

WORDSMITHS NEWSLETTER

22.1

February, 2022

Welcome to the first issue of Wordsmiths newsletter for 2022. It's a new (another) Covid year and I guess like many people, my initial new year resolution has been to go to ground while the Omicron variant rages. I have written a few poems, but mostly I've been listening to classical music. During a week in January, ABC Classic fm concentrated on the works of Gerald Finzi, a British composer. Finzi was an agnostic of Jewish descent, described as "very shy, but full of poetry". During the 1930s he devoted himself to composing and apple growing and amassed a library of 3000 volumes of English poetry, philosophy and literature, and a collection (some 700 volumes including books, manuscripts and printed scores) of 18th-century English music. He found solace in the poetry of Thomas Traherne, and set the poetry of Thomas Hardy and Christina Rossetti to music. Finzi and his wife also catalogued and edited the works of poet Ivor Gurney after Gurney was committed to a mental hospital. Finzi also wrote large scale choral works, using text by poets Edmund Blunden and William Wordsworth.

I have been intrigued to read more about Finzi and his love of poetry. His music is sensitive and as a chorister, I'm hoping one day I might sing in a performance of one of Finzi's large scale choral works.

When poetry is put to music the result is food for the soul. Like Finzi I do have a library of poetry books (and keep buying more), however a library of 3000 books is beyond my wildest dreams...but I'm working on it.

Leigh Hay

MEETINGS

Peter White led the December meeting, which had to be conducted online. The traditional sharing of Christmas lunch together also had to be eaten online. Wordsmiths attending had emailed Peter their poems to be workshopped

and the afternoon was enhanced by poets reading their favourite Christmas poem. Hopefully for Christmas 2022, Wordsmiths will be able to meet in person.

FORTHCOMING MEETINGS

Given the surge in Covid transmission, meetings will be held via Zoom for the foreseeable future. The first meeting for 2022 will be **Saturday 12th of February**, via Zoom. Please email Carolyn Vimpani the poem you wish to workshop by Thursday 10th of February.

Month	Leader
February 12th	Maree S
March 12th	Peter Baker
April 9th	Janette

LAUNCH OF SILVER LININGS



Maree Silver, Ann Lock, Janette Fernando

On Sunday, December 12, 2021, the Silver Linings anthology was launched at the Box Hill Community Arts Centre. Edited by Maree Silver and Janette Fernando, and published by Poetica Christi Press, the anthology was launched by Rev Ann Lock CT, Director, WellSpring Centre. The launch was well attended given Covid restrictions and

proximity to Christmas, and musical items were presented by Cathy Altmann (violin) and Angela Chandler (piano). Poets who read their works included Maree Silver, Carolyn Vimpani, Cath Barnard, Leigh Hay, Mairi Neil, Janette Fernando, Peter Baker, Janine Johnston, Cathy Altmann, Jennifer Chrystie, Carolyn Ingvarson, Richenda Rudman and Tru Dowling (Winner of the 2021 competition, pictured below.)



After the launch, over afternoon tea poets, friends and family had the opportunity to chat and browse PCP's book table.

Copies of *Silver Linings* are available for \$20 by emailing Maree Silver : poeticachristi@optushome.com.au

MEMBER NEWS

Cath Barnard's new book *Learning to Listen* will be launched by Rev. Mark Dunn on Sunday 27th February at 2.30 pm at Manningham Uniting Church, 109 Wood Street, Templestowe, also featuring Concert Pianist Quilby Nelson.

We offer our condolences to **Joy Chellew**, whose son Peter died on Christmas day after a battle with cancer.

Congratulations to **Janette Fernando** whose poem *Worlds Apart* was awarded third prize in the Society of Women Writers Tasmania Robyn Mathison Poetry Prize.

MEMBERSHIP DUES

Annual membership fees of \$25 or \$20 concession (reduced due to Zoom meetings) are now due. Direct transfers can be made - Name : Poetica Christi Press, BSB: 633-000 Acc: 118162593. Please see the attached reply slip for details.

