

# Steel Jackdaw

Edition 4 - Oct 2021

An arts magazine with heart, celebrating the power  
of creative expression and positive action



tchack

[www.steeljackdaw.com](http://www.steeljackdaw.com)

# Steel Jackdaw - 4

## All four one and one four all!



You don't need to be a Musketeer to enjoy Steel Jackdaw but you do need to embrace its ethos for a better world, where all should be equal, valued, nurtured and supported.

Steel Jackdaw (SJ) does what it says on the tin, it exists to celebrate the power of creative expression and positive action. Birthing a new arts magazine in a pandemic has, definitely, been a challenging experience but one that's oh, so worth it!

Please support the contributors inside by promoting them, buying their work, commissioning new pieces, recommending to others, or even sending a simple thank you!

SJ aims to be a beacon of positivity and hope and a call to action to stand up and make a difference, however you can. Doing good and being free to express yourself in all of your beautiful difference.

Steel Jackdaw Magazine.

## A note from the editor

Edition four marks a big change. I've started a Creative Writing MA at Bath Spa University in the UK, specialising in poetry. I'm giving myself permission to explore, experiment and grow as a writer. But don't worry, SJ will continue as a groundbreaking publication.



E4 is a Halloween edition and amidst the celebrations we're conscious of life and death, ghosts and monsters lurking under the bed. SJ is a force for good in the world from social issues, to mental health, the environment and equality, so we can think of Halloween as a transition for how we can do and be better as people: help people to face their monsters, cope with grief, look to the future and take positive action to stop climate damage.

Sad news is never good news. My father will be leaving this world soon, so Edition 4 is dedicated to him. I'll miss him so much but I have a lifetime of good times to warm me and keep him close in spirit. Here's to you Dad, for supporting my creativity and helping me to dream of better!

## Supporting good causes

A percentage of proceeds from Steel Jackdaw magazine will be donated in an equal split, to international environmental organisation ClientEarth, and local Gloucestershire-based charity, The Nelson Trust.

Why? Simple. To do good and to show that any venture can and should support good causes as part of its core principles and limit its environmental impact in the world through sustainability and social responsibility

Thank you for making a difference!



## Cover artist

Many thanks to artist Rebecca Brindley for her wonderfully detailed illustration, featured on the cover! As a thank you for her work, you can see her two dedicated artist pages in this magazine.



Each edition will feature the work of a different creative, as a paid commission. Would you like to be a featured cover artist? Get in touch and send in examples of your wonderful work to [tchack@steeljackdaw.com](mailto:tchack@steeljackdaw.com).

If commissioned, you'll be paid for your original work and will have your own pages in the magazine to promote you!



# Mind + Heart + Eye + Ear Candy

Show your love for the featured creatives, businesses, groups and organisations in this edition. After all, love makes the world go around!

Image credit  
Jacqueline Brandwayn  
Instagram.com @lajaxx





**Dream Forger**

**Artanzo Ha**



## About the artwork

This is an important work for the artist, as it marks a real break between a long period of pen-and-ink drawings on very small sheets and larger paintings with more space to work with. On this occasion, Artanzo wanted to illustrate the genesis of his inspiration from his dreams.

Since dreams belong to the realm of the elusive, of a world of ether, the jellyfish fit the concept perfectly. It was necessary to give them an impressive, almost threatening look to illustrate the uncontrollable, rare and frightening aspect of the unconscious. The little girl contrasts this dark metaphor. She looks confident, with a posture of resistance to the wind and she firmly grasps the lines connecting her to the jellyfish. Her youthfulness evokes a carefree attitude, a theme that is very present in Artanzo's drawings. However, the little girl is seen from behind, which gives her a mysterious and disturbing look. This is another facet of the artist's universe, that of uncertainty, fear and nostalgia. Dream Forger thus manages through this triptych medusas and child to summarize a whole process of creativity spread over several years of a life.

On the technical level, Dream Forger was realized on a smooth and thick sheet of calligraphy paper. This kind of material is usually difficult to find because calligraphy is often practiced on thin sheets with pure ink. The artist opted for Indian ink poured into a small cup, with a few drops of red ink. This process gives a light Clora to the wash while making the texture of the ink more fluid and therefore easier to work. The outlines of the drawing are made with a pencil, several layers of wash are then applied with a brush until the desired values are obtained.



Artanzo is a Franco-Peruvian artist born in 1983 in the middle of the Andes. He moved to France in 1990 because of the political situation in his country. He settled there for his studies in a small mountain village and then moved to Paris for work. Artanzo has currently two activities, first as an engineer and second as a painter, which he does in his free time.

His sources of inspiration come mainly from his dreams and nightmares, as well as from his travels. His favourite themes are underwater stories, dreams and scenes of serenity. His drawing technique has been influenced since his youth by the master painters of Asia, China and Japan. His paintings being mainly done in watercolor and ink on calligraphy paper. Artanzo has made hundreds of original drawings during his life and would like to share them with as many people as possible beyond the bounds of the Internet. An artbook project is planned for the next months, as well as the organization of exhibitions in the city of Paris.

[www.artanzo.com](http://www.artanzo.com)

Instagram @artanzo\_insta

## Letter to My Future Self

Don't worry,  
About a thing,  
Cause every little thing  
Inside you will be alright.

My community has been cancelled for a new one,  
A future one.

One with free quality health care.  
Where no one has to fear being on a waiting list,  
Where cancer has now become like a cold.  
People no longer grow old,  
In houses that try to kill them.

Don't worry,  
About a thing,  
Cause every little thing  
Inside you will be alright.

My continuity has been transplanted,  
to another place.  
One that is full of grace,  
Dignity and meaning.  
No mean people mugging others,  
because they can't afford a living.

Knowledge is shared,  
and from inside,  
the threat of being used or abused,  
Has been pulled down  
Like buildings of old and corrupt statues.

Racism is now derelict,  
so is sexism and Poverty  
You don't have to be a good girl,  
or a good boy,  
to go to heaven.  
This is just a place.

Where people play,  
enjoy creativity  
And wind away their day.

## Barrington Gordon

Letter to My future self was  
bourne of a socially  
orientated poetry  
workshop. This allowed us  
to explore themes.

There are many hidden  
strands that are the  
genealogy of this poem,  
from Louise Armstrong's  
What a Wonderful world to  
The Beatles Imagine. I  
dared to imagine a  
different community a  
different world. I found my  
fingers flowing over the key  
board and so it breathed  
and smiled at me off the  
page.

We have so many social  
concerns; health education  
the dereliction of  
communities and the  
increasing power of  
corporations and  
governments including the  
sifting of "our rights." I've  
often imagined what it  
would be like to live in a  
different world or what I  
would say to encourage  
my children or  
granddaughters. Strangely,  
I, even as a 60's black male  
child, still needed this  
encouragement. So I used  
the imagined and unknown  
future world as part of my  
legacy to inspired them  
and also hopefully others.

I hope you enjoy this and it  
encourages you to be part  
of this brave new world in  
the poem.



## Flowers After Midnight

Barrington Gordon

Pressed down, rancid sweat fills my nostrils. I scream. Mother and father snore, exhausted. Through bushes from militias, we ran. Crickets and nightingales sing love on night air, this is not. A barbed wire chest bruises my breasts. Through the bombed roof I drift, become one with stars. He invades my universe, showering damnation on my soul. His scent remains unwashed away.

Father beat me desperate for water, camouflaging bruises left by the faceless soldier. Blood seeps. Fear enters Mum's eyes, thinking Father injured me. Realization strikes. I'm showered with kisses. Be Proud! You're a woman now. Shame washes me.

**Flowers After Midnight** was written May 2021 in response to Government policies which are recognised as being hostile by immigrants who are forced to flee their land and seek sanctuary in 'our' country. Via the media, images are often portrayed of illegal immigrants 'invading' via flotillas that endlessly ebb toward our shores. Little regard is taken by the press who overlook, on the whole, the back stories to the trauma that either lead or follow 'them' to places of 'safety'.

I've worked in education with people from around the world who have experienced and shared such tragedies. I needed to put pen to paper, or should I say fingers to the keyboard, to give a voice to the horrors behind the popular British press imagery of the 'invading unwanted people', who are forced to make such an exodus. I recall an image someone once showed me. It is burnt into my mind, a sunny beach, families out enjoying an ordinary day but yards away (fully in view) an 'immigrants' body lies, dead, covered by a beach towel, no police cordon or investigation in process and the day being enjoyed by the sun seekers with their infants, only meters away from the tragedy. I could look it up and reference it specifically but the assault on my mind from said imagery would embellish and give this Frankenstein monster a new life, that my mind even now struggles to contain. Flowers at midnight, as I breathed life into it, took me on a nightmare journey.

The irony of writing such a piece, as all writers know, you have to immerse yourself in the character. Being of African-Caribbean origin and having experienced inequalities through out my existence, engaging in this immersive process was all too easy. I hope Flowers After Midnight will be enjoyed by your readership. No, 'Enjoy' is not the right word; I hope your readership will remember, be proactive and defend those perceived by Mr and Mrs Joe Public, as wanting to invade 'our' country and it's resources.

For me, the scream of the oppressed is encapsulated in Flowers After Midnight.



Barrington Gordon, is an author. He has been published in Voice Memory Ashes Lest We Forget a short story called The Chair. His short story Grandfather's Feet was published in Whispers in the Walls, a Birmingham anthology, endorsed by Bonnie Greer and Benjamin Zephaniah. BBC Radio 4 also featured this tale as part of it's short story profiling.

Barrington has worked in schools and colleges across the Midlands for several decades. The focus of his work has always been young people and families who are seen as being disadvantaged. This amongst other labels Barrington does not like or adhere to. He feels it all too easily pigeon holes people and throttles the life out of their hopes dream and ability to ACHIEVE. Barrington's goal and writing revolves around uplifting people who just in reality need a little support like we all do to feel and be human. Via his writing he seeks to advocate and disrupt the system whilst empowering others to think and behave differently.

souligh18@googlemail.com  
07710 388 471





## The Green Fix

An ethical roundup for the climate-conscious in Europe and beyond.

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Let me read it first >

The Green Fix is an email newsletter to make it easier for everyone who's concerned about the climate crisis to make a real difference and help build a greener world. Each edition of the newsletter introduces and explains a new concept in sustainability in a jargon-free way, rounds up climate news from around the world, and free resources for anyone to take action.

I launched The Green Fix in late 2020 in lockdown, while working full-time for an EU advocacy NGO. I liked my work but I was conscious that I was part of the 'EU bubble.' I was working to influence major policies for sustainable development that would affect people globally – but the people affected knew nothing about them! Even worse, many people I talked to about my work seemed to believe that what happens at a political level is something they have no say in.

There is a huge gap in transparency and accessibility that prevents people from having a say in the laws that affect them and their future. In the EU, UK and many national governments, laws seem to go through a mysterious and complicated chain of bureaucratic bodies, are laden with jargon, and there's not much effort by politicians to explain what these laws actually mean for their citizens.

When we can't understand or get involved in changing what's happening around the table in our governments, it holds climate action back – to hold politicians and corporations accountable to their climate commitments, you have to know how to do it.

I decided to start the Green Fix to help close that gap, by translating what's happening at a systemic level in the meeting rooms of governments and corporations, into normal language and highlighting the opportunities that are out there to tell leaders what you want.

People have far more power than we realise. We can do a lot more for the planet than just recycle and take reusable bags to the supermarket! You don't have to be an expert or have loads of time on your hands – you just need to care. The idea that individuals can't make a difference to the climate crisis is a myth that serves only the current leaders and helps them to keep the unsustainable and unfair status quo.

With some clear information and the will to make a change, we can make a much bigger impact. I hope The Green Fix will be a useful tool to help people to take action on the issues they're passionate about and help push for a greener and fairer world.



I'm Cass Hebron and I'm passionate about making climate action easier and more accessible. I work as a full-time freelance writer for NGOs and purpose-driven organisations. Originally from the UK, I moved to Belgium two years ago to work for the Fair Trade Advocacy Office. Since then, I've also worked with Oxfam EU, Friends of the Earth Europe and the World Federation for Animals. In 2021 I was selected to be a Unite 2030 Youth Delegate.

Before moving to Belgium, I studied English Language and Linguistics at the University of York. In 2018, I founded a student sustainability magazine called Wild ([wildmag.co.uk](http://wildmag.co.uk)), which is still run by current students. My experience as Editor of Wild is what led me to pursue a career using communications to push for climate justice.

As well as my communications work, I am a climate activist and sustainability enthusiast in my everyday life. My other interests include languages, history, and spending far too much money on coffee.

[www.thegreenfix.substack.com](http://www.thegreenfix.substack.com)  
Instagram @coffee\_and\_casstaways  
Twitter @casstaways  
[www.linkedin.com/in/casshebron](https://www.linkedin.com/in/casshebron)





First collection of poetry by multi award winning poet Clare Ferguson-Walker, published by Square Press.

Order a copy at: <https://clarefergusonwalkermerchandise.company.site>

**Ghost Writer**

**Clare Ferguson-Walker**



## The Lonely King



I am a poet, a visual artist and a workshop leader.

I have been working as a professional sculptor for 20 years and have shown my work all over the world as well as being regularly featured in the Royal Academy opens.

I am a multi award winning poet, my debut collection Ghost Writer is on its 6th publication run and I tour the UK with my own 5 star solo show as well as regularly supporting John Cooper-Clarke.

I have run inspirational workshops for 15 years with Big Ideas Wales, a role modelling programme funded by Welsh Government, and I also work on a freelance basis for Oriel Myrddin running arts and craft workshops and for Sculpture by the Sea an environmental arts organisation whose main priority is to see people engage with nature in a creative, non impactful way.

