside sport and social commentary. A full menu of disparate dishes, using the simplest of ingredients: WORDS. Sliced and diced, stewed and brewed, stirred and shirred, caramelized and crystallized. From-scratch creations that tantalize the tastebuds and leave you hungry for more.

Celebrate London! Celebrate the local authors who enrich our city because they **MUST** write just as they must breathe. It is a part of the DNA, an inborn yearning that pulls stories through hands and keyboards

until they spill onto the written page to be consumed, savoured, chewed over and digested.

Aromas drift up from the food stalls below reminding me I must feed my rumbling belly. But my mind – ah, my mind – has been sated with ideas, emotions, fact and fiction. Listening to local authors read what they have concocted – that has been the true feast.

## In London Town Ola Nowosad

in London town  
poets stand  
at Covent Market  
poems in hand and in our voices

words fly like leaves, golden,  
livening autumn mindscapes, red  
torches being passed down


one from a hundred years ago,  
McCrae's remembered verses  
on war's bloodiness and loss

many battlefields, many wars later  
still we bleed and still we mourn  
and still we write

sometimes on war or on longed-for peace,  
we wonder what it will take to wake  
the world to stop its brutal killings

# “and some are intimate, and some are imaginary friends”

— Megan Gerrett

our words spoken aloud today   
hover briefly, warrior-like  
falcons in November wind

our written words wind on the page  
like refugees lined up seeking home  
propelled by hope  
we read of red poppies, red roses, epic  
pomegranates and ripe apples

the personal becomes the poetical  
the political becomes the poetical

transformed are we by words  
the chaos and beauty of language:  
the desire to feed and feast on words  
Wordsfest

## Character Talk Megan Gerrett

Kids sitting in the aisles,  
excitement in the air,  
faces—everywhere, everywhere  
voices in the air.

But I don't hear  
anything exclusive, I don't feel  
like I'm not allowed here.

I see pens scribble, and it's a different  
atmosphere

like when they talked of books  
and going—going there.

We don't have to explore ourselves  
if it's more comfortable in an  
empty, wooden chair.  
But I like the discovery

of characters when they  
take on a new life;  
and some are intimate,  
and some are imaginary  
friends.

Do they know us?  
am I *God* to them?

## Wearing the T-shirt Laurie Graham

All day, *words*  
banding chest,  
bright font on dark  
shirt, the unending of  
words assessed, right  
words for wages, the  
bright false ones,  
the ones uttered quiet  
and phony to the cashier,  
*have you tried our*  
*[insert words] on sale*  
*this weekend*, never mind all these  
syllables, the clattering  
language of traffic jam,

**“A reading is special because a group of people have gathered to experience writing as a group. Nothing more is necessary.”**

—Zoe Norman

of call-in show, of  
excused absence, words gone  
until you step into the field,  
the abandoned squash  
set to rotting in the  
coherent mud.  
Turns out here's  
the place you need not  
speak when spoken to,  
though you want to now, here you want  
to say, Look, would you look,  
these gourds make the perfect  
punctuation.

**Some writers read their work in a way that is  
bizarre to me**  
Zoe Norman

I didn't notice this until I started attending readings, but some writers read their work in a way that is bizarre to me. They-string... their-words-together... in-a-totally-unnatural-way. I don't know why they do this. Does anyone read like that naturally? Does anyone think like that? Beyond anything, it is incredibly distracting. It takes me a few minutes to get beyond how they read in order to actually pay attention to the content. I wonder what prompts them to read that way. Do they think it adds weight to their words or power to their phrasing? It is much braver for a writer to read their work in a natural way, to not hide behind a performance. If a writer is

honest with their delivery, it makes their words more real, truer. It is representative of their braveness, to read their words as they wrote them, to not contort them to suit an idea of how a writer should sound. A reading is special because a group of people have gathered to experience writing as a group. Nothing more is necessary.

