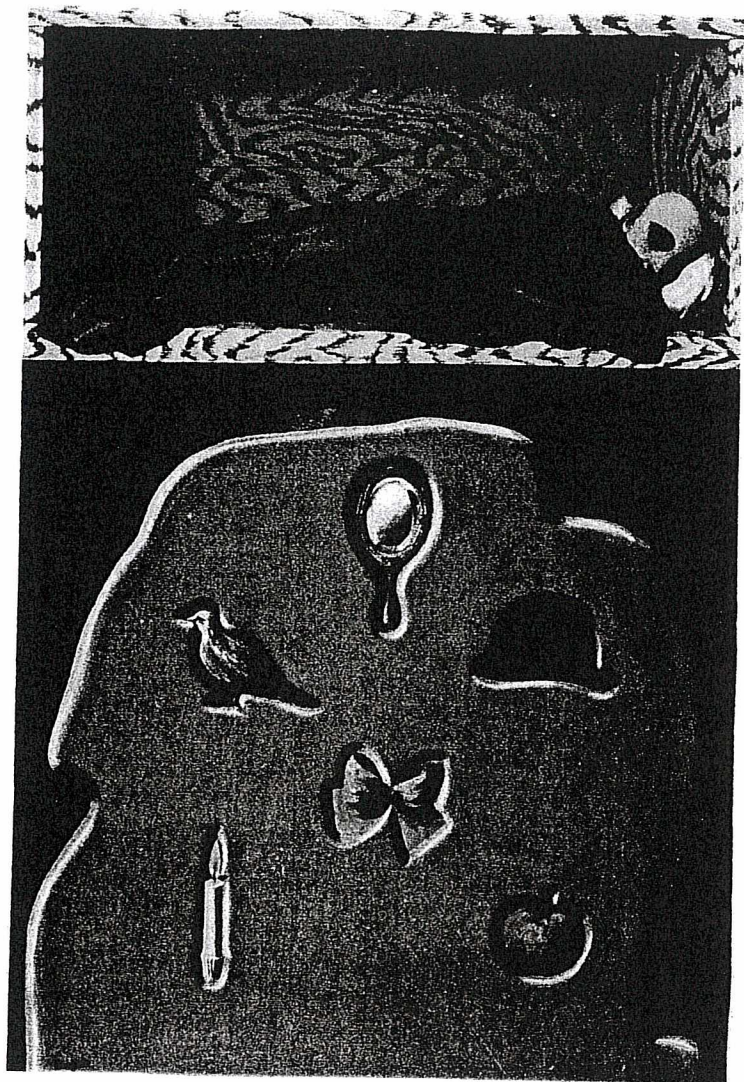


Selected
poems
from



The Mountbatten School

POETRY
FESTIVALS



The Mountbatten School's Annual Poetry Festival was started in 1973 by Isobel Butler in order to encourage pupils to take pleasure both in writing their own poetry and in performing published poems to an audience.

Eileen Betteridge then encouraged a generation of young poets to pursue poetry writing through her inspirational Poetry Workshops.

The school's English Faculty has since striven, through storms of change, to keep the ship afloat – with Sylvia Curtis ensuring that thousands of poems were safely stowed, hence our ability to publish this 'Hall of Fame' selection. My thanks also go to all the English teachers who, throughout the years, have encouraged all pupils to take part in the writing and performance of poetry in the classroom and on stage.

Above all I would like to thank all the young poets who have given us all such pleasure in reading their work over the years.

