
GUIDE TO SYDNEY BEACHES

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ABOUT



Archived in Pandora



Includes the winner of the Bondi Line Competition, a part of Waverley Words sponsored by Waverley Council.



Wamberal

Justin Lowe

Wamberal

I have an enormous respect
for fishermen

forget about the hook
for a minute
try to remember....

on a beach washed clean
their utter inevitability

barely a word
barely a movement

wave after wave dying at their feet
time passing like this

how they seem to be playing
a dirty game with the world

standing there
with the whole ocean at their feet

they choose to slowly drown
in the earth



from: *Try Laughter* (DeadPan Press, 2000)

Photograph by **Christopher Jones**



Copacabana

David Falcon

BEACH MARGINS

the sea isn't always to the east
 should be
 but fools us
laying in bays
 around headlands
it's doing that now as
 the sun shines
lengthways down the beach

this morning
 anglers
 planted their tentless poles
stretched guy-wires into the sea
to dispel the night

now in the onward afternoon glare
 the water is glistening mud
children add poignancy to the scene
caper in the shallows
 parents stand
in arm-folded supervision

night is different
 torpedo wakes race down the dark,
disappear without impact
the sea
 ominous in the blackness
plans a tidal wave

We only ever master the sea with maps
flatten it to a single blue plane
cluster the rocks like black roe
at yellow beach margins
quell our fear by diminution



Bradleys Beach

Susan Adams

BRADLEYS BEACH

Glassed water you could draw your life on
sucks 'laze' into engine noises
glissading bay
with spray patterned trails
in knitted directions.
Raw sun red rashed
halos day edges,
heat nudges moisture
from skin so early
the day will be a swill.
Night cloud leaves bay,
umber under shadows
hint of light so tight
it later fractures,
penetrates skull,
scalps scalp.

Clarity cuts
 air hangs
 stillness waits
for the Kookaburra clarion
to throttle start
the daily pattern of action.

Sandstone cliffs
scroll red
 to gold
 to yellow
shower us with their menu,
we're leeches to linctus
with take home breakfasts.
These days are cut like a pack of cards
variable but similar, each random face
a different throat of dawn exposure.



Palm Beach

Karina Barker

The lifesaver

He's alone on the beach in this weather.
The rain's kicking back on itself like drifting
smoke across the sand. Waves are hinging
on the headland, grand gunmetal gates,

eight to a set. He sinks foot by foot
and doesn't turn to look at the footprints.
Dried salt has tightened his skin and the wind
burrows in his ears like some hungry animal.

He's just a young bloke wearing a red
and yellow yarmulke. He looks out to the hulking
rollers, counting them for no reason but
habit. In the foreground three white-beaked

dolphins nod like toy dogs on a taxi dashboard.
They point to a mistake in the charcoal landscape:
bobbing glimpses buried in white water;
a black and white film flickering.

His feet lighten across the sand to the IRB:
the red rubber duckie. It's a two-man job
but today it's only him and he drags its bulk
to the water like it's a wooden toy on strings.

He hears the whir of the starting chord,
the stuttered catch and pops of the engine.
Props turn, cylinders fire, and he's breaking
the breakers. Behind the combers, the rollers,

the boomers, the water is the colour of night, the air
as sticky and thick as saltlick. He finds her
ballooned, the complexion of scallop. He clutches
her skin. Wrenches her clothing till it tears.

He snatches under her arms but they slip as though
her shoulders are sewn cotton seams. Between
his fingers her pilling skin pops like the peel
of a grape. His hands grab and slap at her fat.

In the end it is a fist of her hair plaited
into the great spider of his sand-roughed grasp
that brings her aboard. He spins the boat on its heel
towards the sand. On the wooden slats of the duckie

she lies crumpled like a puppet with slack strings.
He is a lifesaver but he is not saving a life
in this weather. She was somebody's daughter
but in the half-light, water is sky and sky water.



Narrabeen

Penelope Evans

SURFWATCH

pressure intensifies
a glassy calm.
closer sand absorbs slow tongues
of salt lace lapping smooth
before the storm.

surfies sand-bound,
gaze immobilised,
scan the evenness for possibility,
hug boards as slender
as their prospects.

an offshore breeze
invites the grass to dance.
dragon-flies haphazard
strut their stuff
before raindrops from a yellow sky
annihilate the scene.



Dee Why

Jane Connors

Autumn

The beach belongs to that surfer, gleaming wet suit peeled down to his hips

All is one tattooed across his pubic bone.

Behind him wind skims the sapphire waves

lifts aching veils of spray

Sunlight spills across the wide sea curve now cirrus clouds shoulder the sky.

Pegged across the break at the point surfers rock on their boards

staring out at the horizon

the certain cut

Near the lagoon rank seaweed

crows stiff kneed across the sand peck at sea lice in the kelp

the big swell rolls in sunlit fingertipped

a breeze flicks an ice blue blade of cold

‘Sea weeed,’ a girl’s lemony cry as she tosses a frond in the wading pool

Old men hoick their costumes off under gaping towels

the April light slides quickly over us

When I stop sit here on the warm step

sunshine pools at my hips melts into my core

marks my place.



Manly

Martin Langford

Manly Mall

Like a scene from a kid's book,
the plaza is filled with flaneurs.

A clown is bewildering children.

A brass band impresses the air.

Shade from blown curtains
caresses the wall with its veils.

Buttocks roll.

Names choose big letters.

Citizens smile from massifs.

Thin – between pinks on the corso,
toy-blue in the sky – there's a dado of aqua.

Moray eels hunt from their holes there –
cocks, with sharp eyes, and wide grins.

Toothed vulvae prowl across reed-beds.