Facebook @ClareFergusonWalker  
Twitter @Clarefrog22  
Instagram @clarefergusonwalker  
clare@cfwdesigns.co.uk  
www.cfwdesigns.co.uk

On the hill there's a castle  
made from fish bones  
The moat is dry  
sprouting coat hooks  
They're setting up trestle tables  
beside the queue of sinners  
A breast pocket radio mast forecasts  
turbulent truths  
and heavy storms of electric soup  
Heads turn skyward  
mouths open in harmony  
Please don't stare  
These people  
ache to be someone else

Tenderfoots are trading  
bottle tops for blushes  
and searching their pockets  
for someone else's truth  
An astronaut is screaming  
Can't you see?  
We're heading for the crucifixion  
They're nailing the big book to the cross  
But no one can hear him

There's a pirouette of jesters  
discounting horse plumes  
Beside a woman selling shoes  
that will only ever walk you home  
is a tipsy mermaid barking  
Step right up! Step right up!  
You've got unlucky faces  
Unicycle the wall of death  
without spilling a drop  
and tomorrow will never come

Oh their tumbling stratagems

There's a rumour  
they're planning on  
melting down our armour  
to replace the railings  
they dropped on Dresden  
Protesters waving placards  
'Save the bi-lingual nightcap'  
By the doorway  
Dylan embraces the faithful  
then anoints them with  
the ash of his poems



There's a man hugging the wall  
He's folding miniature paper Buddhas  
and sliding them behind his dog collar  
It's like Jesus  
but without the wine

Bubbling up from beneath  
a memory of a toddler  
face down in a garden pond  
gripping lilies and screaming at the sky  
Does anyone know why  
some people embrace a curse?  
The dungeons are full of laughing policemen  
burning their own alibies  
No one can leave  
until the sun hurts their eyes

Don't mistake this for a comedy  
After the chanting  
on the way out  
they place a tyre around your neck  
The accelerant must be sourced elsewhere

# Boogoos Dream

Daron Carey

Boogoo sphelt slinkly  
Dingering down into before the time when future came  
When all Vinglings mielded with the green  
Lived true and empty hands received fair share

Pumply soft and velveteen stroking all  
Till darkness fell and Velging came  
Slinnerring, brashling, spleening ziles  
And promising more, if only Vinglings  
Learned to hate and never question why

But slicking Velging's promise wasn't true  
And in the tomorrow  
Only Kleptocs rose higher  
Hatching plans, squeezbig  
Building empires and slanking many  
While Vinglings vesseled Velgin's vile and hate

And in the under  
Crecking spleached and bleched  
Vinglings turned to splench and zile their own  
Forgetting together and scorning empty hands  
Till many hungered and the glowing was gone

Boogoo pained to see the Vinglings change  
Simping sorrow, he wandered down into Pumply Hollow  
Smoogeld down till wombing sleeping came  
And in the dreaming the wistering wind whispered  
"Boogoo, all things change"

# About the poems

**‘Fishbone Castle’** is a reimagining of the many meetings I attended where those afflicted by a raging thirst gather together to climb the twelve-step programme with the aim of achieving and maintaining sobriety and rebuilding the chaos they’ve created of their lives. Both poems conclude with different expressions of hope. Change is often slow and frustrating, but belief it is achievable should continue to be held close every day.

The filmed poem, **‘Boogoo’s Dream’**, began as a lament to the way banks and multi-national corporations’ control and manipulation is on the march, ever increasing their influence on the world. The political landscape, both here and in the United States, was undergoing enormous change with political charlatans promising the undeliverable, daily.

Watch the video of Boogoo’s Dream at:  
<https://youtu.be/NtGUVxIHvZo>

daroncarey@hotmail.co.uk



I stumbled into poetry by a fortuitous accident, finding myself in a backstreet boozier listening to poets at an open mic night.

The experience moved me deeply as it’s rare to be in a room where strangers are prepared to be vulnerable and tell the truth of their lives.

My aim in writing poetry is to impact upon and perhaps change, in some small way, what the listener or reader thinks and feels about the issue at hand.







## The Three Little Fishes

Darren Hoskins

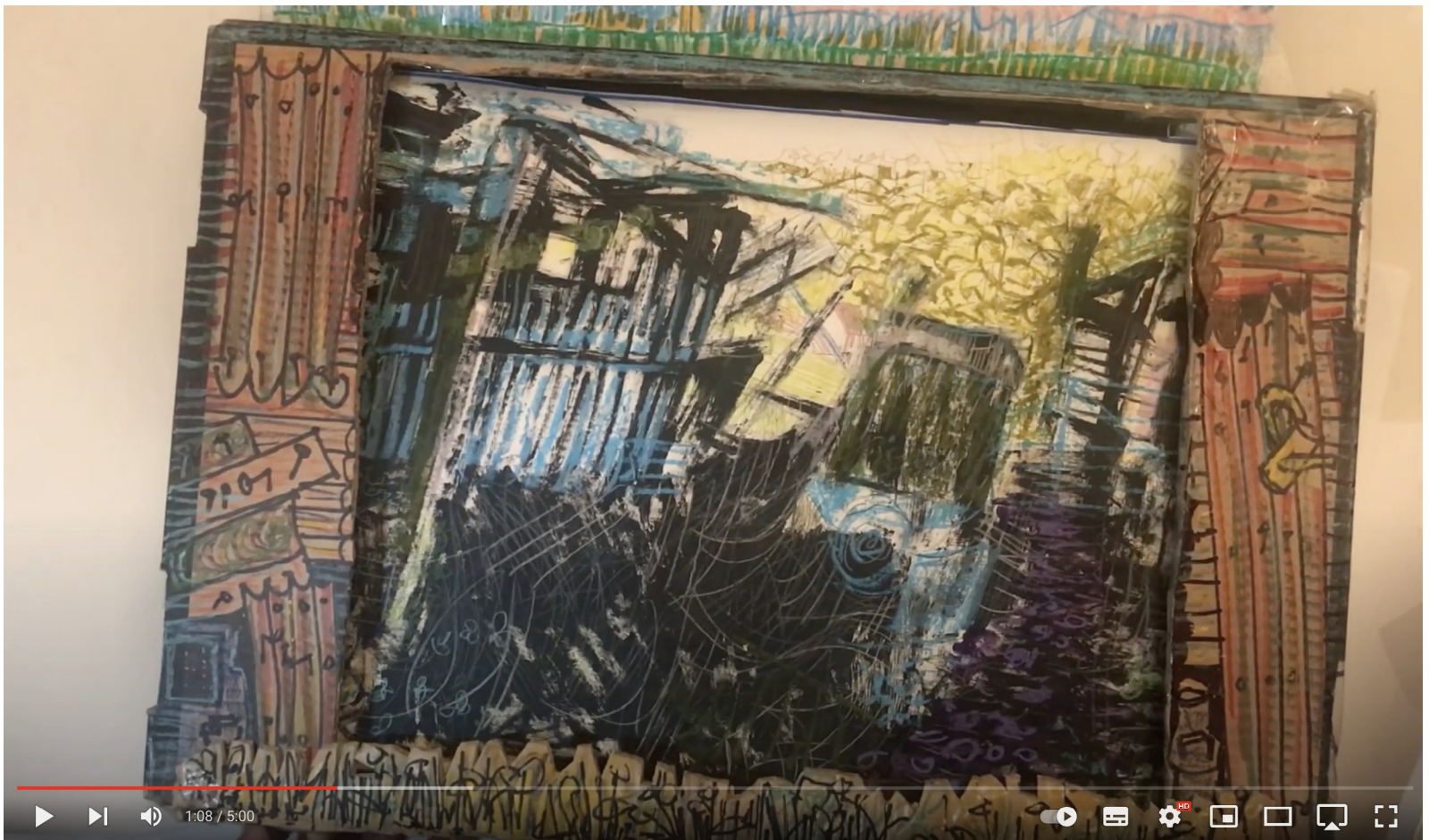
A year ago as part of the River Wye Festival Online, our group "Oh Crumbs", produced a set of programs with material inspired by the river, one piece was a fairly straight version of the old semi-nonsense song "The Three Little Fishes". With its tale of said fishes going on a watery adventure from pond to river and out into the sea, before being frightened into rushing home again, I thought its underwater world would make for a nice little project of some kind in the future. I would take in the scale of how very small the little fishes are compared to the size of the ocean and the dangers they face there.

Then this year, Roger Drury (fellow member of Oh Crumbs) and I took part in some live events on the banks of the river, as part of the "Save the Wye" campaign, mostly dressed as fish. I had assumed that our rivers were all clean now, but apparently not, with all kinds of chemical run-off polluting them and their many inhabitants...

Afterwards, remembering the song and spending lockdown experimenting with the idea of crankies (hand cranked, visual, moving panorama boxes... if that explains them at all?) I decide to play at bringing the two together...

Having made a crankie out of a discarded takeaway box from a Greek restaurant with a food-based Greek myth in it, I made this one with recycled items from a bin in-front of a fish and chip shop. To bring in the story of the Wye and the various horrible environmental issues facing our waterways I added verses to the song, to hopefully touch on these in a light, digestible way.

Watch The Three Little Fishes at: <https://youtu.be/3ITqY5PheOk>



## Badger, Badger, Badger

Darren Hoskins

My first go at a 'crankie' came from me using the 'panorama' function on my old phone. I had used it on wide open beaches and on top of mountains, taking in expansive landscapes and views, then one day, very unusually, I had my phone on me at home on the farm. I was surrounded by the old corrugated tin barns my Dad and I had built together many years ago, now long empty (or so I had thought). Over the years odd shaped trees and climbing plants had grown through the rusting tins, twisting and warping them, the wood had rotted and the windows broken. It made for a dynamic arrangement of colours, textures and shapes, with branches in all directions, there were animal tracks in the mud, birds and insects flying about and the full range of the natural processes of the countryside, of growth and decay, on display.

I turned the nearly 360 degree photo into a long painting and thought it looked quite nice and primeval but didn't know what to do with it. Then I thought about building the sheds with my Dad all those years ago and there was a human side to the story too, about us working together and then not using them very long and all our efforts to make a life and a living being overrun by nature and time... and nature repairing what people have done. I filmed the crankie, recording my voice at the same time, hoping it sounded like an unrehearsed bit of real life storytelling, rather than a scripted thing and let the animals come out to play as if about their daily lives unseen by people. I added the sheep at the end as I like to include shadow work in every story and a hint of otherworldliness (plus it was my first 'jointed' character). I used recycled cardboard, paper, very old crayons and paint from my childhood drawing box.

Watch Badger, Badger, Badger at: <https://youtu.be/i-uWkowMdsc>





Facebook @Handmadetalesdarrenhoskins  
 Facebook @ohcrumbsintheforest  
 Twitter @@DarrenLHoskins  
 Instagram @darrenlhoskins  
 darrenlhoskins@icloud.com

Darren Hoskins is an artist/storyteller and shepherd who lives on his family's small farm in the Forest of Dean. He has worked professionally over many years as a performer in a wide variety of settings, theatre, circus, cabaret, in schools, on the street, in zoos and castles and in small rooms behind/above/beneath public houses. He trained in modern clown/physical theatre and that is a basis in all his work.

He loved drawing and sketching on the farm as a child and sells pictures privately and online hoping to retain the same dynamic, non-judgmental mark-making style he had all those years ago.

The pieces he has sent us knit together the drawing and performing parts of his creative life. The 'cranky' is a relatively new way of telling stories, though it has precursors in theatre and film. It enables him to simplify the process of getting work together, needing no producer or camera-operator etc, just his old phone and some space at the top of the stairs! His material is a mix of personal stories, folk tales and contemporary influences.





# Beyond The Afterlife

Frank McMahon

Hot, frayed a public square, roads seven or eight  
begin or end there, roots, arteries, each trodden by a marching band  
determined footsteps brass and timpani and flutes, their anthems swelling louder,  
all with a different score

and the drums thump as they seek the dominant position,  
face off against the rest, the notes in combat      ragged      louder      louder  
until the pigeons flee the discord.

Black

the print on the Constitution's page,  
"three fifths of a human being".

The merits (or otherwise) of an unwritten constitution  
permit ancestral text to be denied but it creeps like dust,  
as it does in every house,  
through gaps and open windows, creeps and settles like unpaid bills;  
any finger can trace a line to the unexamined archive ( however incomplete )  
to the cellar where what was filtered out speaks  
from the carefully edited page and the wax-sealed box.

The Union flags were lowered long ago, lines of mourners dwindled,  
medals and coins with Imperial heads  
twitch in boxes of family heirlooms.

Empires live beyond their graves and our hearse lurches on;  
a new fleet sails to the East questing for the past while

in the untold story of the stately home.



The past is a mirror to ourselves. In its reflection  
we can't reshape our crooked timber but oh! the lens reveals  
and yes!

it was a shock, no other word will do  
to see the soot and accumulated grime      distorting,  
ascribing a lesser value. I was misled, no!  
I had failed to question the version accepted  
or shall we say      authorised?

And the hearse lurched on, leaking an incontinent bacillus;  
as the fever rose  
notices on windows  
firebombs and faeces  
people dragged to the execution ground  
the weight on the throat emphatically placed  
and always the chorus of casual comments  
threat abuse from deep in the forest  
fever's embers stoked for advantage  
the descant of coded comment,  
and when speech is required      their silence.

Imagine a future as something like, when coming back from a country walk  
past the first houses a flute someone practising a melody  
all clear and fine until the fingers stumble      some false notes  
discords, a pause then a second, third closer to the heart of it  
until the shadows vanish and the places where we live are no longer haunted.

Amongst many more urgent concerns, (climate change, environmental degradation, wars, population displacement, poverty, homelessness, social injustice) 'culture wars' is a topic or issue which lives within our public dialogue and discourse. It is alleged that they are being instigated and promoted for various ignoble reasons. It has been contended that this comes from a form of English nationalism and is designed to appeal to voters with assumed values about Englishness and identity. I don't intend to explore that specific issue of motivation. What is clear is that citizens within the Black communities (I use that term broadly) have suffered from prejudice, discrimination, unfair and unequal treatment and violence, some lethal. It is also clear that this is still the case.

The British Empire casts a long shadow; it is with us today and this was the starting point for my poem. How it has been portrayed in historical teaching and texts (history written from a British perspective) is being increasingly challenged with the aim of rendering a different account, one with multiple perspectives and narratives and one which is much nearer to the reality. It is also being challenged because out of Imperial conquest has emerged the poisonous notion that Black people are inherently inferior. I would like to believe that this attitude, ingrained belief, is disappearing but I am in no personal position to judge. So the efforts to recognise the role and contribution of Black people to our country, (in all aspects of our life within these shores), both past and present is crucial.

Yes, it might cause controversy, the re-examination of acquired knowledge and even a painful re-appraisal of our personal views. And if it does, then so much the better. But it also leads to discoveries of historical and cultural enrichment. And it must lead onto even stronger efforts to create a fairer, socially just society. The poem, as written, is an experimental development in my writing, more discursive and reflective, an attempt to bring, within a single work, different perspectives, some personal; an attempt to



frame an 'argument' in poetic form; also to work in a form which experiments with white space for emphasis and to avoid assailing the reader with reams of dense text. I have tried to write in a 'quiet' tone, to avoid the harsh rhetoric of current debates. After the Second World War, Germans had to, and did, face up to what their nation did during the Third Reich, especially the murder of millions of their own citizens and civilians in countries they invaded and occupied. In this country, we need to create an honest narrative about our Imperial past and connect that with how we conduct ourselves now and create a more harmonious society based on equal consideration.

Frank McMahon's professional career has been in Social Work, working for three Local Authorities, British Red Cross and Action for Children.

His first volume of poems, *At the Storm's Edge*, were published in January 2020 by Palewell Press. He has also been published on-line: (*Poet by Day*, *Riggwelter*, *Fly on the Wall*, *Morphrog*, *I am not a Silent Poet*, *Trouvaille Review*) and in print: (*Cannon Poets*, *The Curlew*, *Brittlestar*, *Graffiti*, *Dawntreader*, *Writersque*). He has written short stories (one published) and a children's novel. Recently, his poem *Citrus* was Highly Commended in the Gloucestershire Poetry Society's Winter Competition; his entry for the Erbacce Pamphlet Competition was Highly Commended (out of more than 12,500 entries). He has written several plays, full-length and for local radio. 'A Death in Flanders' was broadcast in 2018.