KARDIA FORMATION 2022

Expanding Perspectives for Spiritual Direction – Conversation with Margaret Silf - The Great Transformation 3 Feb, 10 March, 31 March,

7.00-9.00 pm. During these conversations, Margaret will invite you to explore and share what the hope of spiritual evolution means to you, and how the global experience of meltdown during 2020/21 and beyond has reshaped you, and all of us, as participants in planetary community. For more information : <https://www.kardia.com.au/expanding-perspectives-spiritual-direction/margaret-silf-3/>

VICTORIAN WRITERS CENTRE

Poetic Landscapes – Writing Place in Poetry

with Evelyn Araluen: 07 May - 10:00 to 4:00 pm, 176 Little Lonsdale St, Melbourne.

To write a landscape is to enter into relations of place, language, and perception. Everything we represent is part of an ecology: the point is not to erase the self from poetry, but to show reverence, respect, and reciprocity for the land you stand on, and write of. In this session, we will explore how speaking of a place should be prefaced by speaking to, by writing poems of environmental relation. Phone: 0390947840 Email: program@writersvictoria.org.au Event Fee(s) \$135 (Concession), \$155 Member, \$215 (non-member)

REGULAR EVENTS AT WELLSRING CENTRE

Dream Reflections – second Thursday of the month, 1-3pm. Format : By Zoom or in person. Cost : \$12. Please book and pay in advance.

Christian Meditation – every Friday, 10-11am. Format : By Zoom or in person. Cost : Optional contribution.

A Contemplative Circle – third Wednesday of the month, 10am-12pm. Format : By Zoom or in person. Cost : \$31.50 or \$26.50 (member concession). Please book and pay in advance.

For more information :

<https://www.wellspringcentre.org.au/>

COMPETITIONS & OPPORTUNITIES

POETICA CHRISTI PRESS 2022 Annual Poetry Competition closing April 30th. 1st prize \$300, 2nd prize \$100. 25 poems will be selected to be included in an anthology to be published by

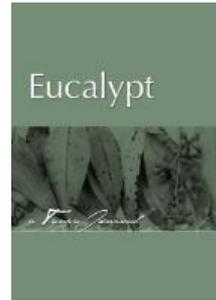
Poetica Christi Press. The theme for this competition is TRANSFORMATION. This topic lends itself to poems about: change, renewal, transition, conversion, revival, rebirth, adaptation, revolution, reinventing yourself, metamorphosis, development, progression, growth, reformation, resurrection, redemption, liberation, restoration. For more information and to download an entry form, visit the Poetica Christi Press website: www.poeticachristi.org.au

Positive Words Magazine Mini Competition
Accepting short story or poetry. 100 words or 10 lines. Entry fee \$2.20 in unused stamps. Prize is six months subscription to Positive Words. Closing date 23 April. To download entry form : <https://positivewordsmagazine.wordpress.com/competitions/>

The Heroines/Joyce Parks Women's Writing Prize accepts fiction or poetry. Open to writers who identify or live as women, prize only awarded to someone residing in, or a citizen of, Australia. Focus on lost women's history, untold stories and reimagined myths, fairy tales, folklore or legends, or speculative fiction. Entry fee \$15. \$25 if selected for publication. Closing date : 28 February. <https://www.theneoperennialpress.com>

Minds Shine Bright Writing Competition
Open to all. Theme : Confidence – each writer to interpret the theme of confidence in some way. Entries must be original, unpublished work.. Poetry, short story, script writing. Entry fee \$5 per submission. Prize \$500. Closing date 28 February. <https://mindsshinebright.com/>

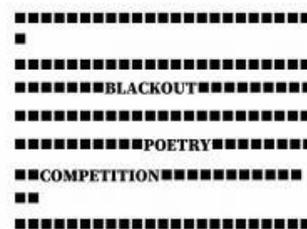
Submissions to EUCALYPT
Closing Date: Thursday, March 31, 2022
Eucalypt is the first Australian journal devoted to this ancient Japanese poetry genre. Japanese waka (now called tanka) are five-segmented poems. In English they are usually written in five lines. Often they address profound human emotions, such as love or mourning, but can also be used to record everyday experience. The genre is 1300 years old, but is surprisingly relevant to the way we think and



feel today. *Eucalypt* is a print magazine which showcases contemporary tanka poetry, written in the English language and publishes only those poems its editors consider of the highest standard. Its objectives are to offer

wider publication opportunities to tanka poets and to make more people aware of the delights of reading and writing tanka. There are two issues per year, in May and in November. Submissions close March 31 and September 30 respectively. Poets may submit up to six tanka for consideration but no more than two poems by an individual poet will be selected for any single issue. There is no submission fee. For more information and submissions, visit the Eucalypt website at: <https://www.eucalypt.info/>