Down in the fracture-zones,
vents smoke and rumble –
where, far above, in pale columns,
shark frenzies leak and fade slowly,
transparent parachutes float by, evert, and extrude.

Previously published *The Great Wall of Instinct* (Island, 1993)



Photograph by **Kris Calhoun**



Peter J.F. Newton

Just before stormfall, Manly Beach
(for Bruce Beaver)

Small dogs, black, unkempt,
play gull & gaff with inbound waves.
Sand scuds over a rusty pipe;
rain pits the dunes of yesterday's kids,
matts the hair of the last rider.

Sheltered away tight from the storm sky
the elderly tuck minds into tabloids;
a beach-bird's cry weeps loneliness.
Minutes later the last rider is gone,
watched briefly by small black dogs.

previously published in *YES: We have two voices* (PNIN Press Balmain, 2001).



Chinamans Beach

S. K. Kelen

Home Thoughts from Abroad

Glimpse of rain,
River rocks glisten
Wing my soul back
To one old dreaming site:
North Sydney Oval.
Palm trees bow in the park
And tall cyclone fencing
Stops footballs landing on cars
Driving up and down
The beautiful Cahill Expressway
In the richest city of them all
And maybe Sydney Harbour
Is the world's heart, who can tell?
Mile high storm clouds
Swell on the north.
Cloudburst brakes cars almost to halt
From the ferries, harbour bells
Ring the long past through the grey.
Run from the sea
To sit on Chinaman's Beach,
Accept the breeze.
Across the bay is the glowing dais
Built for when Christ comes again
Waits for Him to touch down
And walk on ocean
Step on to Australia, then
Joy will rise from Sydney Harbour
Heralding a Golden Age, South Pacific
The throngs wear hula skirts
Sing the Lord's praises.
It's like that now — the desert
Island's delicious nipple —
Tranquil, stropo, tropical.

Previously published in *Shimmerings* (Five Islands Press, Wollongong, 2000).



Balmoral

Carol Jenkins

Hunting

At Balmoral Baths, for thirty seconds,
a fairy penguin lends me her hunting body.
The way she dizzies mullet
into a tight and tighter spiral,
her fast fillip to the surface,
means I snatch a breath,
I swim faster, spiral tighter,
play the net,
hear the water scissor past,
move by thinking,
weaving under, over,
half-spin correction, propelled by fining,
winging mullet towards the wharf's shade
that baulks them, so our swift corralling
swoop completes in the biting satisfaction
of teeth into a mullet's belly.



Bondi

Brook Emery

Thirty-six views of Bondi Beach

In the hollow of a wave
 sunlight, spray, a freckled skipping boy.

He streaks beneath the crest, attentive
 to the glimmering ride; oblivious.

Down the belly of fat north-eastern swells
 he's leaping like a bouncing bomb, against the sea, through the air.

Like a school of fish in a contracting net, lifesavers
 churn the ocean to a frenzy; seagulls screech on angel wings.

She pirouettes as Baz MacDonald sprays oil
 on skin as rich as amber. Umbrellas, igloos, tans for hire.

Louis the Fly slaps hamburger on the griddle, hops, bristles, scowls;
 fat plops and spits at Greasy Mick's

Straight-backed as Cleopatra's Needle the stink-pipe crowns the cliff;
 cleated fishermen cast for blackfish in the murk.

4pm. Billy Jenkins sea-sways from his car, skips rope,
 gives the heavy bag a fearful whacking: 'piss today, piss today'.

The Rex Hotel. 10pm. Cyril turns his spectacles upside down,
 bites bums, sings, 'we gotta get outta this place'.
 Bouncers help him on his way.

~

In the hollow of a wave

the wink of an eye, the slingshot moment.

A surfboat slews, stalls, digs in by the bow,
catapults the sweep and oarsmen through the air.

Underwater, a parachutist tosses and tangles in his sheets,
three men swim him to the surface, can't bring him back to life.

The Whale taps his Christmas morning keg: let us beach bums
all be jolly, fleck the sand with sunburned folly.

Bed legs paddle in jam jars full of kerosene:
Cairo Mansions: top floor cockroach disincentives.

Doogsa Davis: if I catch you two cunts again
I'll crack yer fuckin' knees across the gutter.

Surreptitiously, lanky boys and barrel-chested men
check out the tits on display beside the promenade.

Aub Laidlaw escorts a too-brief bikini from the beach,
catches one of his inspectors cavorting with a topless girl.

He leans on the face of the sun's last wave,
slips, flips, rolls like a carpet up the sand,
runs barefoot to catch a 380 home for tea.

~

In the hollow of a wave
an enfolding, unfolding like a fan.

Bug-eyed sun, gem-bright sand: geometries of iridescence,
facets of light: sunbathers spot the beach like measles.

We march rescue reels in rectangles round the beach;
play out line overhead, endure taunts: dickheads, wankers.

Harry throws his clothes from an upstairs window, tip-toes

down the stairs: 'I'll ring her when I get to Perth'.

Naked, Big Bill 'Tiny' Douglass, skin like rhino hide, pads his workshop,
turns wood, swings his balls like leather bells.

Shouting, 'a meat tray and two chooks, twenty cents a ticket',
squeezing through slabs of men thigh to thigh in the public bar.

Fleeing criss-cross down Curlewis Street, the outwitted,
outraged chef from the Dragon's Gate puffing close behind.

Clouds ghost by, shadows articulate like sharks;
bluebottles mass and drift with fierce intent.

Unwinged, he drops from a steeping wave
and foresees the outcome. The sea is light in layers,
stars maze and flicker within the foam.

~

In the hollow of a wave
these particulars, what they can sustain.

Draped in rain, rescue reels and their unwound canvas belts
make ready aye ready on the cast-off beach.