He lives in Cirencester and is a member of a local writers group. Other interests include travel, his allotment, walking and chess. He read at this year's Cheltenham poetry Festival.





## **Broken**

**Jo-Anne Mc Allister**

This is a drawing that is part of a series of works on the subject of the destruction of hawthorn trees, illegally damaged and felled by developers.

One of the fundamental influences on this series of works are Goya's Disasters of War, in which he recorded the brutality of the Spanish Civil War. With his use of this visceral imagery he illustrates the insanity of this conflict, to tell the story of 'common people' in distress. Equally, the disfigured hawthorn trees, in these prints, are known as 'common trees', which draw on the inequality of how violence mutes the disaffected. It is through this work I have acted as a witness to these events, that are happening here in the UK.



These drawings were then transferred onto lithography light sensitive aluminium plates and printed in the traditional way of inking the plates with large rollers. The slow process of drawing the trace of what was once there and is now gone, acts as a response to the length of time it takes for trees to mature. Bilaterally, printmaking is a reproductive mechanical process, indicative of the effect technology has on environments and how they are being rapidly industrialised. The space dissonates with the image by emptying of all other information, refocusing our attention on the subject, the trees themselves, their brokenness and dismembered forms, giving them a sense of 'being' that speaks to the social and political challenges the living planet faces in the current climate.

Therefore, by cutting through the quotidian of the everyday, we can re-imagine these trees as more than expendable 'beings', acknowledging this is happening in the UK as much as any other part of the world. Issues around deforestation where 'land-take' for developments has reduced woodland cover to a mere 3% in the UK.

In an effort to address the effects of 'land-take' a small percentage of proceeds for these prints will go to the Woodland Trust UK to help retain and revive much of the lost forests and Woodland in the UK. This print and others in the series will be available on my website [www.jomcallister.co.uk](http://www.jomcallister.co.uk) from the 27th November to celebrate National Tree Week.

It was after my son recovered from long awaited spinal surgery, I had one those rubicon moments. It was time to take my love of drawing to the next level and so I applied to Bristol City College and was accepted onto the Foundation Art & Design course. Here I was

tutored by James O'Dwyer who was a major influence in my work and introduced me to printmaking – giving me the opportunity to learn collagraph, dry-point and mono-printing. Since then, I have completed a BA in Drawing and Print at University West of England and continue to develop my skills as member of Cardiff Print Workshop.

My practice is situated between drawing and printmaking, through which I explore environmental, social and political aspects of modern industries and their impacts upon the environment. Drawing acts as way of representing those 'non-human' voices that further extend into printmaking. The matrix or plates from which the prints are pressed from, act as a contact point to represent that which is 'effected' and 'affected'. This offers a tangible response that leaves a trace, or imprint, through a material surface, and interaction that creates a tacit conversation between 'humans' and 'non-humans', through the use of positive and negative aspects in these processes. It is this acute misunderstanding of our relationship with the environment that steers my work, where this human centric opposition needs to be dissolved and more equitable solutions sought to re-establish that we belong to this world, not it belongs to us.

Instagram @jo\_mcalliser\_artist  
Twitter @allister\_jo



# Book Review

**Hanging Fire by  
Louise Longson**

**Review by  
Karlostheunhappy**





# Raising the Alarm

Louise Longson

Tonight, the moon has been caught  
in the bare-branched trees. Long shadows  
tunnelling through the dark. A searchlight  
revealing the detail of each twig. The bark

of a dog alarms me to a jangled  
wakefulness of barbed-wire nerves,  
The whine of a haunted, hunted  
creature keens the air. I am sword-sharp,  
vigilant to every scrape and rustle.

I am the sentry of the grey world outside  
my anxious windows, where the thorn-tree  
scratches, tapping out its sinister code  
to the secret agent of my imagination.

*at rest we witness the rise and fall of day, time & stars*

## **Hanging Fire by Louise Longson**

You're in bed waking up to the sun streaming in, illuminating the dust. You're rested and yawn content. It's a day off. Responsibilities slide and we can be ourselves without the clutter and noise of modernity; silence it's incessant call. You take a deep breath. Not in anticipation of some hardship, but simply to breathe. Relaxed. Alive in the universe. This moment. Golden. Or moon illuminated. It is this sense of peace which sparkles like that floating dust in the sun that Louise Longson has caught in her recent and fine chapbook entitled *Hanging Fire* (Dreich, 2021).

This soft break from life collects twelve poems, each less than a page in length. Three of them about waking up, not necessarily metaphorically, but rising slowly like we do when holidaying or in retreat from everyday rigours. Lines like a breath into the soul.

Easily consumed in a single sitting, this is a radiant collection, full of sun, the companionship of friends, lovers, a cat, and occasional bright cosmic overtones.

At its best, in my opinion, when reflecting rest and rising, *Hanging Fire* could so easily have tipped into new age twaddle, but Longson's lines sit comfortably this side of an authentic connection with the spiritual life, whether she's writing about today or under that same sun which touched the old Albion. We move from the Forest (of Dean – inexplicably credited to Hampshire in a footnote!) to Padstow, giving us that sense of travel, holidaying and retreating to focus on dawns and sunsets. We progress across the day slipping through time as the pages softly roll.

Longson's writing is at ease in giving us a sense of self as we read, navigating our own feelings and responses to her lines. In that way we're also invited into her world, recognising it as our own: 'close together we watch the world outside the picture window'

These sun salutations, the resonating universe and beautiful destruction in 'Theia'; the connection to the old ways recalling moments of the folk-art movie *Arcadia* amount to a beautiful yawn – not of boredom, but instead a life-enriching intake of breath, of words and verse. Come, 'sit gently in the darkness' and see for yourself *The Hanging Fire*.

My recommendation for 2021 poetry chapbook of the year. Get it through Dreich:  
[www.hybriddreich.co.uk/dreich-slims](http://www.hybriddreich.co.uk/dreich-slims)

Karlostheunhappy  
[facebook.com/karlostheunhappy](https://facebook.com/karlostheunhappy)

## **About Dreich**

Dreich is a not for profit publisher promoting poetry and some prose.

Contact: Jack Caradoc  
[dreichmag@gmail.com](mailto:dreichmag@gmail.com)  
[Facebook.com @jack.caradoc.5](https://facebook.com/@jack.caradoc.5)  
[www.hybriddreich.co.uk](http://www.hybriddreich.co.uk)  
[www.youtube.com/channel/UCPI0ChzRuL3SZkuHmiJzYYA](https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCPI0ChzRuL3SZkuHmiJzYYA)



As a child,  
I hugged the grass on hills  
by the dip and curve of Iron-age forts  
stretched full-length, I rolled the slopes  
landing dizzy, in the lap of meadow.

Now, tall in my vertical stance  
feet encased in shoes; body clothed  
I've lost the touch  
of skin on the Earth's epidermis.

Grass is Gaia's hair, rock her skeleton  
she has no arms with which to hug  
but hurts when we cut her flesh  
excavate her bone

bleeding no blood – shedding no tear  
she groans at our lack of love.



# Such Unnecessary Evil

Josephine Lay

(After reading of the destruction of ancient woodland for HS2 Rail Link)

The army of yellow tanks advance  
intent on waging war  
against a blockade of ancient woods.

Dust whirls  
as diggers attack the aged trees  
with smack of metal on living wood.  
Jaws of JCBs close,  
clench and heft – tearing root bole  
from soil that's fed it down  
a century of summers.

Branches thrash and flail  
shudder of ground as each titan falls.  
Above the devastation –  
rooks wheel and caw as woven nests  
detach – scattering moss, feather  
and broken shell.

This rape of Spring  
leaves no darling bud on Dog-rose  
no frond of Hawthorne blossom  
to be shaken by rough winds in May

only shoots and catkins trampled  
by human greed.



Josephine Lay is a poet and writer living mid-way between Gloucester and Cheltenham.

She has a Creative Writing MA from Bath Spa University. Josephine is Director of Operations for the Gloucestershire Poetry Society and hosts the online monthly event 'Crafty Crows'. Pre-pandemic she hosted 'Squawkers'; a live, monthly poetry event in Cheltenham.

She has read at the Cheltenham Poetry Festival and the Gloucester Poetry Festival and has close links with both. She has also performed her work at many events around the country.

Josephine has published three collections of poetry through Black Eyes Publishing UK, her most recent being '*A Quietus*', which can be purchased through the link below, along with more information about her and her work.

[www.blackeyespublishinguk.co.uk/shop](http://www.blackeyespublishinguk.co.uk/shop)

Her work has been published in several online magazines and various anthologies.





**Copper Poppies**

**Josh Duke**





The copper poppies have been a particular favourite amongst my customers, as I feel the poppy has a special place in many people's hearts, especially this time of year. I also offer a hand stamping personalisation where customers can request a name or date to be stamped onto the flowers or leaves themselves making a truly unique and special piece.

I have recently released a limited-edition Red Remembrance poppy which holds the same design as my original poppies but is hand painted with the colours of the traditional iconic poppy and has proved to be very popular.

A proportion of the proceeds of each sale are also being donated to the Royal British Legion charity which I am very proud of.

Each of my pieces are made entirely by hand, from the cutting of the petals to the texturing and sculpting of each stem. I use traditional blacksmithing and metal foraging techniques, which I feel creates an authentic keepsake and one that will last a lifetime.

Whilst at school I studied Art and Design, and this was where I first developed a passion for sculptural art. I designed and created wire figure sculptures as part of my final project at GCSE. I then went on to study Design and Technology at A Level where I learnt many of the basic metal work and forging techniques.

I carried on working with metal as a hobby, refining and teaching myself new methods of work, whilst studying for a BSc Zoology and MSc Wildlife Conservation at University. During this time I developed a particular interest in sustainability and the need for recyclability - and this is why I pride myself on using as many recycled materials as possible in my work.

Ever since studying Art and Design I have taken every opportunity to develop my knowledge and skill base. Alongside studying and creating these pieces for family and friends, myself and my Mother started a small business in 2016 called Fairies of Tranquility where we handcraft wooden sculptures of miniature houses, doors and furniture from locally foraged natural materials which has been really successful and we sell our work worldwide but my love of working with metal has always been there.

I first started to sell my copper roses to the public earlier this year and the interest has been phenomenal, with many private commissions and several local businesses requesting to stock my work. I now create a wide range of floral sculptures, including roses, poppies, calla lilies, sunflowers and daffodils.

[www.tranquilitymetalwork.com](http://www.tranquilitymetalwork.com)  
Instagram @tranquilitymetalwork  
Facebook @TranquilityMetalwork





## Mother Mycelium

She patiently watches,  
Observing lonely trespassers  
Drifting overhead.

She intricately weaves,  
Interlocking all that's beneath  
The sacred soil.

She purveys wellness,  
Giving all who ask,  
Just what they need.

Although she's often unnoticed,  
We need her,

And we are all here cradled,  
In her outstretched arms.

## Laine Mariah

When I work on pieces like  
this, my mind often drifts in a  
meditative state, and words,  
like the ones above, begin to  
flow simultaneously, as the  
art takes a life of its own, while  
I blissfully stumble down the  
rabbit hole of creative  
expression.





**Whispers at Dusk**

**Laine Mariah**



I call this piece, “Whispers at Dusk”, and it holds a special value, as it was actually my first truly original pyrography work of art. I drew the design with pencil before slowly burning into the wood, layer upon layer, with my wood burning pen. I like to take my time with my work, and prefer to linger with low temperatures, building up to the desired depth. This really allows the piece to evolve naturally.

I burned “Whispers at Dusk”, into a 13 x 11.5” live-edge, basswood round. I find the texture of the wood and the roughness of the bark really provides me with a wonderfully organic canvas on which to create pieces like this.

I love hearing the feelings evoked and meanings interpreted by people when they view my art. That’s a big part of the beauty of creating.

For me, this piece tells a story. A story of twilight in the forest. Of secrets told that only the quietest, most still can absorb. The privilege of being part of something much bigger than ourselves. Like the Mycelium, the mother of all, the interconnected web of life, right under our feet within the forest floor.



Laine Mariah started her artistic journey in wood burning in the Spring of 2020. At that time, pandemic isolation began creeping in and she started feeling the deep pull from her creative spirit as it began to awaken. It was then that she picked up that pyrography pen with the gleaming tip, and her creative spark was instantly reignited.

Laine finds her inspiration through the vast forests where she lives in British Columbia, on Canada’s West Coast. Her artistic focus is mainly on the fungi, flora and fauna that is

found on the forest floor, as she incorporates a touch of surrealistic whimsy in her hand sketched burns.

She considers herself a “pyrography purist”, meaning she solely uses heat applied to the wood’s surface to create her pieces. This ranges from her pyrography burner, to a torch, and even a heat gun. To highlight areas and add texture, she will scrape the wood’s surface with knives and files.

Her art shows a strong appreciation and value for nature. To carry through with this love for the environment, she’s woven a plan of sustainability for sourcing her wood, partnering with a local arborist.

At this time, Laine considers her craft a hobby, but hopes to one day make her original pieces available to the public. You can follow along with her social media on Instagram, Facebook & TikTok.

Instagram @penny.laine.reveries  
Facebook @pennylainereveries  
TikTok @pennylainereveries





**Godzilla (Mecha?)**

**Larry McFall**



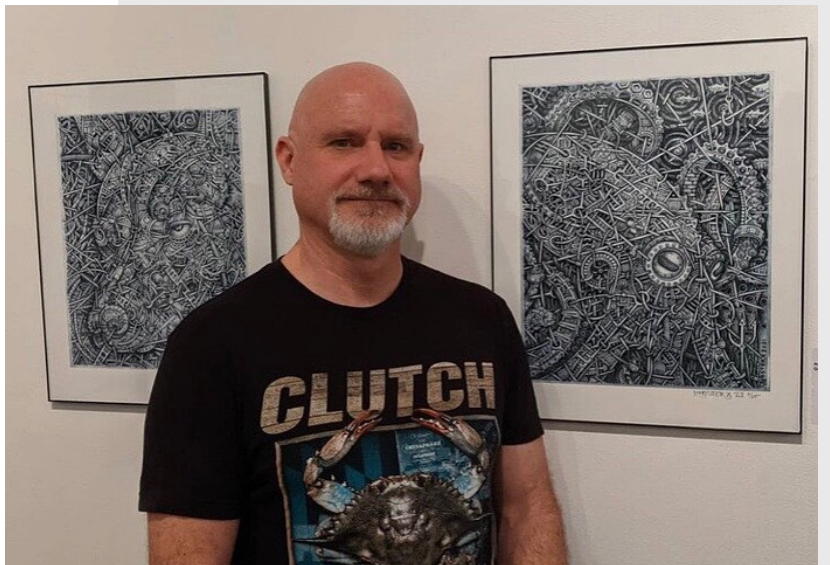
## Catharsis Series: 2020 – present

The images in this series are all 11" x 14" (27.94 cm x 35.56 cm), drawn on Strathmore Bristol 300 series (100 lb) paper using Prismacolor Ebony graphite pencils. I typically start by sketching out the subject and then meticulously detail the work from top to bottom, and left to right – trying not to smear as I go. The only other tools I use are a Tombow eraser, a clear ruler as a straightedge, an adjustable rotary circle template, and a very trusty industrial electronic pencil sharpener. As of 2021, I have been using a Kimberly 9XXB graphite pencil to really make the darks darker.

