

2017 Poetry Pamphlet Prize Adjudication

Thank you to everyone who entered the poetry pamphlet competition. This has become an exciting competition over the last couple of years with consistently high quality writing. Congratulations to all those who made it onto the very impressive longlist:

David Olsen
Reuben Woolley
Jonathan Richards
Miranda Peake
Sharon Larkin
Maria Bennett
Jill Teague
Mark Blaney
Cian Murphy
Christian Wethered
Fran Smith
David Batten
Suzannah Houston
Cari Gabbard
David Gilbert
Joanne Stryker
Carl Griffin
Shelley Tracey
Janice Booth
Mair De-Gare Pitt
Ashleigh Davies
Kathleen Bell
Gavin Goodwin
A C Clarke
K V Skene
John Paul Davies
David Mark Williams
Giles Goodland
Elizabeth Lewis Williams
Joy Wassell Timms
Lindsay Fursland
Pamela Johnson
Karen Robbie
Robin Houghton
Malka al-Haddad
Margaret Wilmot
Lynne Taylor
Bernadette Gallagher
Sue Mara
Frances-Anne King
Will Daunt
Alice Kinsella
Wisty Thomas
Eleni Cay
Ellen Davies
Scott Elder
Susan Watson
Alex Josephy
Lesley Burt

Rodney Wood
Vivienne Tregenza
Jacqueline Haskell
Kate O'Halloran
Jean Harrison
Tista Austin
Sarah Macleod

Wrestling these entries down to a shortlist was quite a task, but those that made it were:

- | | | |
|-----|---|--|
| 1. | <i>an ache in each welcoming kiss</i> | Maria Isakova Bennett &
Michael Brown |
| 2. | <i>Elephants. Fragile.</i> | David Gilbert |
| 3. | <i>The Fast Bright Life of My Lovely Daughter</i> | Joanne Stryker |
| 4. | <i>Blue Rain</i> | Gavin Goodwin |
| 5. | <i>War Baby</i> | A C Clarke |
| 6. | <i>The Long Wave Broadcast</i> | David Mark Williams |
| 7. | <i>Season Tickets</i> | Giles Goodland |
| 8. | <i>Embroidering the Earth</i> | Joy Wassell Timms |
| 9. | <i>All the Relevant Gods</i> | Robin Houghton |
| 10. | <i>Traces of Herringbone Paths</i> | Alex Josephy |
| 11. | <i>Weighing the Distances</i> | Jean Harrison |

Even harder was sifting these these extremely strong entries down to the final four winning pamphlets, but Ian felt that four really stood out and these are:

David Gilbert — *Elephants. Fragile.*

This collection mingles the real and a surrealism of the understated Magritte kind to insinuate, with carefully modulated images and rhythms, a subtle disquiet which tests the boundaries of mental health and 'normal' apprehension.

Gavin Goodwin — *Blue Rain*

The poet draws upon free verse forms in the tradition of William Carlos Williams to denote urban experience. Its register is often that of social realism but it expands that genre with references to other kinds of discourse such as architectural criticism, in the form of an essay from *Design* magazine, and sociology as in its reference to *A Study of Corporate Power and Professional Influence in the Welfare State*. It is impressive in creating, in that way, an original political poetry.

A.C. Clarke — *War Baby*

The pamphlet uses the form of the sequence to create an impressive internal coherence that powerfully evokes a childhood experience of London in the Second World War. This is the poetry of memory but vividly specific and completely unsentimental.

Robin Houghton — *All the Relevant Gods*

The pamphlet has an impressive range of reference which bestows a strong sense of authority on its tone. It is geographically various but sure-footed in its evocation of here versus elsewhere, and it manages to ground its more abstract references, to science and music, in a vivid concreteness, so that it deploys the specific to hint evocatively at larger concerns.

Congratulations to the winners and we look forward to publishing their pamphlets as our first publications in 2018.

Ian Gregson & Jan Fortune