Waves loom, pitch, and fall like sheets of rubble,
the sea floor shudders, faultlines tremble up the beach.

Basso combs the sand, stirs a patch of weed
with his toe. You usually turn up something after storms.

Tunnels stretch beneath the promenade like probing fingers;
rot, slime, rats, shadow, green and guilty smells.

Ramsgate Avenue, Brighton Boulevard, grow second storeys,
sprout sundecks, plate glass, cumquats, gas barbecues.

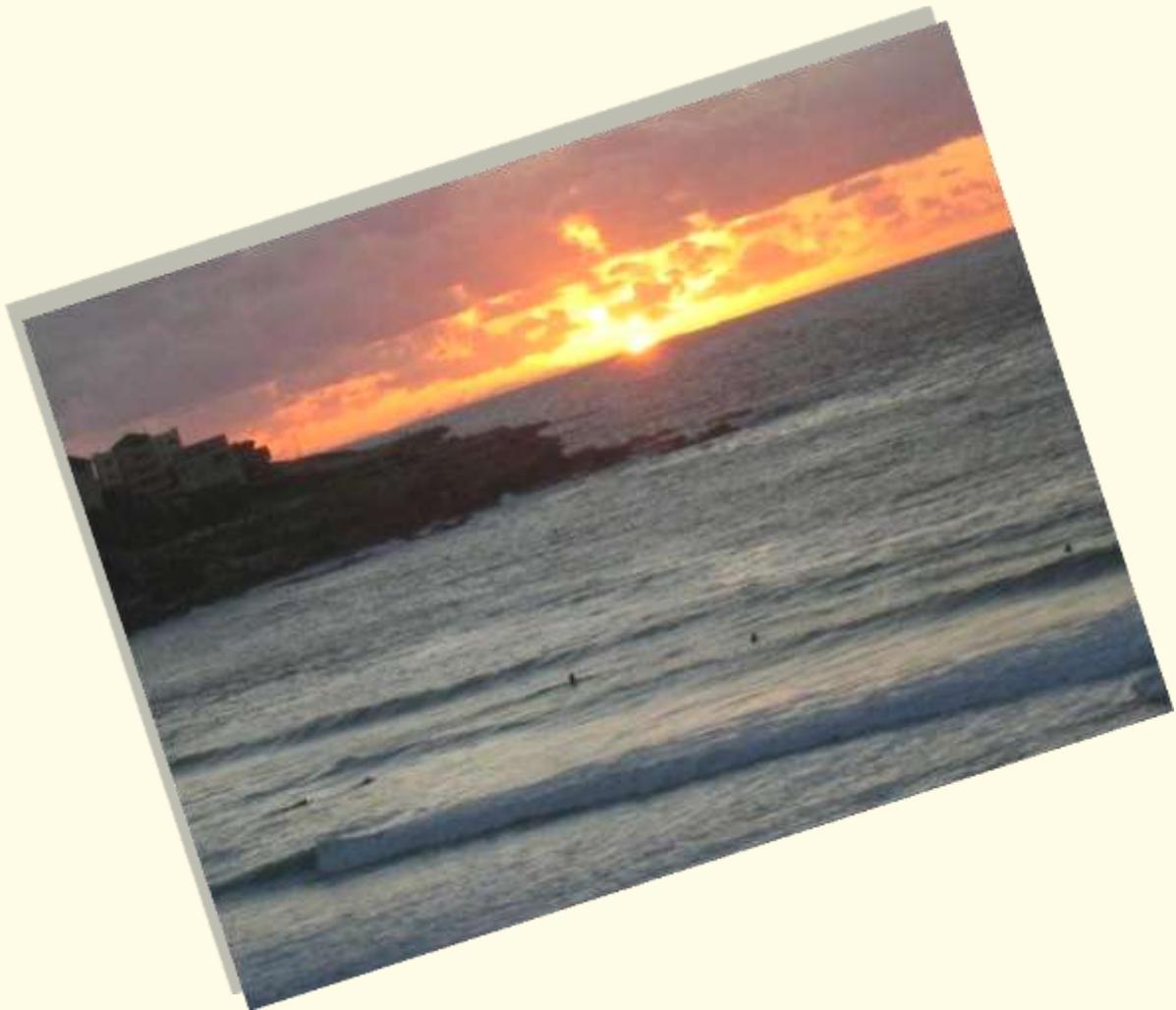
The pavilion gets another coat of paint, another yellow,

fades, looks just about the same.

The sun pulsates, swells, draws in upon the earth, the sea,
dreaming neither before or after, ripples, stirs.
A man lies on his stomach in the sand,

positions his arms like fins beneath his head,
passes into iconography. Light sifts and flicks reflective lures
to reel me in, they reel me in.

Previously published 'Uncommon Light' (FIP 2007).







Photographs by **Rick Warr**



Alan Jefferies

Tourists on Bondi Beach

They come at all hours and in all weather
but mostly they come in the mornings
and if you asked them kindly they'd say;
"Yes, we prefer the warmer weather"
but they come anyway –
usually in a flock, and only occasionally in a swarm
they move away from their mirrored buses
across the path to the ramp
leading to the beach postcard.

There they stop, and they stay
until you are certain they will go no further
Then, through some invisible form of democracy
one or two, usually a couple are elected
emissaries from a foreign country;
to remove their shoes and venture forth
across the sand (seemingly having a lean
on each other for balance as they go)
out to formally greet the sea.

Once they reach the edge
others begin to follow;
now there is a circle through which to step
into the deafening roar of the beach postcard.