Will Jones
(Head of English 2008)

***Strange
And
Startling***

DAYDREAM

*... Battle of Hastings, 1066 ...
A bright cluster of stiff-jointed warriors
Teeters, contorted in a frozen prance,
Pinned flat to an ink-thumbed page.*

*... William the Conqueror ...
As the muddied page melts to reveal
A trampled, bloodied landscape,
The figures ease their time-fused limbs
And the battle takes up its thread.*

*... King Harold of England ...
Desperate men grit their compassion
And carve fellow men into
Carnage slabs to pave their way home
To farm, field and forge alike.*

*... Broke the sacred oath ...
Farmers, labourers, blacksmiths and boys
Cower in the privacy of their helmets,
Smelling their own blood
Above the metal's sweat.*

*... An arrow in the eye ...
Each man sees his own feud alone -
His foothold means a print in history through sons to come;
But the carrion birds' view
Shows one cluster topple.*

*... The Norman Conquest ...
As they fall they freeze,
Sewn into rough canvas;
And laid out on a grubby page.*

Nick Stedman



LACUS SOMNIORUN

Into darkness
Drawn away from the lake of Dreams
Drifting reed craft in the rushes
Silently treads the paths of exile,
Winding with the river
Across the arid border-lands
Towards the sea with many names.
A cold sea:
Mare cognitum,
Its waters restless under a waiting moon.
And far away,
Destined to become no more than a memory,
The lake of Dreams captures forever our Innisfree
And holds it deeper than duskligh
Or thoughts too far from reality.
Is there no way back?
Even the wind has forgotten.

Katherine Goodwin

An Explanation of Why Interior Designers Are Insane

So this is the kitchen is it?
I'm sure we could do a lot with this.

You said you wanted cool colours.
Peppermint green would be perfect on the walls
If one pasted lilac-purple on the ceiling
Added abstract art,
Tiled the floor
And chucked in a good old marble fireplace.

The main feature could be the arch
With chrome sheets and flourishes of gleaming gold leaf.
Hang a glitterball from it and see the effect.
Several disco lights -
Surround sound.
Knock this wall down and there'll be room
For your own bar!

Arrgh! What a vile piece of furniture!
Remove it quick! I feel quite faint.
Don't you people have any taste?
Can I open my eyes yet?
Thank you.

Oh! Oh! Behold that wondrous sight of divine light.
Lava lamp, you say?
Amazing!
We must base the room on it.
Suspend it from a blue nylon string.
Knock down this wall for a giant perspex window
And then bash down this wall
Just for the extra space.
Paint the rubble pink.
Totem pole here.

And they said I was mad!
Et voila!
So. What do you think?

By Antonia Russell-Clark

Full Moon

*The full and glowing moon's light,
Bathes the travelling man.
As he begins to scratch,
The long hairs on his hands.*

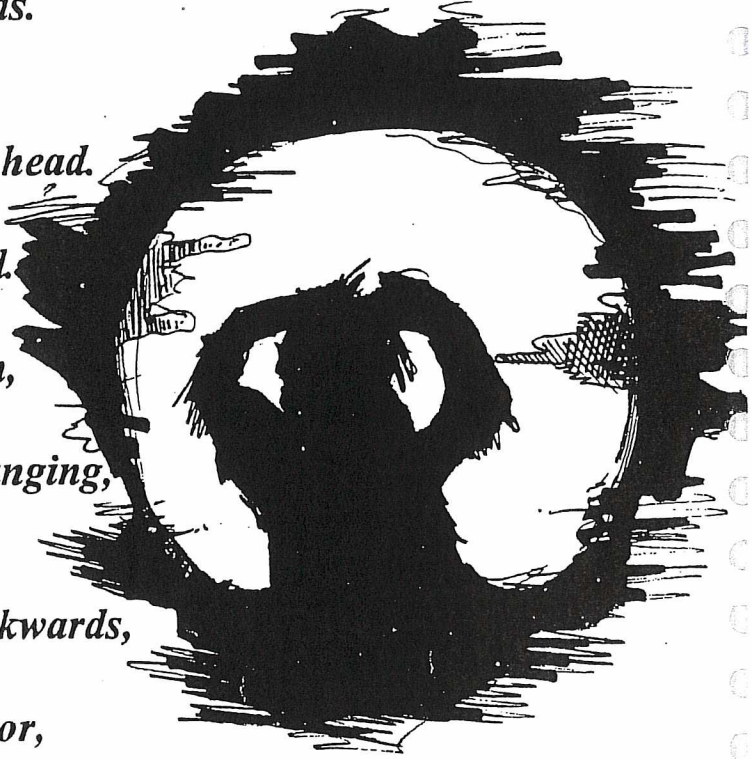
*He falls upon his knees,
With the pain that fills his head.
Already he feels sorrow,
For those who will be dead.*