Baby Teeth Blackout Poetry Competition
Closing Tuesday, March 1, 2022



Baby Teeth is running their second Blackout Poetry Competition. The competition is open until March 1, with the winner receiving

\$100AUD cash and publication in Baby Teeth Journal. The runners up will be shared on Baby Teeth's social media platforms. What is a Blackout Poetry Competition? In short, it is a competition to see who can make the best and most interesting blackout poem from a standard source article. Yes, everyone who enters is making a poem from the same set text! For more information and to enter, visit the Baby Teeth website at: www.babyteethjournal.com/submit/blackout-poetry-competition

Send any news for the May 2022 newsletter to treehousepoet318@gmail.com by April 15 2022. Newsletter edited by Leigh Hay and Janette Fernando.



POETS' CORNER

Listen

long before the dawn
as night-creatures slip away
do you hear the earth rotating
to meet the light of day?

listen for a moment
to the silent sounds around you
the singing of the starry sky
the universe surrounds you

listen for the little things
birth of dragonfly and bee
the tendril of the waking vine
hear mist and growing tree

listen for the rosebud
its fragrance drifting down
melodies of gardens
rising from the ground

earth noiseless ever turning
around the burning sun
hear... creation ever praising
Creator Holy One

© Cath Barnard (from *Learning to Listen*)

Transfiguration

Dismal
a day of cloud and fogs –
mood drab;
mind sluggish and water-logged
dreariness like a sodden cloak
foiling attempts to clear
my backed-up in-tray...
an impulse to exercise
drives me out near dusk
to discipline my body up the road.

Twenty paces on,
mind roused from
preoccupations...
I notice the sky –
... a t r a n s f o r m a t i o n!

The clouds, static and heavy all day,
are performing mesmerising arabesques
draping the full low-hanging topaz

m o o n

in diaphanous folds and swirls of
soft and finest water droplets...

all is l u m i n o u s
bathed in a sacred hush...
my spirit too

transfigured.

© Florence Lisner (from *Silver Linings*)

Pandemic blues

An adult son and me in
our home for three decades –
refuge or prison? Locked in,
kept in a Covid-moulded trap,
days stretch by like years...
but yesterday I filled
a bin of garden weeds
and potted cuttings both to plant and
share;
when I walk, my son comes too
to see that I don't trip...
someone (which passing friend?)
puts our paper on the porch,
and I never ever have to risk the shops.

Don't get me wrong. I'll cheer
when we no longer live in fear...
but meanwhile it's good to be alive!

© Joan Ray (from *Silver Linings*)

Prayer for coming out of lockdown

Oh God, who sees the whole universe at once,
yet sees each one of us,
as our universe expands again after lockdown,
help us to treasure the silver linings
of the clouds we have lived under
and remember our utter dependence on you.
Amen

© Janette Fernando (from *Silver Linings*)

RESPONSE SLIP – send to PCP Treasurer, 12 Cypress Ave, Burwood, 3125

I have enclosed my yearly membership dues (\$25 or \$20 concession) as a Wordsmith/Friend of PCP.

Cheques should **only** be made out to **POETICA CHRISTI PRESS** (Not Wordsmiths) or direct debit (quoting your name in the reference):

Name : Poetica Christi Press, BSB: 633-000, Account number : 118162593

I cannot afford \$25 but enclose a donation.

I wish to buy a copy of *Silver Linings* for \$20 (plus \$3 postage)

Please email me the newsletter from now on.

NAME _____

ADDRESS _____

PHONE : _____ **EMAIL:** _____