First published in the *Newcastle Herald*



jeltje

Splashback

The whistle on a lifejacket
The solid mass of posterity
Resistance to a chaotic mess
Our life-force, intermittently

The Earth's rumbling interludes

A traffic island in a traffic jam
The curtain going up, just one more time
Summer beach infatuations
Life-saving innuendos

Sun-dried emotions, on a slice of toast

Sunny gold-coin donations
The past catching up in a gust of wind
Lines engraved on the palms of hands
Immodest dreams of peace



Paula McKay

Prometheus at Bondi Beach

High over the swell of endings
and beginnings they raised him
over the moon-powered tides
over the death rattle crash of sea
against the rocks
above the red and yellow flags
the life less threatened in between.
Up over bodies oiled and creamed
sun-drenched dreams
slip and slap against the pink,
the zinc, beer-filled bellies, backside
cracks above the slipping shorts
they hauled him high and cheerful
out from the hot and sweated road
crushed sand snug between their toes.

 To barbecued spare ribs, soy sauce
 ground cloves of garlic over snags
 tinnies dragged close, lemons squeezed
 over fish and the horizon.

When, at the lowering of the sun, they raised him up again
he soared above the sugar and the burning gum;
wide-eyed young, the old creaking with rheum
lifted and falling, their breath heaving, calling
adieu to their venerable idol.
Their god of gods swelling in the public eye
he alone had given them their fire.



joanne burns

comb

i.

bondi was always as big as
tomorrow, or something wider
more thrilling than time -
something huge that could reach
out and lift you, once you swam
through and over the waves or dived
under to grab at the challenge of sand
avoiding the careless/careful will of a
dumper; it was big enough for everyone
to think it was theirs

ii.

even the sewer outlet water, its stream
etched into the beach right down to the surf,
could not stain bondi's ascendancy; nor could
a poem 'ode to depravity' composed by a fifteen
year old student of shelley, looking down on
the scene from the top deck of a bus roaring
onto campbell parade in the gloom of a wintery
gale: the ocean the beach the sky all so grey

and remember
the stories of rats in the old wooden dressing sheds
at the ocean view baths where the waves crashed
over the side, defying the odds of a champion swim;
those ladies' swimming club pennants and badges
may rot in a shoebox or lavender trunk - but waves
never retire

iii.

not as spiritually glamorous as balmoral, another 'b'
beach - with young krishnamurti avatar saviour almost
paramahansa sailing resplendent into its shore; no uplifter
of souls but of 'public' standards was mister aub laidlaw,
bondi beach king, judge of what kind of flesh could be
revealed on his shore [his aubrahamaniac bikini law];
whose white zinc lipped cohorts tried to remove and
charge a visiting german hair care company executive

changing out of his bathers inside a handsome beach robe
of black on the shore, while the chrism of suntan oil from
the on the beach kiosk sprayed quotidian radiance
over the bodies in the heliophile queue

iv.

boyfriends boyfriends twisting rocking
the summers away; bondi a map of significant
fickle and frivolous moments; here and here
here and there: forgotten names faceless
renewable eidetic: promenade pavilion sandbank
smooth waves: mash of lipstick and hairspray
pashing in holdens above ben buckler's danish
mermaids: hips swinging easily naively -
the 'peppermint twist' at the pink 'orcadés'

v.

snooze-drifts on a towel with its appliqued
pocket of secrets, wave echoes fizz and
froth down through your ears - you could
stay there forever, your book 'ides of march',
an epistolary novel by thornton wilder, about
caesar's rome, is splayed flat, spine almost
melting, underneath the sprawl of
a surrendering knee you have been seduced
and suitably salted this glistering empire
of ocean and sand



Rae Desmond Jones

The Odyssey of Sydney Opera House
(To Joern Utzon)

It rains so softly in the ear of the Opera House
When the beautiful white lady tugs at the hems
Tying her to the earth because at last she
Will sail out into the harbour

& turn around,
Steered by the baby sharks nipping
At her undies (but she will push them aside as always)
& to the Grand March of Aida waddle out deeper
& deeper, ignoring

The towers of glowing humanity
In steps & blocks of steel & glass
On both sides of the harbour, while sniffing
At her great rival, that haughty rusting bridge
Swaying in astonishment & jealousy at her tragic flaw.

Slowly she turns & wobbles
Around Pinchgut Island - that cheeky small stone tower
Which has never moved for anyone
Rolls out a cannon and blows her a tiny raspberry -

But the dowager reminds him that she
Is younger, more beautiful & genteel & with
Cumbrous dignity works her way between
The Island & the noble warship to the South,
Who watches her closely with reserve
& commendable control.

On she goes, past the graceless mansions
Of millionaires, the shallow stony beaches
Where despite the drizzle & the cold
The aged dive & splash behind nets
While the young sit around the parks at the rear,
In cars & under trees,
Smoking dope & getting pissed,

& how they love the vision of the lady pushing

Her way through the turgid water,
Brushing aside the bottles and Macdonald's boxes,
Nudging the smart arsed little yachts
Before turning to face the angry ocean
Through the broken stoney heads.

Out she goes, coping with the rising swell
& the television interviewers seeking to board her
& the water police & politicians who warn her of danger
But she ignores them all because, after all,
What is she to say, if indeed she were capable
Of that kind of phoney ambiguity?

On she goes with the grey sky above her
Into the rippling waves, to join the whales & the dolphins
Turning South, while in Bondi lines of houris in bikinis
Dance for her on the sand & muscular lifeguards swim to her rescue,
She searches for that Katharsis of which she has heard so often
In tragic song.



Tamarama

Denis Gallagher

Summer Ends, Tamarama

the seagulls
flew south
lost
rings
of the ear
nipple

s
little finger
and nose
sink deeper
into
the sand

No Dogs Allowed

forlorn trumpets
bruised hibiscus
lonely hands sift
by unlovely rocks
the sun
set

o
but next year
more tan
less poetry
another beach
a wedding ring

originally published in *Meanjin*
& *Written in Sand*.