*His face contorts with pain,
As terror takes a grip.
Then he feels his body changing,
His clothes begin to rip.*

*His snarling head tilts backwards,
He lets out a painful cry.
And looks in hate and terror,
At the pale globe in the sky.*

*For when a full moon glimmers,
The pack runs thicker by one.
But this strange and different creature,
Is a decent humans son.*

Steven Tudor



SUMMER CAMP 1932

Bronzed, blond and blue eyed
They chatter under the sun,
Khaki clad they converge by the campfire
And sing,
Sing praise to their Fuhrer.
These budding thorns of a blooming reality
Sing.
"My little petals", he said proudly,
And they smiled and saluted;
Home thoughts dissolved by propaganda,
(Goebbels, the family man, saw to that).
"Children of the Fatherland", he calls,
And they cheer and shout
"Sieg Heil".
Thrusting arms proudly forward,
They sing,
Obedient servants of the Third Reich,
Sing,
Hitler's little children,
Sing.

Elizabeth Bryant

Birth of a Dream

***Gently, so as not to startle the sleeper,
The mind opens to the universe.
Infinity prompts the imagination
Hallucinations from the subconscious
Become temporarily tangible.
Deprived of visual data
The brain activates the minds eye
Stored images of reality
Merge with fabulous ideas.
The fantastic and the prosaic
Combine to produce a virtual experience,
A dream, the fruit of cerebral loins.***

Thomas Rapley

On a High

Dainty petals, salmon pink
Caress a creamy virgin stalk
Sugary stamens shimmer within,
So perfect.
And, mutants of the forest floor.

Mottled fungi nestle low,
A hobgoblin's paradise,
Crooked grass stems.
A lepricorn dances,
His nimble limbs sharp

Deep in auburn
Elfin hair
A frosted ground
For fairy feet
Icy movements pulse the earth
Hazy vapour
Silken twine
A glistening yarn, newly spun.

Pearly dew drops;
Lilac discs are tears of light
Opaquely vague
A glaze of life, a precious jewel.

Vapour that has the sweetest essence
A secret scent of untouched mauve
Piercing clarity weaves inertly
Fading into shadows dull.

To taste the air is deep delight
So tiptoe through these precious sprays
Of crocuses and tulips mellow
Revel in this land of glory;
A glistening land
A sparkling place where I can live
And you can live
Without surviving.