**fem-i-nism**  
Megan Gerrett

Definition: women should have  
equal rights to men

I'm not a radical monster; that's not how it's meant

A “known feminist,” as though it's a crime  
challenging society, and standing against  
false advertisement

Feminist  
it's a nice word; let's all put our hands up  
because thirty years ago, things were different  
and yet, much the same

Let's end the suspicion; I'm not against you  
I'm with you, for you  
and equality, diversity

I know that we are strong  
and I hope we will persist  
in case you want to know, yes  
I'm a feminist.



# “This November air Is made of soliloquies Along Dundas Street”

— Jennifer Zhang

## Take-aways

Roy Geiger

She said one tough mother said an idle day, a  
waste

She said a magnifying glass shows the  
beating heart right through the shell of a  
snail, anyway

She said all her dreams are still in the house  
where she grew up

He said criminal secrets will out we are born  
knowing right from wrong he said

He said fiction almost hides the secrets  
spelled out in nonfiction

He said story is a dream state

She said fiction is one big book her life story  
over and over again

## Friday Night Festival Pulse

Marilyn Ashworth

Chatter, a sea of rolling words from people  
in:

bow ties, suit ties, jackets, jeans, sweaters,  
scarves, necklaces, skirts, caps, slacks,

poppies, Movember 'staches,

cotton blends, colour clashes,

ladies, gentlemen, bald, crop, mop, troupe?

video cameras, cell phones surfing,

hugs, laughter, pointing finger, whispers, note  
jotting

mic testing, last minute preparations,  
questions, answers?

old friends, introductions,  
young, old, exclusive, inclusive,  
Zolf greeting, noise fading  
Museum London, opening night reception,  
WordsFest begun.

## Haikus From a Street Corner

Jennifer Zhang

This November air  
Is made of soliloquies  
Along Dundas Street

Though our feet wobble  
Atop overturned milk crates  
Our voices do not

Boldly spoken truths  
Shake the heart of the city  
Inspire the rest

## a pointwise stroll (amongst the stars)

Helen Ngo

tonight, i walk to the edge and dare to look  
not down, but up  
and i find that i have come further than i  
could fathom  
so tonight i find myself contemplating the  
world in polar time  
hanging on a horizon lit by the measure of a  
parameter

# “an Other - silent like a foot in the boot of white boys who speak History”

— R.A. Robinson

just beyond the reach of our  
comprehension—  
comprehension in all of its finite, curious  
glory.

and as iron sharpens iron, so we will too  
as we tumble through this rabbit hole of  
wonder  
vast enough to hold the universe in its pocket  
(and then some, because who measures the  
infinite?)  
a universe so big i could never pinpoint the  
north star—  
the one guiding all of our (extra)ordinary  
hearts.

chemical imbalance, in (way, way over) my  
head  
sparking obvious midnight chances set  
against a backdrop  
of telescoping ideas in n-dimensional space  
space that could not be contained by the  
greatest atlas  
space containing the lion-shaped  
constellations of our souls  
and the thunderous hummingbird-song of our  
heartbeats.

## **Unborn Not Here** **R.A. Robinson**

Last night, he spoke of Steve Biko  
standing before a small crowd of white boys  
ribs-split, sitting with mouths wider than

specks of spit  
suspended and pass books spread like legs of  
black mothers  
flapping to fly from homes  
soaked in Soweto Riot scares - another black  
born -  
another - unborn -  
an Other - silent  
like a foot  
in the boot of white boys  
who speak History,  
meeting Steve Biko  
unlike nameless, rib-punctured unborns.

## **A landmark jutting prominently from the linoleum expanse** **John Malik**

A landmark jutting prominently from the  
linoleum expanse;  
sweet, crisp, and warm.  
The architects began to plan;  
the builders began to build.  
Crumbs and stones and hair;  
the elbow grease of a thousand workers' six  
thousand limbs.  
“A home,” they said.  
Deposits of blue succulence, lakes of sultry  
resin.  
When it was finished, it was enjoyed.  
The colony was united in a vivid sense of  
purpose.  
“For generations to come,” they said.