Colleen Z Burke

A lullaby

Although
the turbulence
of Tamarama
beach
and gully
was just around
the corner
we still listened
to swish
of oceans
in seashells
lulled
to sleep by
sea breath
gentle in ears
soft on
 tongues

Previously published in the odd pagan or two, 2004.



Bronte

John S Batts

DEATH ON BRONTE BEACH

On moving slopes of water
Glide surfers yet
— silent but secure

gun-metal grey and quite away
from pounding waves
and rushing foam

a form now lies with gash on back
small pools of faded
blood upon the sand

cresting on the whale's road no more
helpless and stranded
a giant in his native world

is now lost, heavy, motionless,
injured, dying
perhaps already dead.

First published in the *Prismatics*



Les Wicks

MY BRONTE BEACH

is the loudmouth in the waves singing *Summertime*.
It's actors, politicians,
pensioners and the kids – shockingly minus stuff.

This incursion of Spring is the radius of white plovers,
light swallowed by each wavelet
as the tourist biplane dissects the new blue of midday.
In Sydney it gatecrashes (around NOW)
just for a moment
then Winter never feels at home.
She will move out like some rattled tenant
with a short-term lease
in the rough part of an unruly town.
This beach – the dominance of birds
politely ignored by undercover dogs
pale skin
on raw sugar sand.

Someone known - just out of hospital -
totters back to the sea
like a great old turtle.
Cedars of Lebanese legs copse around BBQs,
3 o'clock shadow.
A bum's washing dries on the memorial quartz beside
buffed girls laughing like lawn sprinklers.

Community, the accretion of small tragedy
that attends every understood life. It's my wife,
on a seasoned wafer of towel, absorbed
by utter quiet. The sun disinfects.

Our black cottons are heavy by the shore
straight lines don't fit.
We don't own ourselves, but each one,
we all have separate Brontes.
The sand takes the shape of our need.

Previously published in *The Ambrosiacs* (Island, 2009)



Clovelly

Margaret Bradstock

Morning, Clovelly Beach.

Lap after lap, time descending
into the sea's chamber,
the cryptogam-covered steps.

On the white concrete plateau, sunbathers
are already stretched out
like slabs of meat for the barbie,
basting and turning themselves,
skin like crumpled leather.
That hole in the ozone layer
won't spoil *their* day.

Tourists are sculling, sculling
against a gun-metal sea
out beyond Caddy's Steps,
listening for the shark plane
or snorkelling in search of
the Big Blue Groper,
cries of discovery mimicking

another babel tower.
Someone throws chips
into the bin, and seagulls
go into attack mode
in a scene from *The Birds*.
Somewhere an airborne
beach-umbrella takes off

like cosmic dust, spiralling
into the blue nowhere.
Keep your eye on that spike.

*You've come at the right time, he says,
tide going out, no bluebottles,
a beautiful temperature.*
Except for the sea-lice, that is,
homing in like kamikaze pilots,
mistaking your floating body
for seaweed, or a marine smorgasbord.

Don't worry,
you won't feel a thing
until later.

First published in *famous reporter*.





Mark O'Flynn

THAWING

Suddenly sun exposes the casual blubber
of winter's hibernation. Clovelly bay darts
its thin tongue into the hedonistic
armpit of the beach. We recline awkwardly,
unused to such leisure, sand where it shouldn't.

The slimy chitons green with stillness
constellate on the rocks. The water freezing
for a moment, after the hard abstinence
of winter, the city has seemed relentless,
suddenly the lost decadence of ice cream.



Coogee

Brenda Saunders

Three views of Coogee

1. Coastal tribes gather on bora ground close to the shore. Waves of painted bodies move forward and back, clap sticks beating. The *Waier Waier* chant rises and falls.

After a long drought, the deluge. Wild skies
Breakers cover the coast. The lookout warns
of a far-off land. Floating. Brave Gadigal men
swim out, save strangers falling into the sea
Trees, bodies, *koo-jah* sweep in on the tide
On a cliff top a funeral pyre burns for days
Mountain clans read the smoke: the story
is sung into Dreaming. The island settles.

2. Tom Roberts paints *A Holiday Sketch*
from his camp on the hill: captures
the blueness of the day. Sees banksias
tufty grass, a tree stretching out of view
Impressions laid down with a square brush
Parasols, figures dot the curve of the bay
He sets water and sky in sharp definition
leaves the island out of the picture.

3. Today the beach is empty. From my place
high up in the park I watch clouds mass
on the horizon. A Southerly has dumped
the seaweed again: there is a familiar smell
The island is half-submerged, a sunken blur
Sandstone floaters riding the swell. Rain has
crimples the pages of my poem: the story
fading like a painting pressed under glass.

Coogee from *koo-chai* or *koo-jah*: the smell of the seaweed drying (Bidigal language).
Waier Waier: the island strangers, possibly from Polynesia



Little Congwong

Amelia Gledhill

Little Congwong

A dead eel lies half-rotten by the shore.
The child eyes it warily
And sniffs the air rushing from the sea.
It films the carcass with wet salt.
There are shark eggs
And searching sea gulls
Curls and whirls of drying seaweed
And fourteen coke bottles between the waves and the stairs.

The child lifts a stick and pokes the stiff mouth,
The creature rocks and lies still.
Braver now, she strokes the cloudy skin.
From nearby her mother's warning call:
"Don't touch dead things!
Don't touch anything."
Her hands tugging and hugging fast,
"This place is wild and unwatched and no place for us."