Every piece I create has a narrative. Godzilla (Mecha?) is the latest in a series of 22 drawing I have completed since March of 2020. In most of my pieces, I will inject 'Easter eggs', or references that are clues to the subject's life or story. In Godzilla (Mecha?), you will find a Geiger counter face, the logo for 'Monarch' (Monsterverse series), a radioactive symbol, King Ghidra, downtown Tokyo, the rising sun/Japanese flag, Xilien UFOs, and Godzilla's name in katakana. These Easter eggs are reminiscent of a U.S. children's magazine that would have hidden picture puzzles in them; I loved them as a kid.

I grew up watching old Godzilla movies on a small, black and white television. My favorite Godzilla movies are clearly from the mid-80s, where he battles King Ghidra in monstrous battles royale. Even as an adult, reflecting on my childhood, Godzilla is a hero figure – battling evil to save Earth.

These are the times where we could use a few more heroes, at any level.



The Universe is comprised of moving parts - interconnected and synchronous. As humans, we long to be part of this harmony, but the emotional burdens we carry can keep us from achieving our goals. Periodically there must be a catharsis that allows us to regurgitate, reconfigure, and re-contextualize our lives in place and time. Drawing allows me the opportunity to connect the broken and unused pieces of life that accumulate into something new and meaningful.

My style has always been to utilize complexity and attention to detail. In my latest body of work, I use the connections between random pieces of 'junk' to form a portrait using control lines, background textures and unidentifiable parts of tools or machinery. I then weave these together using a 'Escheresque' approach to keep the viewer's eye moving at all times. This style is an amalgamation of several influences in addition to M.C. Escher, including H.R. Giger, R. Crumb, Albrecht Durer, Dr. Seuss, Lebbeus Woods, and Tim Burton.



[www.lobsterxart.com](http://www.lobsterxart.com)  
Instagram @lobster\_x  
Facebook @lobsterx  
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Youtube: Lobster X

## King and Country

## Lou Hotchkiss Knives

Lust- you know, that sorrowful path  
Hollowed by a thousand feet !  
Shiny boots of leather marching down the black road  
Bawdy songs carried on the breeze  
We signed up for bloodshed, haven't we ?

Somewhere across an ocean of tears  
Seasick, bobbing on hostile waves  
In your foolish dingy, you cling to your noble cause  
The old lie - the more you bleed, the more you care  
Oh Incommensurable pain, futile sacrifice of youth  
Allegories of marble  
Demonic Venuses  
Kings with lopsided crowns  
Nations of wanton lunatics  
Dignified and broken queens  
Saccharine girl-soldier dreams  
My heart, ardent for some desperate glory !

Tell them, you Holy Fool !  
You have fought a thousand battles  
And each of them blackened your heart  
To what end ?...  
For all their Love and their grand stands  
None of them will ever find God  
With holes in the palms of their hands.



## About the poem

On a poetic level, the journey of the Soldier mirrors that of the Lover. Love and War are two sides of the same coin, as both paths lean towards annihilation, be it through amorous acme or emotional and physical agony.

Idealism inevitably gets crushed by reality, as pleasure and pain meet in the liminal zone where the self is wholly deconstructed.

The value of sacrifice itself is ambivalent – does it really lead to a greater good, or is it a futile exercise in submission to another's discompassionate will?



I am a secondary school teacher, a punk singer, an occult author and a scribbler of curiosities.

My poems tend to be free flowing and disorganised, although you will find patterns in the ambient chaos. My influences include Japanese tanka, Sufi poetry, Parnassianism and the poets of the First World War.

My short stories are published by Veneficia Publications ([www.veneficiapublications.com](http://www.veneficiapublications.com)) in the anthologies “22: OPUS ARCANNA Tales of the Tarot” and “Voices from the Ashes: Resurrecting the Wytch”. I have also contributed to the poetry anthology “Songs of the Black Flame” available on Black Moon Publishing ([www.blackmoonpublishing.com](http://www.blackmoonpublishing.com)).

Instagram @louhotchkiss

# Art Performance Essay

## The Psychic Life of Minerals

By Denise Carvalho, Ph.D.

Minerals are always in a state of transformation. They are fossilized matter that had been once under the sea, resulting from the destruction of vegetal, human, and animal material, consolidated through millions or billions of years in a process of constant decay. Rocks and shells are compounds of unreadable inscriptions and mimetic chaos, yet scientific analysis may trace their geological information as a basis for predictions and archaeological coda. Thus, outside this system, the millennial inscription of minerals is meaningless. Its knowledge is about lengthy stratifications and microscopic destructions that act in the present, propelled to envelope time and matter, embracing without nurture, turning captive without captivating. The knowledge of minerals pre-exist human language and in/9nitum, but in its infancy, the exodus of humanity mirrored in its own biological strata the processes of the land, their laws of condensation and waste, compactness and induration. The echo of minerals in the human psyche is this making and unmaking, forming and unraveling, searching for beginnings, but continuously perishing. The law of decay predetermines the law of consolidation, as it sustains thresholds states, to enable openness and contingency.

The echo of minerals constitutes the flute that is made with bamboo or bone or the cello made of spruce, maple, poplar or willow. The music that these instruments play, which resonates the archaeology of sound of the natural elements (rain, thunder, wind, the waves and tides of the ocean, the sound of fire), is here transformed by the silent gesture. Equally transformed is the condensation of the elements—the chemical process needed for the formation of new rocks and transformative and operative aspects of the instruments' materials. Memory, a negative process rooted in the past and in its projection into the future, links these two negatives: the silence of gestures and the emptiness of matter. Like minerals, memory is always in a state of precariousness. Except in its automated form, as an appendage of the machine, memory is revived by momentum, by the imaginary. As the performer's fingers replay the musical sequence, he/she enacts a temporary intensity, changing the strata of the archive into an automated coda: the beginning of a new intensity, the tune without a tune. This is what happens when silence is played. Silence, another negative matter, preserves momentum while becoming a threshold to something yet unknown. Silence does not predict, it empties expectation, swallows desire. The silence of what is known is stronger than its expression. And the porous materiality of emptiness is the silence's momentum.

Rocks don't feel dislocation. In their displacement and disintegration, they don't reminisce in nostalgia or feel longing, they are not afraid to let go. But human land is created in memory, inherited from generation to generation, established as hierarchies, felt in the guts of its people who fought for it, died and killed for it. The land represents the possibility of being remembered.

The amalgamation of humanity in the land created the myth of continuity, but the land itself never ceases to dissolve into dust, into sand, into water, decaying, dying, and reappearing in a different place. Stones, on the other hand, embrace oblivion, fully, lost in the boundary, becoming the boundary that erases itself.

Yet humans need solid ground. The idea of solid ground is more important than the land itself, which is in a persistent state of disintegration through its cracks and thresholds. Like the land, the human skin is also porous, but the body's appearance as whole gives a sense of security, of permanence. Like the land, the body is also continually perishing. There is no such thing as a whole body or a solid ground. Even silence and matter are not whole. They are also constituted by the nature of elements and their relationships as they become content and expression, form and action. The architectonics of nature is always temporary, whether it is made from millions of years of geological crystallization or from the gap of time in the disappearance of a species. Whether the polarization is heterogeneous or homogeneous, its natural elements follow certain rhythms, determined internally or externally, or both. All depends on the degree of accumulation and segregation, on the properties (temperature, density, mass, volume, etc.), and the functional complementarities impacting them. Both these natural rhythms and their expressive gestures become part of a quasi-random endurance process. Its quasi-random quality is due to the internal/external forces affecting the process in time and space. Yet, chance, unpredictability, is inevitable. It is the unpredictable that greatly affects the potential outcome. Losing a home or a land can be projected into the future, as decay or illness anticipates disintegration or death, but the exact moment of death can seldom be predicted. The return of something that once existed is also impossible. Nothing can be returned or preserved permanently.

In the psychic life of minerals, the preservation of materiality is trivial and redundant. Contrastingly, truth resonates. When something is truthful, its momentum briefly echoes into idea-matter, an idea that materializes out of nothing. The moment of completion of an art piece feels truthful. No longer owned by anyone, the artwork shares the rhythms of who witness it and of its surroundings. It becomes the amalgamated rock, rolling down the hills, decaying into dust, subsumed by water, perishing now to be consolidated again in a different place and time. The truth of an artwork is silent and formless; its materiality is transitory. Its formal and conceptual attributes are intensities echoed beyond its appearance.

The Psychic Life of Minerals was written as a response to performance *When All Things Evaporate, We Will Talk About Minerals*. It was a collaboration with Simone Couto at the Pioneer Works Center for Arts and Innovation, Brooklyn, NY.





## Denise Carvalho, Ph.D.

Over the last three decades, Denise Carvalho has worked as a professional writer and artist, scholar and art critic, as well as a curator. Her professional practices combine distinct scholarships, knowledges, and sensitivities, redefining the meaning and direction of her creative writing and artistic abilities in line to her professional scholarly and curatorial work.

Dr. Carvalho began her writings in New York City as an art critic for magazines such as Sculpture, Art Nexus, Review, Flash Art, Vogue, Ceramics: Art & Perception, Afterimage, Art in America, Hyperallergic and Whitehot Magazine, and journals Kwartalnik journal, Grove Contemporary Art, The International Journal of Arts & Society, NKA, Journal of Contemporary African Art, and New Observations. She has contributed with numerous essays for exhibitions she curated at major museums and international city galleries, as the National Museum in Poznan, Arsenal Gallery in Bialystok (Poland), Whitebox Gallery (NY), Westport Art Center, Hermit Foundation (Czech Republic), the Chelsea Art Museum (NY), The Art Institute in San Diego (CA), and The Museum of Telecommunications Oi Futuro in Rio de Janeiro (Brazil). As a creative writer, she was a fellow at the Writers Institute at the Graduate Center in New York City in 2013.

[www.linkedin.com/in/denise-carvalho-4a2b2714a](http://www.linkedin.com/in/denise-carvalho-4a2b2714a)

Facebook @decarval

Instagram @denisecarvalho891

[www.denisecarvalho.squarespace.com](http://www.denisecarvalho.squarespace.com)

Twitter @dgcarvalho88





**Jaewook Lee**  
**Simone Couto**

**When All Things Evaporate, We Will Talk About Minerals**



Jaewook Lee is an artist, writer, amateur scientist, semi-philosopher, and sometime curator. Lee is the founder and director of Mindful Joint (<http://mindfuljoint.com>), an annual symposium that focuses on non-hierarchical knowledge sharing in contemporary art. Lee is the recipient of awards such as the 4th SINAP (Sindoh Artist Support Program) and the SeMA Emerging Artists and Curators Supporting Program by the Seoul Museum of Art. Lee has participated in exhibitions, talks, performances, and screenings at such venues as Museo de Antofagasta in Chile (2020), Hong-Gah Museum in Taiwan (2018), Art Sonje Center in Seoul (2017), the Guggenheim Museum in New York (2017), the Asia Culture Center in Gwangju (2016), MEINBLAU Projektraum in Berlin (2016), NURTUREart in New York (2014), the Museo Juan Manuel Blanes in Montevideo (2014), MANIFESTA 9 parallel event in Hasselt (2012), and the Chelsea Art Museum in New York (2011), among others. Sculpture Magazine featured Lee's work in May 2017. Lee's work is in the permanent collections of several institutions, including the Gyeonggi Museum of Modern Art in Ansan, South Korea, and the Jordan National Gallery of Fine Arts in Amman, Jordan. Lee received MFAs from Carnegie Mellon University and the School of Visual Arts. Lee is an assistant professor of New Media Art at Northern Arizona University.

[www.jaewooklee.com](http://www.jaewooklee.com)

Simone Couto is a Brazilian-born and United States-based artist whose multimedia and interdisciplinary practices expand into poetry, writing, curating, and pedagogy. She investigates how biographies of both humans and places are negotiated physically and emotionally and constructed through the poetics of relation, reciprocity, and belonging. Simone Couto received an MFA from the School of Visual Arts Art Practice Program, New York, a BA in Creative Arts from the University of San Francisco, and studied Theater Arts at The Federal University of Rio de Janeiro, Brazil. Her work has been shown in the United States and internationally, including Gwacheon National Science Museum, South Korea, Argentina, Brazil; and Pioneer Works; Invisible Dog Art Center; Electronic Arts Intermix; El Museo de Los Sures; all New York. Art Residencies include ISCP (International Studio and Curatorial Program), The Hafnarfjörður Centre of Culture and Fine Art, in Hafnarborg, Iceland, as well as at the Studios of MASS MoCA, NARS Foundation Nurture Art Non-Profit, and others. She teaches at the Fine Arts Department of the School of Visual Arts (SV) in NYC.

[www.simonecouto.com](http://www.simonecouto.com)





**The Radiant Furaha**

**Lucie Estrade**



When I painted The Radiant Furaha I started with the mouth.

After a few hours I had painted a big smile and a super happy woman. So I thought about how to get all the positive and cheerful spirit that this woman gave off to the rest of the painting. Finally I had this idea with the pop art style afro.

Black women have a special relationship with their hair, which is a symbol of history, character and emancipation. I wanted to sublimate this already magnificent hair through this mixture of colors.

I loved painting this part, and gradually let the colors evolve between them. I am really happy with the result.



Self-taught, I fell into painting by chance. Sensitized to drawings and plastic arts from my childhood, I really started painting only in the summer of 2019.

This passion turned out to be so intense that within a year I gave up my digital career to devote myself to my art.

Naturally drawn to street art, I first experimented with colorful works in

acrylic. However, it was the women who really made me make a turning point in my creative process.

Captivated by their beauty, sensuality and diversity, I have chosen to translate all the poverty that each of them inspires in my portraits. A tribute to the modern woman, her culture, her diversity and her personality. Each painting is unique in the image of its model, which allows me to embellish my works with colors and finishes that I believe reflect the personality of the subject.

Over the course of my work, these details, so characteristic of my portraits, have taken on a consequent importance that I wanted to translate through relief work. One way to catch the eye on these little cultural winks that make up the beauty of these works.

Today my work is articulated through a set of mixed media techniques and the use of oil allowing me to broaden my universe and to transcribe even greater emotions into it.

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**Flying Deer (Lucanus Deer)**

**Manuel Soppelsa**





Manuel Soppelsa is an Italian artist and sculptor creating fantastical creatures from recycled metals and costume jewelry.