**A landmark jutting prominently from  
the linoleum expanse**

—John Malik

A yawn and a half open eye  
spots a tasty treat.  
Whiskers bristle as the workers bustle  
underneath;  
the shadow encompasses, engulfs.  
The feline enjoys a breakfast snack.

# Poetry OutLoud

## Writing in Snow

Martin Hayter

I write in sky blue ink:  
march my words  
between the lines, overcast,  
paging what comes to mind  
amid a chaos of slow  
soft bombing that tries  
to whiteout my rhymes,  
rhymes that also lay claim  
to this page where both,  
in silence, have a war  
to wage with silence.

## Anna Behind Bars

(imagining Anna Akhmatova)

Martin Hayter

Naked, she scratches poems  
with a splinter from a bedpost  
on a bar of soap and rubs them

into her skin, into memory,  
and, as she comes clean slowly,  
the words wear down, fading,

leaving a white slate as clean  
as her body the guards inspect  
each day for contraband, as she

razes their suspicions once  
more, with her silent smile, dry  
as ink, a withering critique.

## In hollow streets

Joan Clayton

In hollow streets the poets flow  
Between the pillars row on row  
That mark our place while in the sky  
The word gods blinding writing cry  
Scarce heard amid the drone below

Guerilla, a member of an irregular armed  
force that  
fights an organized group

Or a large hairy animal

Words wordy a wordy play on words

If you do not feel this love of words pulling  
you like a river  
If you do not feel this pull

Then sleep on, sleep for those of us who do

We are the bards short days ago  
We wrote in cloistered cells felt fear  
For those who weep and now we write  
On city walls step up the pace

The poet hears silence, finds eternity in a  
single word  
Enters by the front door, the back door and  
the chimney

A gorilla eats a lot of bananas and is  
preverbal

# “this deck near Sparta where winged symphonies strut”

— Shelly Harder

Take up our quarrel with the foe  
To you with trembling hands we throw  
The pen; be yours to hold it high if ye break  
faith

With those who march we shall not sleep  
As poets flow in hollow streets

A wordy play on words, Bring Your Own  
Guerilla/Gorilla suit . . .

## **plastic blossom** Shelly Harder

in backyard suburbia  
squirrels frenzy in shrubbery  
leaves scrap  
with the last scraps of a bag  
caught in a tree

other bits of wrapping  
lie with the leaves mulching the beds  
a sterile coupling

not so this deck near Sparta  
where winged symphonies strut

where, buried in birdsong  
morning forgets the honk of buses  
and the stampeding feet  
the faces furrowed too soon

rather, to languor in the sun  
and quite forget what they on branches  
and on water have never known

here where bags have never stabbed the air  
where fast food wrapping have not slouched  
where sirens have not stormed to quell a  
beating

but I return, oh city, city  
and your leaves are dancing with the plastic  
let loose to bloom and wither before the sun

## **Poem: A Forgotten Library (remembered only at exam time)** Sara Raza

Cramped identical square desks are packed  
like sardines,  
surrounded by tall towering shelves crowded  
with volumes of novels.  
Thousands.

Air reeks of fresh print on paper mixed with  
a tang of acidity and the scent of grass.

Worn walls are only decorated with cracks  
and stains.  
Lights are dim, illuminating only the corners  
within.

Wastebasket is overflowing with crumpled  
paper, lost ideas, incomplete thoughts.

A comfortable silence...  
that is only broken with occasional deep  
exhales and pregnant sighs.  
Teenagers are wrapped in a corner engulfed

# “All of us mistook it for some sort of Heaven.”

— Stan Burfield

in textbooks.  
Bulging backpacks bulking with belongings  
weighing down poor backs as they earlier  
walked class to class.