Nina Collins

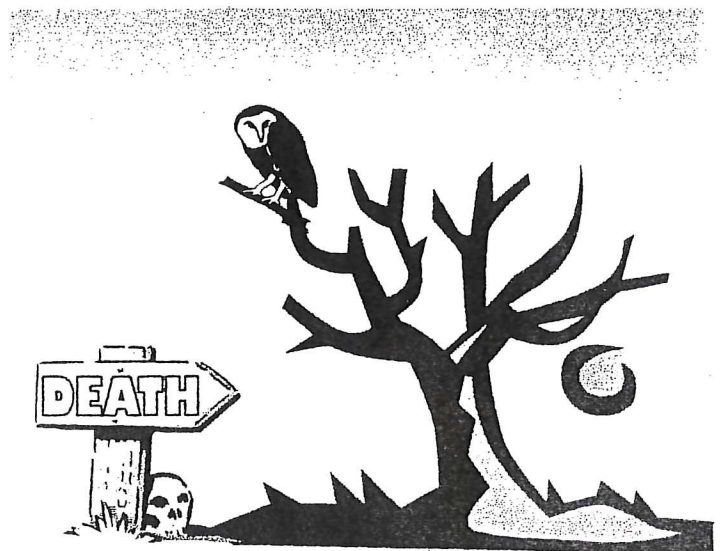
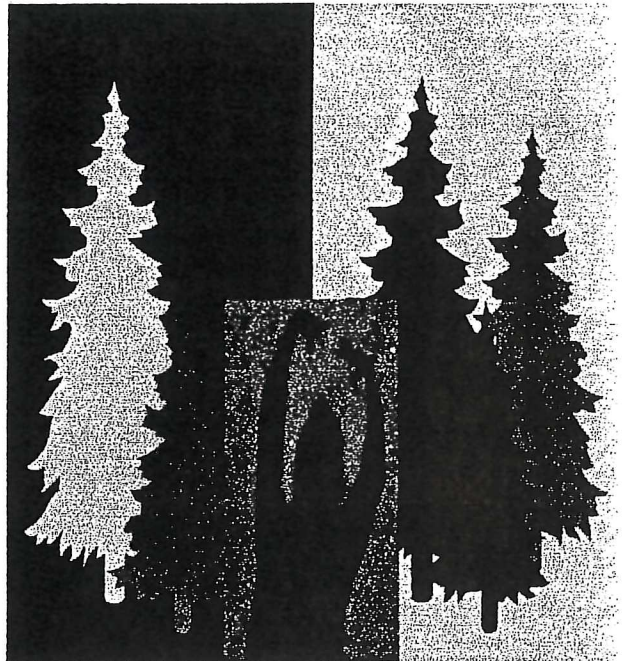
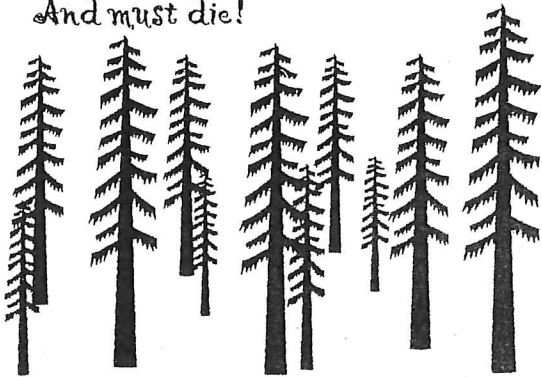
Midnight Wood

Dark in thee wood the shadows stir,
What do you see?
Mist and moonlight, star and cloud.
Hunchback shapes that creep and crowd.
From tree to tree.

Dark in the wood a thin wind calls,
What do you hear?
Frond and fern and clutching grasses,
Snigger as you pass,
Whispering fear.

Dark in the wood a river flows,
What does it hide?
Otter, water rat, old tin can,
Bones of fish and bones of man,
Drift in the tide.

Dark in the wood the owlets shriek,
What do they cry?
Choose between the wood and river,
Who comes here is lost forever,
And must die!



Neil Davis

The Stalker

I see her,
She doesn't see me.
She just walks,
Unaware of the danger,
Unaware of me.
She would have stayed home if she knew
What today had in store for her;
What I had in store for her.

For months I have watched her,
Her every move,
Her every breath.
She is mine and I study her closely.
Every inch of her body, I know,
More than mine.
I have been in her house, her room, her bed,
But she is unaware
Of me.
I am her shadow.
I am always there;
Watching, planning, waiting.

I know her whole life.
When it began,
When it will end.
If she won't accept me
She won't accept anyone.
I'll make sure.

By Tom Lee

ANGELS IN THE ATTIC

The angels in the attic
Are crying,
Unheard,
Cursed with eternity.
On their beds of straw
They lie,
Chill-limbed,
Heady,
Pale
And stiff,
Whilst nightly pours
The silent ladled light
Of moonbeams
Through the panes,
The dusty diamond-panes,
Dirty outside,
Never cleaned.
The angels cry
Insomnia
With their saltless tears.
The rain sheets down
Outside.