He transfers the organic forms of insects and animals, using goldsmithing, innovative design and sculpture, into beautifully crafted synthetic sculptures worthy of Steampunk and Cyberpunk novels, to which Manuel pays homage.

You can follow his work at:

Instagram @soppelsamanuel

Facebook @Manuel-Soppelsa-

400937407001662

[www.flickr.com/photos/147287104@N03](http://www.flickr.com/photos/147287104@N03)







## **Du Sköna II**

Acrylic on canvas, 120 x 100 cm.

**Mathias Frykholm**

## About the artwork

I had been thinking about a special motif for a long time. I wanted to do a painting that depicted a beautiful woman moving through the water of a Swedish lake.

In early 2020, I was participating in a "Wedding Fair" where I showed my paintings for the visitors. At the same fair I saw a beautiful woman walking with flowers in her hair. I thought that she would be absolutely perfect as a model for my painting! She was actually a florist and was also participating at the fair.

I began to talk to her and asked her if she wanted to be a model for my next artwork. She really liked the idea and said yes. So me, her and a professional photographer met and took a lot of beautiful pictures for inspiration and reference material. I ended up making two paintings with her as a model.

First I did a painting in color and I named it "Du Sköna". It was a success and people loved it. After that I wanted to do another painting with the same theme and model, but in greyscale. I named it "Du Sköna II". I really loved the progress and it is challenging to paint in grayscale. It took me about 150 hours to complete and I am very happy with the result!



Mathias Frykholm loves to capture the beauty in the world in a realistic way in his paintings. Inspiration often comes from Swedish nature and its environment. He lives very close to Sweden's largest lake and many of his paintings depict its beautiful surroundings. Sometimes he paints a human in the motif, to show the interaction between man and nature.

Frykholm prefers to do big, immersive paintings for the beholder to get lost in. He loves to work with the small details that make the painting come alive. He continuously strives to develop his artistic skills and believes that there is always room for improvement. As an earlier athlete, he is familiar with working towards a goal and he implements that in his artistry.

Spectators often believe that Frykholm's paintings are photographs when first viewed. Mathias Frykholm has been working with different mediums but finds acrylic paint the best way to create his art, especially since he found a slower drying acrylic brand. This gives him more time to form his paintings to a realistic look.

Frykholm now lives his dream by working full time as an artist.

[www.frykholm-art.se](http://www.frykholm-art.se)  
[Instagram.com @frykholmart](https://www.instagram.com/frykholmart)  
[Facebook.com @frykholmart](https://www.facebook.com/frykholmart)  
[mathias@frykholm-art.se](mailto:mathias@frykholm-art.se)





## **Out of Sea**

**Matthew Hayward**

Oil on Canvas, 140 x 160 cm.



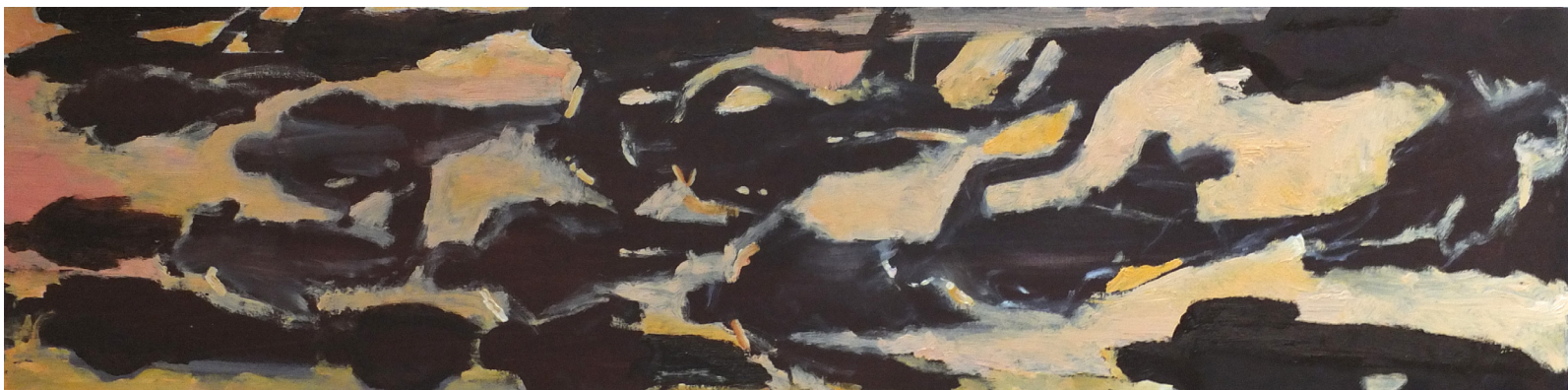


## **In the Camp**

**Matthew Hayward**

Oil on Canvas, 80 x 100 cm.





## **Flight**

**Matthew Hayward**

Oil on Canvas, 120 x 30 cm.



## About the artworks

### Out of Sea

Refugees make land after a harrowing journey across the sea. The focus is on women and children, with quotations from the tradition of religious art, especially depictions of the Madonna and child.

### In the Camp

Refugees in a camp at the time of Covid. In the midst of squalor, people eke out a life while clinging to as much dignity as they can.

### Flight

Refugees make a run for it, attempting to evade the police and officials to escape from the squalor in the camps near Calais to make it to what they hope will be a better life in Britain.

I was educated at Oxford University and at West Surrey College of Art and Design. In the process, I studied History as well as painting and became increasingly aware of the unexpected connections between the two and how each can be enriched by the other. I have taught art, history and history of art. This has enriched and stimulated my own work, leading me to question ideas and working practices that otherwise I may have taken for granted.

Like all painters, my work feeds off the past but is also dependent on the flood of images of the now. I am haunted by the work of Francis Bacon and by his facility in creating grandeur out of sometimes unlikely material and his ability to suggest a presence through streaks and smears of paint. Francis Bacon said, "I believe in deeply ordered chaos," and I can relate to his capacity for generating an epic multi-layered mess like an archaeological dig. I am a messy and 'spontaneous' worker, and I don't know where the end will be once I have started.

Sometimes fragments of photos or memory become large statements and if all goes well, these shreds of experience carry a worthwhile resonance.

I have exhibited in London at venues such as the Oxo Tower and the Bankside gallery and locally in Sherborne, Bath and Salisbury. I was twice highly commended in the Natwest Painting prize.

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

[www.saatchiart.com/account/artworks/327803](http://www.saatchiart.com/account/artworks/327803)



合氣道



# WOLF IN HIS BELLY

A two-time cancer survivor reflects how the art of Aikido serves as a lifeline in processing mental and physical recovery



A FILM BY MICHAEL HANCOCK

DIRECTOR OF PHOTOGRAPHY: OLUWASEYI THOMAS

CAMERA OPERATOR & COLORIST: HERB MAXIMO

VO SOUND ENGINEER: ADRIAN CABRERA

PRODUCTION ASSISTANT: DYLAN GRAHAM

**Wolf In His Belly**

**Michael Hancock**







Released in late August, a film by Michael Hancock, *WOLF IN HIS BELLY*, is a short narrative documentary currently running its course on the film festival circuit. It's been picked up for 'Official Selection' for numerous awards, a very lucky 13 to date, and has already been awarded BEST SHORT FILM in film-fests in the US, Canada, France, Germany, India and Estonia. A truly international and humanistic message, a two-time cancer survivor reflects how the art of Aikido serves as a lifeline in processing mental and physical recovery.

Made on a miniscule budget, it portrays a young man's insatiable appetite for Aikido practice that spans 50 years. Now an old man, he reflects on the initial spark, how it became a thread through life he came to trust, a continuous study, and discovers a truth that begins and ends within.

In the words of his most pivotal teacher, "There is nothing more perfect than nature. It has no muscles and no physicality. We must copy it. Everything else is bollocks."

This is the basis for training, a labor of love... to learn about ourselves, to connect. The reasons why Aikido is vital to his existence are explored and openly shared, through cancers, through darkness, and recovery against the backdrop of limited mortality. It's a powerful sense of presence, and a little taste of freedom.

Michael Hancock says he was happy to bring his story to life, and most importantly, use the medium of film to hopefully inspire others that may be enduring cancer treatment, in all it's awful disguises, and inspire the mindset that you should never, never, ever give up.

There's been positive critique. Indie Eye Film Awards in the US, who gave it their 'Best Doc Short', says it's 'very creative, very stylish...' Due to real audience restrictions, it will soon be available to view on numerous online and selective festival platforms.

Updates will be available at [www.wolfinhisbelly.com](http://www.wolfinhisbelly.com) and Instagram [#wolfinhisbelly](https://www.instagram.com/wolfinhisbelly)



Michael Hancock



## **I Will Take Care of You**

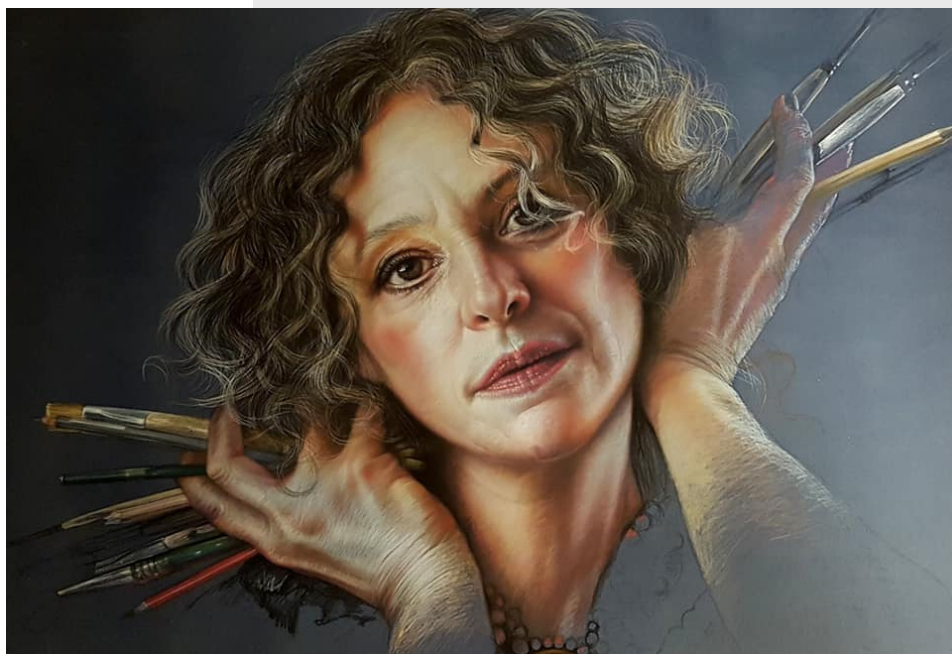
**Michela Bogoni**

Caran d'Ache Pastel Pencils on  
Pastelmat Board 50 x 70 cm.



*"I will take care of you" is  
dedicated to my mother.*

Michela Bogoni



Michela Bogoni was born on March 22, 1973 and soon showed her passion for drawing.

Her favorite game during her childhood was to make up stories so that she could illustrate them. At the age of fifteen she began the activity of madonnara which still today is a fundamental part of her art making process.

In 1992 she graduated with points 51/60, becoming a designer and fashion stylist and in 1998 she finished the Academy of Fine Arts in Venice with full marks.

In the meantime, she carries out a series of small commissions, which will give her the necessary stimulus to decide to make all this work involving her husband Federico Pillan as well.

She currently works with her husband in the Monteforte d'Alpone studio alternating commissions with her mother's work and some more personal paintings that she exhibits in public places.

Instagram @bogonimichela  
Facebook @michela.bogoniil  
[www.bogonipillan.com](http://www.bogonipillan.com)





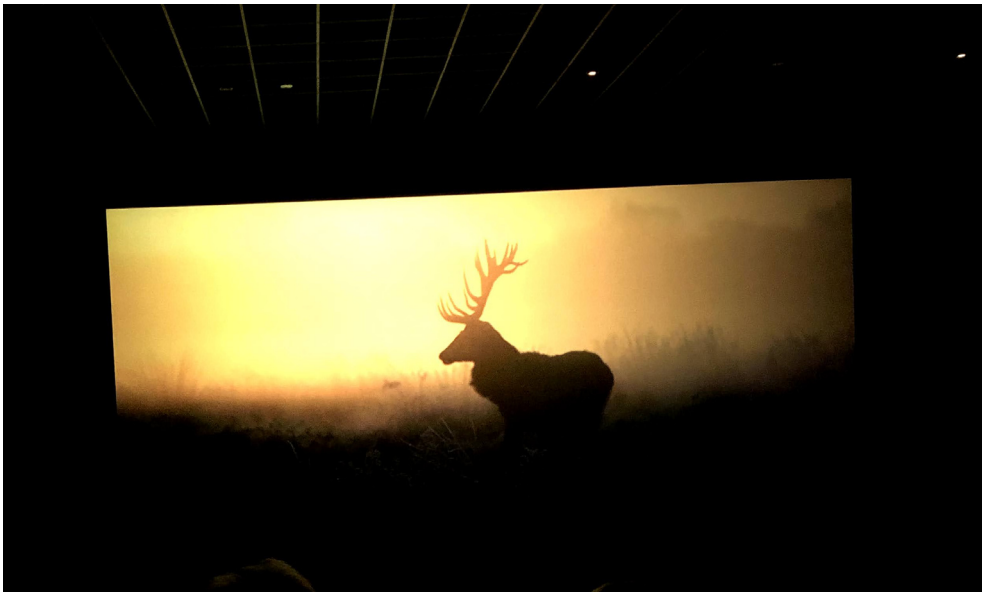
# Community Focus

**Stag**

**Annabel Richmond  
& South Gloucestershire  
and Stroud College**









This incredible fork sculpture was inspired by the film 'Philophobia' (now 'As I Am') as I worked alongside the production team making it back in 2017. Shot locally around the Stroud valleys, the film was the passion of a young director, Guy Davies and was supported by the producers at Fablemaze.

The film, which now streams worldwide, is a coming-of-age drama about a friendship group during their last days at school. Together they experience fears about the future as they contemplate their final exams and face moving away from their home town. The story follows the highs and lows of relationships within their teen group as they move toward adulthood.

It turned out to be a very surreal experience for me. I too had grown up in Stroud and taken my final exams at the very school and in the very same hall used for the film scenes! This film shoot became embedded in the community during that August four years ago – as young people took on extra roles, floor running jobs and local families and businesses offered use of their homes and premises for the film shoot. Once wrapped, working as Assistant Producer I was employed to help wind up the film.

One particular challenge was to find a way to dispose of 7000 forks that had been used as props during a part of the story. (You'll need to watch it to find out why!) The steel was too low grade to be reused as scrap and so I decided to try and use the metal in a sustainable and creative way.

I approached the School of Art at SGS College to ask if they would be interested in a



Annabel Richmond

collaboration to build a metal sculpture of a stag. As a child I had grown up with forms around the home as my aunt had trained in sculpture. A stag was chosen as the animal features at key turning points in the film and has always been an iconic symbol. Fortunately, the team of tutors and technicians at Stroud College accepted the challenge! They involved students in every aspect of the design and build. This creative process provided work experience for students as well as welding skills. Students are so very fortunate to have incredible mentors in the art department – most of whom are also skilled artists themselves.