Their growling stomachs begin pleading as  
they write...  
They turn to glare at the sign hung at the  
snack bar,  
and the big red letters glare back, “closed.”

Faces pained with concentration. Eyes  
drooping heavily.  
Hands stained with ink. Heads burdening  
their necks.  
While sitting on this rigid torturous chair,  
their thoughts skip to escape as  
they dream about soft pillows with memory  
foam that tailor to their carefully crafted  
backbones.

Meaningless noise as the microphone turns  
on –  
“closing time”.  
Desperate teenagers leap out of their stations  
as  
smiles break open as they exit.  
Sweet home.

## Then I Saw the Vatican Stan Burfield

All of us mistook it for some sort of Heaven.

We paid our fees and streamed in,  
and by the thousands poured down the  
heavenly halls,  
glimpsing, above the churning river of our  
bodies,  
gold, enthroned Madonnas done in oils,  
frescos of classical motifs, with cherubs  
looking on,  
Popes in robes, surrounded by angels,  
all proclaimed under high arches  
held aloft by Roman columns,  
each inch worked  
to the highest art, but we were always pushed  
on,  
our tour guides somewhere calling,  
and if I could just stop  
and absorb all this  
I might think of a prayer or at least a good  
thought. But no,  
under that grand girth of power and glory  
we were ground down like polished stones.

Then I discovered this small painting  
by a little-known artist named Crespi  
in the old, neglected Castle Saint Angelo.

Alone, in a silent inner room,  
I stood for a long time,  
just inches from the face  
of a man worshipped for two millennia,

“They say, Play poetry backward  
and you can hear sinister voices.”  
— Andy Verboom

ever since the long moment of horror  
he was living through  
there in front of me.

I was held by his unhurried eyes.  
They accepted  
the armoured brute  
who was forcing him forward  
amid splashes of blood-red spray  
into the room  
I was in.

### **The Loosed Tongue** **Andy Verboom**

They say, Play poetry backward  
and you can hear sinister voices.

Just imagine the flames crowning  
such a world, their giant fingers of smoke  
jabbing for more.  
The poets run  
like wild dogs, their noses everywhere,  
but they're caught and burned  
in mounds of their books.

The loosed tongue leaps like a fish  
from its chains.

The globe swings like a censer  
from its chains.

The loosed tongue leaps like a fish  
in mounds of their books.

But they're caught and burned  
like wild dogs, their noses everywhere,  
jabbing for more.  
The poets run  
such a world, their giant fingers of smoke.

Just imagine the flames crowning  
and you can hear sinister voices.  
They say, Play poetry backward.

### **Who praises silence?** **Jennifer Chesnut**

Who praises silence, who praises the air?  
The moon held between heaven and earth by  
an invisible hand  
The river rubbing her body on the bank  
The cat captivated at the window  
The bird popping up beak first at daylight  
The body in sleep, the head on the pillow  
The lovers rocking in and out of the night  
Who praises silence, who praises the moon?  
Martin Luther King begged the pause to open  
people's vision  
Gandhi held fierce to the quiet path to reclaim  
a nation  
Aung San Suu Kyi went present into house  
arrest  
and years later returned the same  
Maude Barlow's words struck like lightning  
into silence, into certainty  
Before the alarm sounds, before the gates  
close, silence enters  
Her magnetic fingers pull us into a new room

**“Before the alarm sounds, before the  
gates close, silence enters”**  
— Jennifer Chesnut

What will she say next in the space where no  
one is speaking  
What will she beckon forth from you, and  
soon?  
Sun setting over Tibet  
Baby's first breath  
Last leaf falling before the full freeze  
Who praises silence?  
On these loud shores, who praises the moon?