Photo by **Les Wicks**



Cronulla

Margo Ruckert

Cronulla to Flinders

1. winter

we leave from the palm corridor with Sunshine no, not the name of our dog could be the nickname of the weather lady on last night's news if irony was given a job occasionally the Bureau has proclaimed heavy showers thus the raincoats I'm wearing mine these are apparently old-fashioned according to the 20% of would-be athletes using umbrellas as hand weights in storm conditions? maybe they don't finish the whole path and rest to recover at Oak Park with the blue-ringed octopus warning signs grey clouds compete with the resolve of runners will we chance a drenching for a chance at health health wins by a silent auction of thoughts as we pass a walker on a crutch young mothers are working out with prams I catch the wave of a two-year old with a will to connect with my unknown face heavy footpath traffic flaneurs, strollers one young father is clearly finished his daughter refuses to stay imprisoned she's finished her ice-cream mother's at work he's at work here too but there are no handy peers to explain two-year-olds clouds close over like the roof on an aircraft hangar our sun flies away planes turn up the volume a southerly buffets us towards Glaisher Point glacial conditions we climb a rise to say hi to a stone trio of navigators M. Flinders, G. Bass and "boy" Martin my husband signals see the huge phenocrysts? I see intrusions of colour curious bands in rock selected for uniqueness like the history at this point retracing time we tick off the threats on our weather checklist squall wind-chill drizzle a surfboard chained to the ankle of a wetsuit negotiates the cold wet grass I put on a thermal take it off this is a difficult child of a morning its mind changes at each small step a weather smorgasbord multiple courses we've an appetite for coffee an inside table an outside view inhale the power of a single wave to deflect a drifting mood kind words mostly from the elderly

2. summer

we bare almost all only a lick of cream separates us from the frying eye of the sun I'm under a hat large floppy muslin shirt over shorts and T-shirt my sandals are on a path to deny their name enough of commentary at least you know how I start this trip in cautious leisure 9.30 am on a weekday the path's not crowded I've always wondered about the mix of walkers are they mostly locals? how far are they driven to experience sea that magnet for the heavy metal of cars dogs and children strain at the ends of leads cyclists and joggers mow us down what atmosphere is this? beach fever sunny exposures postcard pictorials an artistry of surf, sand and flesh the horizon

draws a line across the sea miss junior draws lines on her father's moist forehead her mother breast-feeds with an eager sun supple nipples she's been waiting half the year to sit on Cronulla's headland searching for the earth-mother alias marine mother can she feel natural here from this point of view will the sky accept her baby she's a peace seeker the smash of rocks on the wave platform for her this is quiet a Rottweiler is somehow off-leash fortunately pre-occupied offering a warm gift near the earth-mother's feet its owner catches it up with a scoop not too proud to embrace normality I need to appreciate today's larger picture change eyes with a camera store a full 180 degrees in long term memory my vision chips away at the micro-level riders on boards flip and play like acrobatic seals acrobatic sea-gulls turn sky-divers foot traffic builds lycra battledress swift walkers three across an impenetrable fortress close distance runners like bottles on a production line bob along a path hardly smooth gliding I want to remonstrate with their selfishness go find an oval for grunt this is nature's walk not run we meditate on values public access to treasure to the east laser-cut Banksias shapely mirror trees surf music wave platforms to the west evolution of the tallest



Garie



Susan McCreery

Coast Track

I want my yard
to be like the Royal,
with Hawkesbury sandstone,
great grainy slabs of it
glistening with quartz.

I want the wind
at the edge of drop-jaw cliffs
to fill my lungs when
I gasp at the sea.

A landscape softened
with heath, the flicker
of honeyeaters
scrub she-oaks
soughing like dreams.

There'd be spot fires
of banksia,
needle bush spikes
for any stray dogs.

Where weather
can change in an instant
as blue air shifts
to a wild, rain-pocked grey.

I want miles and miles
of no houses
so I can walk out my back door
and sing.

Photo by **Alexander Kesselaar**



Stanwell



Photograph by **Laurence Owen-Ross**



Jean Frances

Stanwell Tops

that first time
on the stony plateau
breath
snatched away
sand dust in my eyes
standing at the crumbling rim
loose pebbles tumble
to the creaming sea
silent
on the rocks below

where to the right
smiles a golden crescent
tiny figures stroll
others roll and scramble
in the surf

and further on
the cliffs and ocean's sweep
beneath a ferocious sun
the sky held up
by hordes of screaming gulls



Austinmer

Susan Adams

CAUGHT

Two tankers sit at the split between
sky and water,
our ankles are knit by rockpool eddies
and arms wrap the other as linen,
we are one cloth, bound.

Rock fishermen arrive, its time,
they throw lines from precipitous edges,
their rods cut arches against smashed foam
travelling the jag of the escarpment
in rapid explosions of birth.

Then shimmering silver, sparks
tossed from a frightened fish desperate to live.
A trophy photo is taken and
the fish is thrown back in.

Neither of us can throw the other back in
our capes of scales dazzle still,
we are caught on the sharpest hook
of imagination, reeled in, pull free but jump
on the hook again.
The trap of survival.

There is no registry of rules
but a bond that recognises our total.

We're stars gazing at our galaxy,
a blaze of globulus spray splashed across
the netted blackness of
sky's own catch of silver.