The metal sculpture was complete by the autumn of 2020 and provided an amazing backdrop at Stroud's VUE cinema for the premiere of the film. Since then it has also been worked on by the Construction department at SGS and mounted on a concrete plinth for all to enjoy.

My plan was always to create a fundraiser from this incredible work. So this past weekend underneath unusually clement skies, the sculpture was officially launched with sunflower garlands, by acting duo Tamzin Malleon and Keith Allen. Fresh from their new joint film 'La Cha Cha', Tamzin was especially



keen to support a fundraiser that supported those affected by suicide and described the project as 'A beacon of hope and love'.

The local community including SGS College, have endured the tragic loss of several young people to suicide. And it is clear that the recent pandemic has really taken its toll on the mental health of young people in particular. Adolescence can be difficult at the best of times. The STAG now stands in memory of all of those whose lives were cut short by damaged mental health. Looking out over the busy road below the college it serves as a permanent symbol of paternal vigilance, sustainability and the power of art for good.

Links:

[www.sunflowerssuicidesupport.org.uk](http://www.sunflowerssuicidesupport.org.uk)

[www.mind.org.uk](http://www.mind.org.uk)

[www.sgscol.ac.uk](http://www.sgscol.ac.uk)

[www.jakepond.squarespace.com/jakepond](http://www.jakepond.squarespace.com/jakepond)

[www.as-i-am-movie.com](http://www.as-i-am-movie.com)

[www.directedbyguy.com](http://www.directedbyguy.com)

[www.fablemaze.com](http://www.fablemaze.com)



**Could you sponsor a fork? All funds will go to support the work of Stroud charity Sunflowers Suicide Support and MIND. <https://gofund.me/c63228f2>**



# Community Focus

Look Again

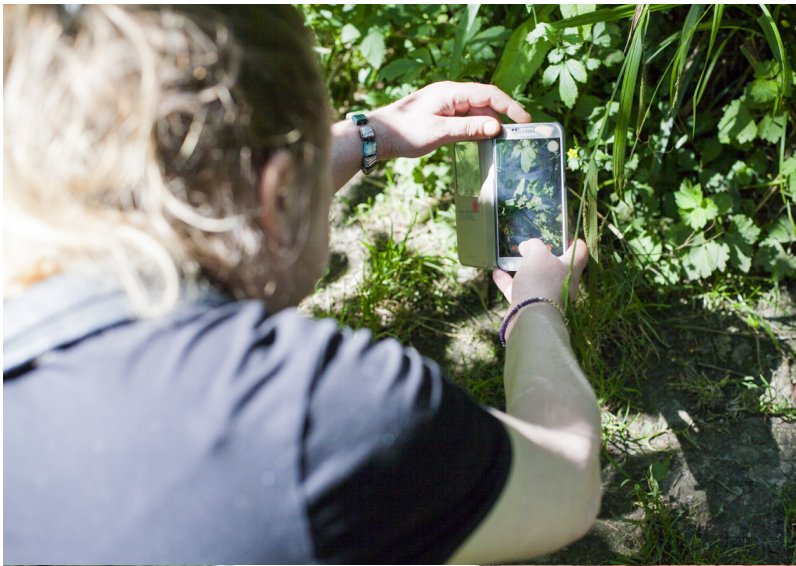
Ruth Davey

LOOK  
AGAIN



MINDFUL PHOTOGRAPHY  
FOR MENTAL HEALTH,  
WELLBEING AND  
RESILIENCE OF PEOPLE  
AND PLANET







Are you stressed, anxious, feeling low or exhausted? Are you finding uncertainty and change challenging? Would you like to improve your mental health and wellbeing, build resilience, and stay calm and connected in a creative way?

Our creative, experiential, accessible and evidence based mindful photography courses and programmes help you, your staff or clients to:

Improve mental health and wellbeing; reduce stress, anxiety and depression; gain clarity, focus and motivation; and build resilience in a fast changing world.

Right here, right now... slow down, look, and look again. Learn to see from a different perspective. Use a blend of mindfulness, photography and being in nature, to see your life, your work and your world with fresh eyes. All you need is a smartphone or camera, a notebook, pen and an open mind!

“Developed out of a need to stay mentally well and to build resilience myself (see about), I am absolutely delighted that thousands of people from all walks of life and around the world have benefited from the transformational Look Again mindful photography methodology, which is evidenced by academic research.”

Ruth Davey  
Founder and Director of Look Again

[www.look-again.org/community](http://www.look-again.org/community)  
[www.seewithfresheyeyes.co.uk](http://www.seewithfresheyeyes.co.uk)



I'm Ruth Davey – Founder and Director of Look Again. As well as being a mother, I'm a photographer, facilitator, social entrepreneur, public speaker, author, Fellow of the Royal Society of the Arts.

In 2012, with 20+ years experience as a project manager, facilitator and trainer in international, community and business development and coaching with the creative industries, in London, Africa, Bristol and Gloucestershire, I founded

Look Again to bring all my skills and interests together with photography, to help improve the health and wellbeing of both people and planet.

However, this creative journey was not always easy...

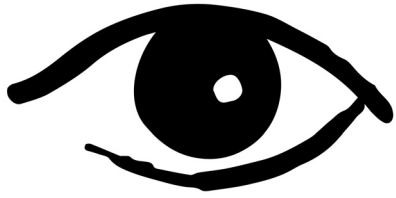
After experiencing episodes of anxiety, depression and a full on 'breakdown' in 2015 due to burnout and life circumstances, I asked myself what I really loved. My response was: photography, nature, walking and mindfulness. I gradually combined these four elements as part of my own recovery. And it worked - my 'breakdown' was in fact my 'breakthrough'!

I now feel honoured to be in the position to share my unique evidence-based methodology with others, and to be considered a leader in the field of mindful photography. I'm delighted that my work is recognised around the world as a transformational and powerful intervention in improving mental health, wellbeing and resilience - to help people see their lives, work and world with fresh eyes.

I'm happiest outdoors (with or without my camera) and feel nourished by time alone in nature. I believe in simplicity, integrity, and courage. I'm blessed to have built my business around sharing these values with others.

[www.look-again.org](http://www.look-again.org)  
Twitter @LookAgainPhotos  
Facebook @lookagainphotography  
Instagram @lookagainphotos  
[www.linkedin.com/in/ruth-davey](https://www.linkedin.com/in/ruth-davey)





Black Eyes Publishing UK

Black Eyes Publishing UK  
in conjunction with the  
Gloucestershire Poetry Society



# 2021 Open Poetry Competition

It gives me great pleasure to announce that the Gloucestershire Poetry Society's 2021 Open Poetry Competition was a real success.

We were amazed at the response and the number of submissions. As long short-lister, I began to wonder if the entries were ever going to stop. The standard of poetry was high and I enjoyed reading every single poem, though deciding which ones to put through was much more of a challenge.

I'd like to thank Adam Horovitz, our judge for this competition, for all his time and effort and his choice of three brilliant winning poems, plus the three others which were honourably mentioned. All six of these poems are published in this 4th edition of Steel Jackdaw and our thanks goes to the editor, Jason Conway, for giving us the space to include all six poems.

Congratulations to our winner, Jenny Mitchell – her poem 'Resurrection of a Black Man' is such a powerful poem and a very worthy winner, and I know you will enjoy reading it here. My congratulations also go to close runners up: Sophie Dumont and Scott Elder. And of course, well done to the honourably mentioned poets.

Thank you to every poet who submitted to our competition this summer and made it such a great success. I look forward to reading more of your poetry next year.

Josephine Lay (Director of Operations for the Gloucestershire Poetry Society & Editor for Black Eyes Publishing UK).

## **Winner: Resurrection of a Black Man by Jenny Mitchell**

Potent, full of anger and love, and rich with brutal and tender details that carry the reader through the poem's time-jumps and juxtapositions to its strange and beautiful conclusion, Resurrection of a Black Man struts in as high a style as the man the poem is about.

## **Second Place: Outfitting a Kayak by Sophie Dumont**

An impeccably measured poem that lays out in compelling, curious, empathetic and tenderly obsessive detail, the deep histories of a new hobby.

## **Third Place: At Once the River by Scott Elder**

A breathless, compelling poem, laced with startling images, that spills from the tongue like rushing water when read aloud.

## **Highly commended (in no particular order):**

### **Ye gods un little fishes... by Emma Purshouse**

A deliciously observed vignette that captures its subject beautifully, with a dash of dialect and prayer and a lot of telling detail.

### **Pretty Poet Purge Night by Jo Else**

A thrillingly irreverent two-fingered salute of a poem that sets out its stall in furious style, and is a joy to read aloud.

### **London Snow by Caroline Hammond**

A beautifully sustained study of the city made strange and new.

## Resurrection of a Black Man

Jenny Mitchell

They stamp you to the floor,  
a gang who do not care. You shone  
chipped parquet tiles, proud  
of your new Jamaican home. Lush  
sounds of fireflies weave through  
a garden coaxed from damaged soil,  
your hands made rife with blood-  
red hyacinths next to a field of figs.

One of the tallest trees calls *Father*  
at the windowpane as drunken men  
kick out. Again, they curse you  
to the roof – *Batty man, bye bye* –  
voices thick with rum, cracking bones  
inside a golden suit you made  
to sashay over hills, glide across  
blue mountaintops. As men yelled,

*Sodomite*, you clicked stacked heels,  
hurled *Queer can kiss my neck*.  
The same when young and Blighty-bound,  
one of the few to swish  
from a banana boat, shout  
*I'm a bender* to the host, refuse  
to doff your cap of fuchsia felt.  
My God! You knew the way to strut.

But on this smaller island, sun informs  
each bold flick of your wrist. Taken  
by the gang as a red rag, they chase  
you home, knock down, stamp hard.  
What if their feet could be reversed?  
Not walking on your spine but forced  
beyond flamboyant trees. Wild  
jasmine, known to purify, will trip them

in a nettle bush. Pricks shall exorcise  
blood lust. The root of hate twists  
in the ground. I'll feed you healing plums.  
Before your final breath, you'll reach  
for juniper as it rejuvenates. What more  
can nature do to bring you back?  
The gang stamps from your house.  
A fig tree calls you *Father*.



Jenny Mitchell is winner of the Poetry Book Awards for her second collection *Map of a Plantation*. It was chosen as a 'Literary Find' in the Irish Independent and a Poetry Kit Book of the Month. She has also won the Ware Prize, the Folklore Prize, the Segora Prize, the Aryamati Prize, a Bread and Roses Award and several other competitions. A debut collection, *Her Lost Language*, was voted One of 44 Books of 2019 (Poetry Wales).



# Outfitting a Kayak

Sophie Dumont

My second-hand Dagger is moored in the town hall.  
Today I am making it fit like a limb. I sit in the cockpit,  
rocking gently on the lino floor.

I reach for a hunk of foam, begin cutting it with scissors  
from the first aid box, wedge padding between my hip  
and the boat's bones.

I consider the kayak's origin, built to hunt seals, whale,  
polar bear. How the Inuit mould a boat to its builder,  
measure it against their anatomy:

Length, three spans of the builder's outstretched arms.  
Width, the builder's hips, a fist either side.  
Depth, the builder's fist and outstretched thumb.

Wives stitch sealskin, stretch it over a whalebone frame.  
I fill the gap between knee and cockpit's coaming.  
I lose where skin ends and boat begins.

I replace lino for Avon's bank. I hip-shuffle off the edge,  
nose-slice into river, bounce, pull with my paddle  
to steady and settle with the closeness of water.

Few Inuit ever learn to swim. The sea is grave-cold,  
they know the way a whale's ribcage can cradle a body,  
lung-like, to keep it afloat.



Sophie Dumont is a Bristol-based writer and ex-canoe coach whose poetry won the Brian Dempsey Memorial Prize 2021. Sophie's poetry has been shortlisted for the Fish Poetry Prize and twice for the Bridport Prize (2019, 2021). Her poems can be found in *The Rialto*, *The Interpreter's House*, *The Moth*, *BANSHEE* and will be published in *Under the Radar* and *Neon* later in 2021. She has written three immersive theatre productions for Riptide.

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

## At Once the River

i

When her breath became a sigh we entered incandescent  
two bodies cut flat dark water warm embracing each pore  
deepness a thrill loosening our grip I touched her hand  
it stained my own *twilight colours* she said she spoke in shreds  
eternity filled each lisp and slur I listened host and guest  
till the river became our saviour and slumber: my Lord

ii

her hand was ancient as water itself ankles knees belly waist  
the river swelled to meet her lips *what shadow is this*  
*that spills me here* bitterness dripped from the tips of her hair  
she smiled once and then forever as if meeting a forgotten lover  
*what shadow is this that links me so* a warmth familiar  
as a scent remembered a breath fleeting  
a river sliding the whole of it beyond her reach  
as might an echo in mist

iii

how long did she sleep certainly not an eternity  
after all she's here is she not as miracles go  
a river might turn into a sea of milk this one's blood  
and fire howling she strips to her feet follows her steps  
to the river's edge and leaps eyes raging  
Rosie's no different from fire or water this she knows

iv

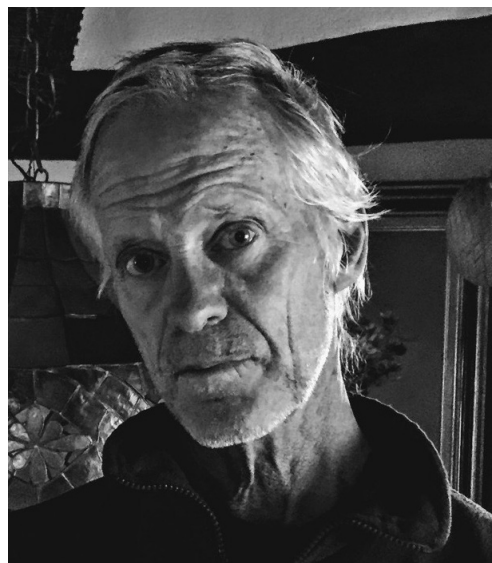
everything the room bed her hands and thoughts  
dissolved in sound a roar a storm in a bell jar's grip  
and *poof* she's ankle-deep in tears the river wails  
to no avail she's deaf and only feels a body's slip  
deeper and deeper the water fills her emptiness  
and leaves her tender as a new-born nymph

v

dusk or dawn whichever sun's an abstraction  
the ferryman too there *is* a bank and on it she kneels  
*this is no river* her thoughts stir like bubbles rising  
the morass is thick of them each shoulders a murmur  
*kiss your index to feel its presence* no finger no lips  
breathless comes the ferryman breathless she steps in

## Scott Elder

Scott Elder lives in France with his three teenage children. Since 2014, his work has been published on both sides of the Atlantic as well as having been placed or commended in numerous poetry competitions in the UK and Ireland. His debut pamphlet, *'Breaking Away'*, was published by Poetry Salzburg in 2015. A first collection, *'Part of the Dark'*, by Dempsey&Windle 2017 (UK), and his second, *'My Hotel'*, is forthcoming in *Salmon Poetry* 2023 (Ireland).