# Heterogeneities and Rhinos

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## Palms as Poems

Jayme Archibald

I like to think of my palms as poems  
or perhaps, my poems as palms  
as I hold them both, hands up  
in offering  
begging for you to take them by the handfuls  
grasping them with your own  
poems, palms  
palms, poems  
I blow them in kisses  
so another may hold them gripless  
letting them slip to the sky  
fingerpainting the framework  
that pillars the planet  
presented in feather light  
poems, palms  
palms, poems  
I breathe them in doses  
healing myself in the powdered pressure of  
poems, palms  
palms, poems  
to my wounds, cleansing and mending  
in the touch of words, these  
poems, palms  
palms, poems  
in offering, as I hold them both  
for you to kiss and breathe and mend  
as well

## Heavy Metal Rhino

Andy McGuire

A protagonist of  
five o'clock light, I hear  
rumours of November,  
the Norway of the year,  
all my puny wounds  
dressed for the weather.

## rail trail ride

Marlene Laplante

riding on the line  
sunlight filters through the trees  
each pedal seems in time with the past  
or the clatter of a ghost train on the track  
wheels turning capture feeling, momentum  
connecting past to present in a haunting way

this quiet nostalgic trail ride  
opens some very special memories  
rare privileged moments of a most thrilling time  
when tons of metal moved through remote areas  
brought people together – grew a country

you never forget the trains...  
childhood memory won't let you  
steam whistles – bells ringing – engines puffing  
bellowing billows of black smoke  
the fascination never ends

“ past neighbours  
who keep to themselves  
fatten themselves with grudges  
are not who you think.”

—Miriam Love

as I cycle round a curve on this preserved  
path  
my journey parallels iron rides of a hundred  
years  
through villages and towns along the way  
I can still see the children waving  
hear the train's whistle answer back

at journey's end  
I roll into the end of an era  
rest my wheels and reflect back  
on the great ride it was

### **Where it leads** **Miriam Love**

The rhino runs  
along the gray folds  
of the 401  
past small towns  
past neighbours  
who keep to themselves  
fatten themselves with grudges  
are not who you think.

Now, a boy with thin cold hands  
follows, camera strapped  
against hard breast:  
catch the beast,  
a probable tale  
a possible tale  
for a story without a father.

Dürer's Rhinoceros –  
all scales and cloven toes  
heavy armour and horns—  
her body at odds  
with life itself,  
could not run  
like this rhino.

The boy runs faster  
farther, after his image  
above the fold  
tracking grey-horns  
and guile, lens  
bouncing on chest  
rubber soles slapping  
hard on the pavement.

### **The Rhino Lounge** **Tom Cull**

The rhino lunges,  
tin and steel,  
at angles to itself.  
The writers tighten  
the circle, closing in,  
the rhinoceros spins,  
impales a Language poet –  
he screams eeeeeeee  
and falls.  
A phalanx of novella-ists  
charge the armoured beast  
bringing her down.  
A journalist produces

**“The writers tighten  
the circle, closing in,  
the rhinoceros spins”**  
— Tom Cull

a hacksaw from inside his  
trench coat. It is passed  
through the crowd,  
and the sound of sawing,  
bellowing, briefly turns  
the heads of Saturday  
commuters.  
The riven horn is held aloft,  
passed from hand to hand,  
doused with WD40,  
and sent to the smithy  
who melts it down  
to make mighty pens  
and so the sexy  
stories go.

# Contributors

**Jayme Archibald:** a spoken word poet who frequents the London Poetry Slam and recently traveled to Vancouver for the Canadian Individual Poetry Slam and Saskatoon for the Canadian Festival of Spoken Word.

**Marilyn Ashworth:** loves to write and learn; both are offered at WordsFest.

**Frank Beltrano:** an active member of the London Ontario poetry community.

**Stan Burfield:** Organizer of London Open Mic Poetry Night.

**Heidi Choi:** a third-year English Literature student at Western University, and aspires to make a living one day from publishing my brain juice.