Thirroul

Linda Godfrey

Single girl, seeking like-minded

...looking to make up what I've missed....I walk around at night naked by the light of the kitchen clock, bright enough to read *Tattoo Life*. I want a man to come every Tuesday and massage my feet, paint my nails red. I water-save and spread the grey water on green-goddess lilies. I have desires: I want to wear mismatched socks, but don't, yet. I want to learn to chop wood, to split something through and through with a tomahawk, but not you. I have tree ferns and bromeliads, but only zebras. I didn't want to put a picture up, believe me, I'm blond, slim, have green eyes. I walk on the beach, rain or shine, at the exact period of low tide. It is most lonely at three-twenty in the morning. I found a dead white dolphin once. I was going to pick it up on the way back, but it had gone. Do you believe in resurrection or re-incarnation? I can never decide. We could meet up for a picnic at Sandon Pont one Sunday. You know what they say about the first date, quick and public. I would show you the surfers, the bike riders, the protest site against the development, the newly developed houses. I'd take you down to the boatsheds built during the Depression, great real estate, views north can never be built out, it'd be quick and private and then we could swim off the rocks. I've only seen live dolphins there. Maybe they'd do tricks for us. Age and looks not really...



Pacific Notion

Martin Langford

The Beach

Whitewater surges towards you,
a hedgerow of small, liquid tongues.
You dive through to hissing
that sighs to a crochet of salt.
Diving, again and again,
you will come
to an endless slight rocking.
Here, light and water are one:
brief-slope and half-bowl striations;
light-tumblings, ruptures and pearls;
non-human hectares of dream-jostling,
skin-gentling slaps.
When you turn round
all you see's the huge light
flooding spray-drifts and stately, broad levels.
Unheard, waves crawl
across farther and farther gold sea-plains,
small, upper bodies
where great rays fan out
through the caves and suspensions of spray.

Later, you climb the warm stairs;
walk in and out through the shadows
that lean across bright, spongy grass, and pink paths.
Summer has soaked into crevices.
It sets at the back of your eyeballs,
bathes nerves in your scalp...

On, tired and slow,
past dark, wide-open entrance halls,
surfies, old couples with kids.

Side-streets that peel into jigsaw:
sky glimpses, leaf shadows, brick.

Bone-happy. Slow. Without utterance.

This is a gift from the sun and the planet.
This is not just something humans or words have made up.

Previously published *Faultlines* (Round Table, 1991)



Brook Emery

Half-glimpsed through water

What was that?

From the corner of my eye,
through light's slant dismemberment,
the unsettled heft of swell, something
appears and now disappears. I dare not,
and do each time I turn my head.
It could be was or will be. I look again.

Sea's plunge, contingent maze of grey,
a pale sun too impressed to
plumb the soundings. Here, up close,

things blur as if there is an end in mind.

*Anything which lacks a body
does not exist; everything which exists
has a body of its own.* Is it here, this,
a figuring which is all of me?

Now's a place to put this, it's not
beyond understanding; but what to know
of how time acts between each detail, of if.
Was that a fin? Were there two?

I listen to my body.
I'm flayed, erotic, fifty metres,
thirty seconds from the cliff.

I feel you at my skin like kelp.

Previously published 'Uncommon Light' (FIP 2007).



jenni nixon

frenzy

headline *poke in the eye saves shark victim*
a man off the NSW south coast
is eaten by a white pointer shark
(who maybe thought him a seal)
when his head is swallowed
squashed in a vise he enters a dark cave
on the second bite the white pointer
has him by his torso in its jaws
he stabs with an abalone chisel
pokes the shark in the eye
is spat out

smashed mask blinded
bleeding a broken nose
agent Harry M Miller
sells the shark man story
in a feeding frenzy
audience of millions gasp
devour open mouthed
the diver who is not fish food
book sales TV appearances
sold for the highest bid

newspaper front-page story
one that got away
becomes old news
wraps take-away fish and chips

Previously published Poems from the Bottom of the Harbour (P&W 2009)



John Tranter

The Beach: a sestina

It's the morning of a summer's day in the inner west of Sydney, the sun already baking the bowl of sky. Here the pollution is heavier than in the centre of town – the sea breeze nudges the smog westwards through the day and into the evening as the lights come on, the evenings of trysts and hamburger smoke and hot cars, the nitrous oxides cooking in the heat and filtering through the lungs of the working classes in the new suburbs on the baking Cumberland Plain stretching towards the outback. You remember that Sydney and Los Angeles are similar the way a rubber stamp is an echo of its image, a coastal plain with an escarpment ten or twenty miles back from the on-shore breezes so that a bowl is formed with a lid of cold air sitting on top of the warm air

And the smog thick with suspended particles and diesel fumes and deadly gas is dumped on the plain right where the people live but the inhabitants laugh, they're happy to breathe the contaminated air that gives them health as well as sickness. And now we've caught the bus and we're moving east towards the coast, the sea, the Pacific, longing for a cool drink –

The buses are blue and white now, the colours of the sky, but they used to be dull green and cream, matching the beach at the foot of the grassy park at Brontë, and made in England, but with the postmodern age Australians tilted toward the Teutonic and the people now go to work in buses made by Mercedes Benz, a name meant to recall the beautiful daughter of a diesel millionaire going to boarding school in Switzerland and having lots of expensive fun;

And now in a flash I remember my first meeting thirty years ago with Stephen Knight – then just a young man fresh from Oxford – in the broiling sun at Tamarama Beach – he lay on the sand in long sleeves, long pants, hat, socks and sandals stretched out in a patch of shade among the sybarites but in the fully-clothed potential of his one day being a professor, even then rolling over in his complicated mind the prolix chilly downhill teleology of Malory's *Le Morte D'Arthur* towards armour-plated death,

So here we are, way back then, a couple of teachers, six young students, a bottle of Pernod, Ferdinand de Saussure and all, dozing and reeling around on the fabulous littoral, the mythological beach –

Hi, Stephen – well at least at an exemplar, one unit selected from the Venn diagram of the immense conceptual set of all the overlapping permutations and combinations of the poems, songs, articles and stories about where the shore meets the sea, and the actual twenty-seven foam-scalloped beaches that bedeck and embroider that doorstep of the South Pacific, Sydney.