# Ye gods un little fishes...

Emma Purshouse

...thas hot. Eases his feet into the bowl  
trousers rolled, stripped down to a white singlet  
(new un each Christmas off Bilston market),

the ritual tranklements laid out. Towel,  
ointments, creams, crepe bandages, clean socks.  
Give us this day our daily bind, lead us not

into more ulceration. Water sluiced away,  
re-made legs carry him to the cabinet  
like his father before him who art in heaven

he takes a nightcap, a grimace and bare it  
slug o whiskey, sleeps in the chair, rises early  
walks a foundry floor. Forever. And ever.

Amen.

# Pretty Poet Purge Night

Jo Else

Stuff your overblown similes,  
Your gargantuan fat bastard metaphors,  
Take your waddling, flabby words, too obese to stand,  
And stick them up that fabulous pretension you call your life.  
Untouched by anything other than a failed exam,  
You float in middle-class bubbles and Radio 4.

That sprawling ego thinking it can write.  
Drive by like emperors in your 4 by 4's,  
Those novels, those poems, those plays  
Are squeezing small cars off the road,  
And chronicle your non-existent pain.  
Oh dear, you missed your plane,  
They raised the interest rate,  
Susannah's birthday cake was late.  
You talk of inclusivity but your content rules the streets.

We're coming to the gated community of your art,  
Us sharp and starving raggedy ones in masks.  
We're on our way to home invade your skin.

We'll leap over barriers and skewer you lean.



## London Snow

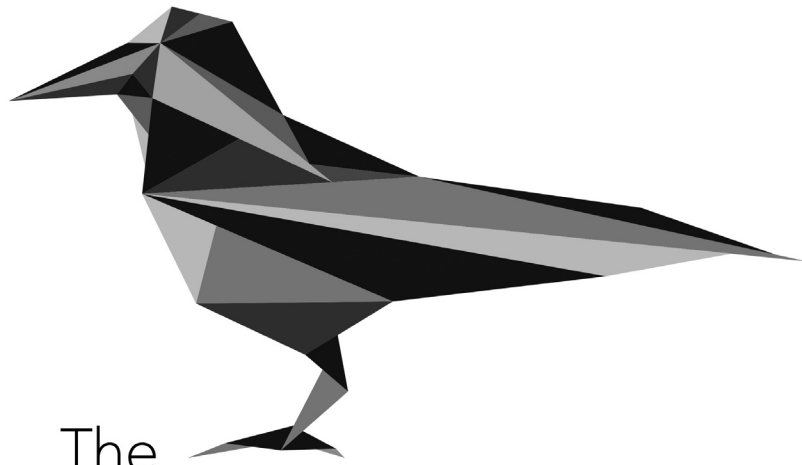
Caroline Hammond

Tell me you would do it all again  
if I asked you: that day, when snow stopped everything  
offices closed and at Charing Cross  
where we met up, as buses came like mammoths  
out of the gloom to pick up people headed home  
the two of us turned back, to stay and see  
a rare thing now: London's towers, bridges, streets  
draped in white and put to bed.

Through Admiralty Arch in St James's Park  
pelicans ruffled flecks that dared to land  
on feathers even sharper white.  
A faded sign by the pond said these birds  
can live as long as fifty years,  
twice the time since we found them there  
by chance, on one of our first London walks,  
when there was still so much to learn about you.

Crowds still shopped on Oxford Street, boots got wet  
from the slush, one reached for the other's hand  
and said: *keep on, this part won't last long.*  
Made good time to the gates of Regent's Park  
where we laughed at the astonished joy  
of dogs that walked there every day.  
Roses gaunt with age leaned from their beds  
and snow grew like bread above flowerpots.

The sun had set by the time we reached the zoo,  
stood beside the fence that once held Withnail's wolves,  
when they could still afford a London rent.  
Unmarked snow multiplied the electric lights  
so evening was lighter than the afternoon.  
The sky had cleared, later there would be stars,  
so we set off again, made for Primrose Hill,  
climbed until there was only earth and sky.



The  
Gloucestershire  
Poetry Society

**#GloucestershirePoetrySociety**

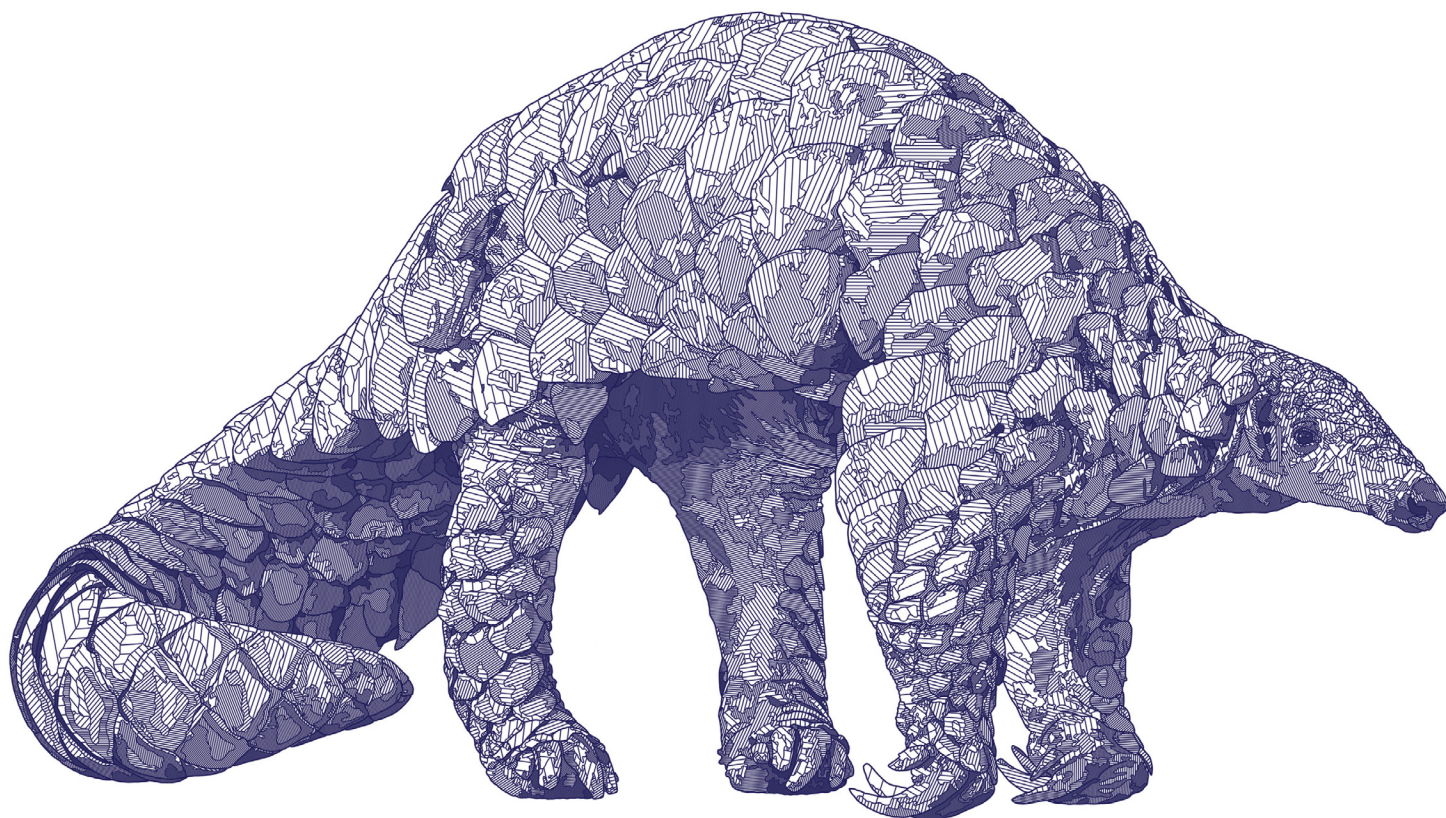
**#ChangingLivesThroughPoetry**

**Twitter: @GlosPoetSociety**

**Facebook @TheGloucestershirePoetrySociety**

**[www.thegloucestershirepoetrysociety.com](http://www.thegloucestershirepoetrysociety.com)**





**Pangolin**

**Rebecca Brindley**

Pangolins are the worlds most trafficked animal and are critically endangered.

My work shows the pangolin drawn in clean, alternate lines that showcase its beauty and complex form. The blue tone can represent sadness and loneliness or calmness and serenity, which highlights the uncertain future of the pangolin.

This was a digital drawing that took around 30 hours to create and only one copy was ever made.

This drawing was created specifically for the Sketch for Survival initiative by Explorers Against Extinction in 2020. It was chosen as a finalist for the Invitational 100 to be displayed in a touring exhibition culminating at the Oxo Gallery in London.

This piece was eventually sold at auction with all proceeds going to Explorers Against Extinction.



Departed Company is a design studio run by Rebecca, specialising in blackwork, linework and imagery with a strong graphic identity. Our artwork portfolio reflects the inspiration we find in the world around us - even the more macabre aspects.

Departed Company aims to reflect the beauty in everything - especially the unexpected.

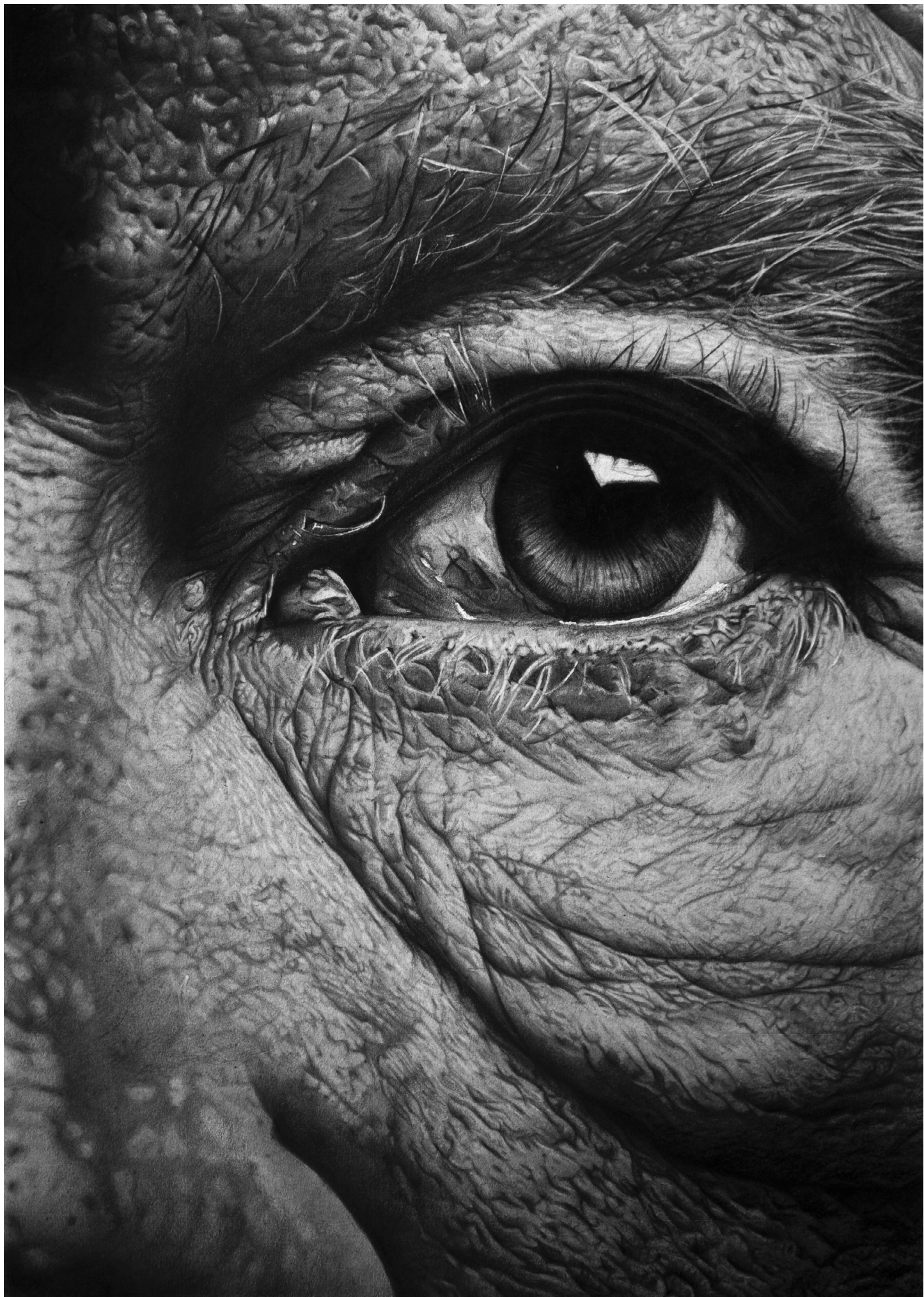
Departed Company was born out of Rebecca's obsession with all things art and design. Rebecca creates artwork based on her love of nature and the darker aspects of life.

From large scale acrylic paintings on canvas to tiny detailed pen illustrations, her work encompasses a variety of mediums.

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**Bill**

**Sagar Gondhali**

When I started pencil sketching, it didn't take me much time to decide to go for realism. I wanted to put out my thoughts and ideas in a very visually appealing way. Realism has a certain visual impact and aliveness to it. To create it, doesn't only take a great set of skills but you must work on yourself to develop certain qualities like patience, focus and more importantly perseverance. Over time, I have worked on many realistic drawings. I call them study drawings. Because my way of learning is through the very process of doing, I choose my subjects based on what I can learn from them, what's there to explore? It can be a subject, a technique, an approach or the very materials that I am using.

I find human eyes are the most intriguing aspect of a human being. They are not just a visual device with which to see, but a medium with which to converse with the outside world. At the same time we can look into someone's eyes and see many things. There is something which is being said by the person, something which is held back, something which is silent and I believe, if you look closely, you can see the very being that is peeping out through those eyes. There is a whole world available to see if we are willing to observe it and I draw from that.

Bill is a hyper realistic eye sketch of an old man, created in graphite with as much details and skill as possible. It has great depths and textures, very white reflections and pitch black shadows. I didn't only want it to be a sketch of an aged person, but to have a soul and the grace of an old man. I wanted it to reflect the experience of a lifetime, yet an eternal aliveness of the being behind it. I have made it larger than the actual size of an eye so that it can show much more than what we generally observe in someone's eye.

While sketching Bill, I experienced a trance like no other. I would start it and get lost in the process in no time. I would often find myself not drawing it but being a witness of a process unfolding in front of me by itself. I spent over 200 hours and I could still see room for more and better. This drawing has turned out more rewarding than I thought and I am very proud to present it to you.