**Joan Clayton:** Playwright, historical fiction, POETRY QUEEN.

**Tom Cull:** lives and writes in London Ontario.

**Roy Geiger:** lives in London, and is a lifelong, avid reader.

**Megan Gerrett:** Peace and Love.

**Laurie Graham:** a poet and a teacher at Fanshawe.

**Shelly Harder:** “Full of high sentence, but a bit obtuse... Almost, at times, the Fool.”

**Martin Hayter:** a full-time psychotherapist and part-time poet.

**Aileen House:** Woman in need of reminders found them.

**Marlene Laplante:** a great grandmother.

**Miriam Love:** lives in London Ontario, and teaches at King’s University College and Western University.

**John Malik:** Mathematics PhD, Musician.

**Lincoln McCardle:** a father, husband, interpretive dancer and proud Londoner.

**Andy McGuire** is poet and musician from Grand Bend, Ontario, and currently resides in Toronto. He is pursuing an MFA in creative writing from the University of Guelph. McGuire’s poems have appeared in *Riddle Fence*, *Hazlitt* and *The Walrus*.

**Helen Ngo:** addicted to cats, coffee, and calculus.

**Zoe Norman:** a lion tamer-cum- university student.

**Ola Nowosad:** a poet, teacher and member of Poetry London.

# Contributors

**Sara Raza:** an avid poetry and start-up enthusiast studying Economics at Western University.

**R.A. Robinson:** a 4th year English Major at Western with aspirations to work for the CBC.

**Christopher Scott** lives in London, where he is a practicing artist and has worked as an installation consultant and a lecturer. His works have been exhibited in galleries across Ontario.

**Stefanie Tom:** 18-year-old foreigner who likes to sing.

**Andy Verboom:** won the 2014 Winston Collins Prize, edits *The Word Hoard*, and writes at [andyverboom.com](http://andyverboom.com).

**Kym Wolfe:** a freelancer who writes for a variety of magazines, I now have two books in print (*Barhopping Into History London, Ontario* and *Hopping Into History, London*).

**Jennifer Zhang:** a medical sciences major with an affinity for poetry.



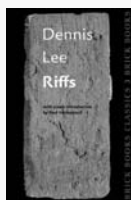
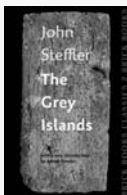
“*Short Talks* is...a unique form of slag-like poetic address that arises from the full formative force of Carson's young embodiment of a northern Ontario mining-town winter of mind.”

**Brick Books Classics 1**  
*Short Talks* by Anne Carson  
Introduction by Margaret Christakos



“...how the outsider becomes an insider by becoming a supplicant...honouring the culture of the people among whom he has decided to make his home.”

**Brick Books Classics 2**  
*The Grey Islands* by John Steffler  
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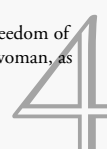
“*Riffs* is the book that unites his various voices and lyrical personae. It is a book in which all of his poetic attitudes are in harmony with one another.”

**Brick Books Classics 3**  
*Riffs* by Dennis Lee  
Introduction by Paul Vermeersch



“[Dumont] struggles fiercely for full freedom of expression: as Indigenous person, as woman, as thinker and poet.”

**Brick Books Classics 4**  
*A Really Good Brown Girl* by Marilyn Dumont  
Introduction by Lee Maracle



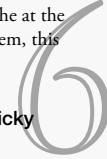
“Michael Crummey's *Hard Light* is an homage to the Newfoundland past, a fervent wish to rescue it from darkness, render its voices, to make it speak.”

**Brick Books Classics 5**  
*Hard Light* by Michael Crummey  
Introduction by Lisa Moore



“[Wittgenstein's thought] reveals an ache at the heart of language, and in Zwicky's poem, this ache may be what's hardest to bear.”

**Brick Books Classics 6**  
*Wittgenstein Elegies* by Jan Zwicky  
Introduction by Sue Sinclair



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**“This November air  
Is made of soliloquies  
Along Dundas Street”**

— Jennifer Zhang

### **Acknowledgements**

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*Cover artwork: untitled by Christopher Scott.*