Wendy Parker.



THE MARTIANS EATING

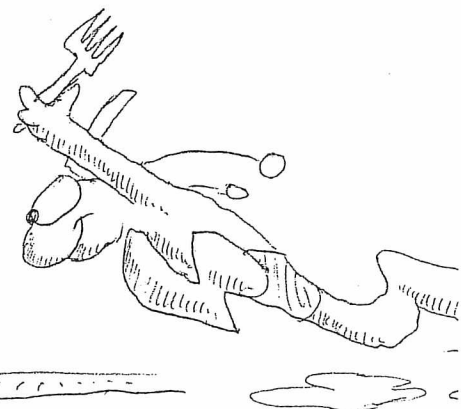
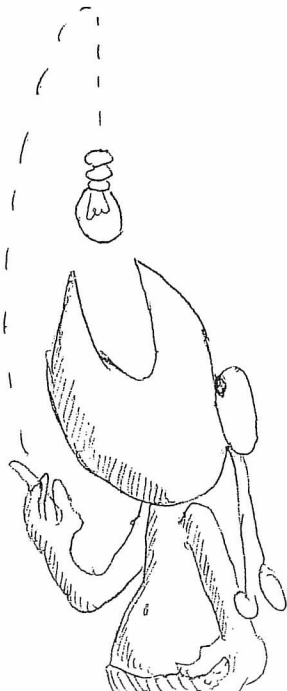
Old tin cans
And dustbin lids,
Old chair legs
And ink of squids.

Oily car engines,
Old fish bones,
Used-up batteries
And hard gall stones.

Cold light bulbs
And spider meat,
That's what all
The Martians eat.



Samuel Pead



Fallen Angel

Fallen angel, broken soul, still revengeful, on patrol.
Tied in fires, knotted in chains, king of liars and Hades' plains.
Thirst for power, lusting control, give him an hour and he'll devour your soul.

You will fear, but not see, you may hear and not believe
He's still there, behind your eyes, in the air and in your lies.

If you deny, he'll come in, if you defy, he'll play your sin.
You will act, he will maim, you're not backed to play his game.
Like a puppet on a string, you will live in Satan's ring,
No more holy hymns you'll sing. Bow down before the rightful king!

Sarah Williams

THE OTHER LIFE

The teddy bear is ten feet tall,
It scrapes its head on the ceiling.
At night it unzips its furry skin
And steps out as bare as a sheep,
To move with night echoings
Slow shadows, a cold silence,
All gloomy and magenta – maroon coloured.

One night out walking
He met a fire that scorched and burnt
The ends of his golden-amber fur,
Fed on his fluffy stuffing,
Left an aroma of charcoal
And a husk of debris,
Soot on his pawprints.

Natalie Cresswell



GEORGE AND THE DRAGON

Set in slumber,
Soft hide rhythmically rising,
Warm, moist breath echoing sleep,
Vision of power and beauty welded,
Curled in heavy lidded retreat.

Trotting through fragrant cedar grove,
Fearless knight on sculptured stead,
Lances of sunlight piercing armour,
Hungry sword edge craving to feed.

Between the dreams fears are burning,
And memories of days long passed,
Senses awakened! Tucked wings stretching!
Faceted eyes peep from lids of brass.

Heart leaps! Grey eyes shielded!
Shady cedars become searing light,
Valour vanquished, doubts succeeding,
Swish of tail troubles his sight.

Arching upward, dragon rises
On gold leaf haunches, with bronze lace wings,
Proclaiming proudly his thunderous message,
A golden masthead to all living things.

Burnt sunlight bleeding over meadows,
Scorched hair and skin scenting the night,
Bullying breezes buffeting wing span,
As torn and weary they continue to fight.