I am a hyper realistic pencil sketch artist based in Pune, India.

Realism is a skilled work which requires patience and perseverance. I find it is something which doesn't only challenge me creatively, but also helps me grow as a person. I am a civil engineer by education and I took up drawing much later in life. I picked up a pencil one day and this love affair has continued for nearly three years now. I spend hundreds of hours on an artwork, pushing it to perfection and the results are very rewarding.

I am in a way an outsider to the art world as I am not formally trained, but my passion for art always keeps me motivated and brings out the best. Though I try to avoid outside influence and keep my art as an authentic expression of myself, I do like to cherish and appreciate amazing artworks coming from artist communities. I started teaching pencil realism, some time back, to impart my years of self devised learning and I am seeing magnificent progress in my students, which has been a very enriching experience for me.

I am now looking forward to more opportunities to make art a fulltime journey of my life.

Instagram.com @\_sagarart  
www.sagargondhali.com





**I May Dress Fancy, But Don't Call Me Bird**

**Sarah Arnett**





I May Dress Fancy, But Don't Call Me Bird is my new, limited edition giclee print. Available from £260.00.

March is International Women's History month, and I wanted to create a piece that embodies everything about my work, my love of fashion, women and nature.

The title, don't call me Bird is to call out all misogynistic references. It's time for us all to start using the right language.

My pieces always have subtle references to the 'muse' portraying strong women and characters from fiction and film.

sarah  
arnett

Sarah Arnett is an acclaimed contemporary artist, illustrator, and designer, specialising in fine art, textiles, and interiors. She is known for her fabulously eclectic aesthetic: expect colour and exoticism, busy pattern and bold ornament, a vision of pure escapism. An attention to process is at the heart of everything Sarah creates; it's been evolving since her early days as a weaver and her fire for experiment is still burning. Her colourful artworks begin with an initial, hand-drawn idea. Working from her studio in Brighton, Sarah combines these sketches with digital illustration, painting, and original photography, layering as she goes.

Educated in the tactile arts of weaving and dying, Sarah's use of digital processes is meticulous and highly skilled. A kind of reverse taxidermy, every tiny element is hand drawn and gradually built-up to create a rich and complex final image. The plumage on a bird is never just an illustration of plumage, but the hand-drawn creation of each and every feather, intricately layered for depth, texture, and delicate beauty.

These digital drawings are then combined with hand-painted backgrounds and self-taken photographs, which create that surreal mix of the actual and the imagined that Sarah is known for. Each work is a collage of endless ingredients, painstakingly composed onto a range of tactile surfaces including paper, textiles, lacquered wood and concrete. Finally, Sarah breathes dazzling life into her work with hand-cut sections of gold leaf, antique sequins, vintage beads, and crystals to create luxury texture and finish.

The work of Sarah Arnett takes you from the black and white of reality to the vibrant technicolour of fantasy, like Dorothy drifting into Oz. Step into a world of the imagination, where Regency Palaces are bedecked with jewels and mystical creatures roam through exotic lands. It's a stage-set for theatre, it's the glitter of Hollywood, it's the dizzying dream of poetry.

[www.saraharnett.co.uk](http://www.saraharnett.co.uk)  
[@studiosaraharnett](https://www.instagram.com/studiosaraharnett)





**Leaving Here**

**Steve Samsara**





I'm Steve Samsara, an Artist, Illustrator and Sculptor.

If you want to know who I am and what is in my heart, just look at my drawings.

I prefer to stay in the background and let my creatures exist in return.

[www.stevesamsara.com](http://www.stevesamsara.com)

Facebook.com @samsara.samsara.56829

Instagram @ stevesamsara







**Buckholt Wood**

**Susan Cook**



This photograph was taken in Buckholt woods, near Cranham in Gloucestershire, UK. It is one of my favourite woods to walk in – there is a circle of woods around the Cranham and Sheepscombe valleys, all of them ancient, all of them have sudden dips from gullies or old quarry works that send the path twisting so that you lose sense of direction even within a relatively small perimeter. These woods are full of dog violets, wood anemones, bluebells and wild garlic in the spring and patches of wild strawberries and raspberries in the summer. I walk here in all seasons and in all weather.

Often, in the woods I practise a meditation as I walk. It's a challenge. My head is so often busy with this or that, or commenting endlessly on all that I see and hear. I look at the quiet space before me and I discipline myself to walk into that space without littering it with my thoughts. I still myself, I quieten myself, I just listen and I become aware of the holiness of that moment and that space. And it is like suddenly knowing the truth of a tree, or buzzard keening overhead, or water trickling down a brook, and not just the truth about them.

The day I took this photograph was a dank, foggy October day. Very few people were out. And it was terrifically muddy underfoot. I love days like this – I love the way sound is deadened, the way the drops of light drizzle and moisture in the air catch on the leaves and create a quiet music as they drip from leaf to leaf to leaf as if on a glockenspiel in the trees; I love the way the well-known becomes a place of mystery and strangeness, and the softness that is a counter to our highly contrasted and saturated world. This puddle was muddy but even a muddy puddle reflects if you get down to its level. The orange autumn leaves in it caught my eye and as I crouched down, the other reflected misty world appeared as if woven in-between the leaves. And, you know, all of this was just there right below my feet. Passers-by so easily missing this wonder – just an unattractive, muddy puddle, after all. It was all so quiet and still, just the sound of water-droplets above me.



Susan has worked as a midwife for many years. Walking solo in the countryside is what re-balances her. She particularly loves walking at dawn and dusk, out of and into darkness, for the silence and solitude and, of course, wonderful light. It has been a personal project over the years learning to work with different kinds of light in her photography. She would say she is certainly not there yet, there is so much to learn, but she is enjoying thoroughly the journey.

Photography has become another way of seeing – capturing wonders tiny and vast, whether it be a great, sweeping vista, or the golden dance of the stamen of apple blossom. There is so much wonder and this is what Susan's passion is – sharing the wonder in nature and encouraging others to open their eyes and see – the strange, the ordinary, even the so-called 'ugly' can be magnificent when seen through new eyes. She carries a magnifying glass everywhere she goes now – this and the lens of her camera opens up new worlds. And her knees are generally dirty from looking at the world from different angles – what is it like to be a mouse in a barley-field?, how do the beetles view the bluebells over their head?, and what does the world look like from the lip of this puddle?

[susiew9@hotmail.com](mailto:susiew9@hotmail.com)





**Deer Print**

**Zoe Kingston**



I am currently attending collagraph classes with artist printmaker Sue Brown, [www.suebrownprintmaker.blogspot.com](http://www.suebrownprintmaker.blogspot.com) where I created this series of prints from a self-made plaster plate.

The prints are made using an etching press and hawthorn inks.

Some prints have been made using a viscosity inking process.

I am really enjoying exploring printmaking techniques, particularly collagraph, I enjoy using different textures and marks to create my work.

I am inspired by light and space and have been developing my drawing using a 'walking, drawing' technique, making observations quickly whilst walking in the beautiful countryside around Stroud (I was introduced to this technique by another fantastic artist, Maxine Felton). I am aiming to develop these drawings into collagraphs over the next year.



Zoe Kingston is an artist teacher living in Stroud, Gloucestershire. Studied at Fine art at UWIC specialising in Fine Art Photography.

Zoe has been teaching art and Photography at Secondary schools for 15 years.

"I am currently reconnecting with my own creative work after focusing on my career and family for a number of years. Lockdown allowed me some time to begin developing my skills in printmaking."

[Zoekstudio3@gmail.com](mailto:Zoekstudio3@gmail.com)







**Ivy Wong-Tebbitts**

**Production Coordinator**

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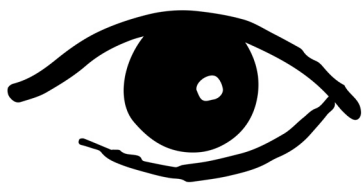
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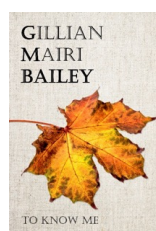
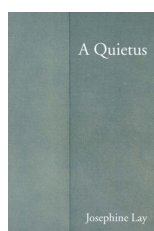
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# Thank You!

4 is the magic number, well for this edition is certainly is! Edition 4 is a cornucopia of creative talent and I hope that you, our fabulous readers, enjoy it as much as I loved to create it.

Congratulations go out to the successful artists and creatives included in this publication. Thanks for helping to make it such a wonderful celebration of creativity. Thank you, also, to everyone that submitted their work for consideration. The high standard of work received continues to challenge the selection process.

Thanks to Rebecca Brindley for her superb cover illustration.

Thanks also go to Amit Dey for creating the eBook versions of this publication.

Contact Amit at [amitdey2528@gmail.com](mailto:amitdey2528@gmail.com) or [www.in.linkedin.com/in/amitdey1](https://www.in.linkedin.com/in/amitdey1)

Thank you to all of you that have purchased this publication. A percentage of your payments will be donated in an equal split between the our two charity partners, ClientEarth and The Nelson Trust. Your payments will make a real difference in protecting the environment and supporting vulnerable people in Gloucestershire.

And finally, my last thank you is an emotional and painful one and goes out to my father, Peter Conway, who sadly has a very short time left to live.

*Dad, It was you that set me on a career path in the arts and sparked my thirst for exploring the unknown. You were a magical fixer of things and generous beyond means. You are loved dearly and will be greatly missed.*

Jason Conway  
Founder and Editor in Chief  
of Steel Jackdaw

# SJ Edition 5 Out in January 2022

Steel Jackdaw is a quartely publication and the fifth edition will arrive in January 2022. To stay informed about the magazine, please bookmark our website and sign up to our newsletter at [www.steeljackdaw.com](http://www.steeljackdaw.com).

We're confident that edition five will continue to set the bar for the power of creative expression and inspire people to do good in the world.

We have made the decision to open up the magazine to include advertising, which is open to individuals, groups, businesses or organisations to promote themselves. However, they need to be ethical and either support creatives, be sustainable or help the local or wider community.

Help us to be better and tell us what you think. We LOVE our loyal readers and value their feedback.

SJ is a celebration of the transformative power of creative expression and positive action. Please help, however you can, by reaching out to support the talented creatives featured here. Take the time to make contact and say that you enjoyed their work, share their links with your contacts, buy their work, hire them to run workshops, or commission new pieces from them. If you're an artist or creative, please send in your work for consideration.

Steel Jackdaw has big dreams and we need your support by sharing the news about our editions with your friends and contacts. The more we grow as a publication, the more good we can achieve.

In times of great struggle, understanding, compassion and love can shine through the darkness. Remember that we all have a unique light to illuminate our world and a voice that deserves to be heard.

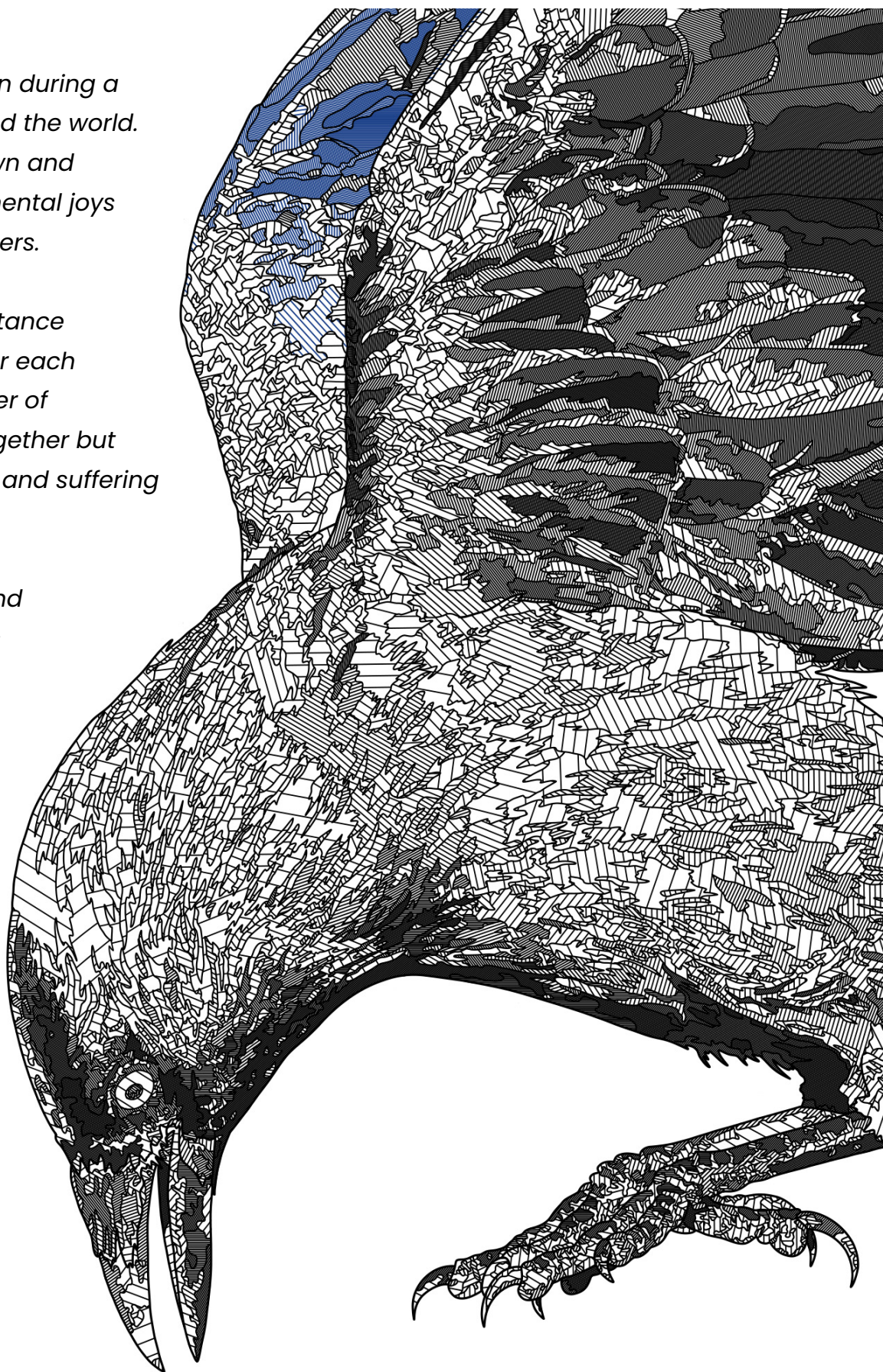


*Steel Jackdaw was born during a pandemic that changed the world. It forced us to slow down and appreciate the fundamental joys of life. What really matters.*

*We saw the vital importance of nature and caring for each other. We saw the power of communities to pull together but we also witnessed fear and suffering on a global scale.*

*Health, love, equality and compassion are what's needed to rebuild a better future for us all.*

*Jason Conway*



# Steel Jackdaw

An arts magazine with heart, celebrating the power of creative expression and positive action

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