The bowl of sand and water is a kind of memory theatre now: when I was a boy in the country I liked to swim, poke at an octopus with a stick and chase poisonous puffer fish through the rippling shallows, then I would wander up the five-mile beach, no one there, squinting against the light reflected from the white sand, a sack over my shoulder, collecting

bleached cuttlefish bones to sell to the store for bird feed. One time, walking along a ridge of grassy sand where the hollows are full of heat and stillness, I trod on a snake with my bare feet and got such a fright I didn't think to snap shut the shotgun and shoot. Now the beach seems a tedious gritty way to get skin cancer – just as when I was a kid in a country town I longed to live in Australia's busiest metropolis, Sydney,

And once I got there and failed a few university courses and worked at the Orange Spot Bar midnight till dawn selling the prostitutes fruit-cake sandwiches and mopping the floor, so I travelled, but found London was no better, Iran at least had crystal fresh air

But nowhere to swim let alone a beach,

And in Afghanistan the bell-boy sold you dope for a dollar a handful, but the police threw you in jail if they found you with an alcoholic drink –

Why are we always restlessly searching for a way to help us avoid thinking about the final payment to this charade, death?

In the end, sad joke, it's the wages of fun.

Let's turn back to the landscape – not the real one, this one, which is just a work of art, like something sketched with a pencil and then painted onto a large sheet of paper with those grainy water-colours, the paper crinkling where it's wet – in one sense every artist is just a version of a kid having fun –

But of course there's more to it, namely meaning and characters – once on the radio I heard the art critic Peter Fuller say in his serious English voice 'of course, some landscapes are more meaningful than others', and I laughed so hard I hurt a muscle in my jaw and had to go to the doctor – everyone knows the meaning gets stirred in at the last minute the same way you add mould inhibitor to a can of bathroom paint! and as for characters, just look around you – not at the painted paper, look at Sydney

Sliding past outside the bus window glittering with shops and traffic and its freight of noise and activity, Vietnamese immigrants, here's an Italian family quarrelling, and a Greek fish shop crowded with revellers in white – there seems to be a wedding celebration going on, and the bride's father is yelling at the groom – more characters than you can poke a stick at, every one of them slowly and inexorably heading towards a common end, that unwilling emigration from the country of the living to join the multi-million population of the land of death –

So our feelings write themselves onto the view, turning geography into landscape, distorting the weather. Imagine a sleepy romantic picnic under the trees brought to an embarrassed end with a flurry of leaves and the first pattering drops then the bruised, boiling clouds occupy the sky and a cold rain darkens and fills the summer air

With chill electricity – so we inscribe our feelings onto the backdrop, if a landscape is really a backdrop, the way a young guy in love might notice when he lifts his drink

That it leaves a ring of moisture on the surface of the table and he absent-mindedly traces out a word with his fingertip – a name – seven letters that are full of magic for him, but not for anyone else in the darkened bar, they're just tired from their day at the beach.

It seems to take ages to get to the coast from almost anywhere, so perhaps we should forget the bus and take the car instead and just put up with the fact that there's nowhere to park and the acres of boiling hot macadam burn the soles of your feet, and when you finally arrive you trudge along the famous golden sand spiked with rusty needles soaked with hepatitis and HIV and junkie spit wondering what the 'style' of the place really represents – you notice the Esplanade is crowded with Japanese brides getting their wedding cheap – they say in Tokyo it costs a fortune with all the presents for the thousands of guests including every fellow worker and all the superiors from the office and their wives, so it's less expensive to fly to Sydney and have the ceremony at the Nippon International and send everyone back home a video – they stroll past the old milk bar that sells Chiko rolls, milk shakes and fizzy drinks, looking for a sushi bar or maybe an American nightclub and trying to get that casual Australian slope into their walk which has been stiffened by a lifetime of restrained competitive frenzy in Tokyo or Yokohama, they walk right by Martin Smith's bookshop and never think to drop in and chat and maybe ask for a bit of light reading... nothing too demanding, you know what I mean, something gushy and fake like *The Piano*, say, to pass the time – their honeymoon time – or a book of haiku about Australian native animals – ha, Aussie Haiku! Excellent! – about native animals, right, but not the ones that creep up inside your trouser-leg and sting and kill, and not the nightmare creatures, say the shark as big as a refrigerator that scoops a leg off in the blink of an eye – you don't feel it for a few seconds, you just feel a heavy bump that knocks you breathless, and then you feel it, and see the spreading red cloud – surely savage predators wouldn't live anywhere near such a crowded beach

And in any case we can see the surf lifesavers patrolling in their kindergarten-coloured caps and costumes and we see the warning poles topped with flapping pennants that spell out the difference between safety and danger more bluntly than the social rules that say you can go just so far with a girl but no further, cravats are in but safari jackets are definitely out this year, and shorts and thongs are not allowed in the Jungle Bar – and a team of hefty lads are dragging a boat into the water, a large elegant rowing boat with half a dozen oars, then they butt through the first wave, the nose lifting up then thudding down onto the water again, it seems to be fun

But it's really a serious kind of work that gives out a noble and metallic social aura because the young men are all volunteers – so are the bush fire fighters with their tankers of life-saving water – here it's the water that kills – and in both cases it's youth facing down the unimaginable that can strike us anywhere and – we hope – defeating it with their strength and guts – you feel a glow of gratitude towards them and plan to buy them all a drink

At the clubhouse afterwards but a gesture like that could be badly misinterpreted, and you notice – as the nose of the boat heaves up into the air again – that some of their costumes are very skimpy, if that's the right word, disappearing into that cleft between the buttocks as the helmsman leans on his oar half-submerged in a boiling green turmoil, the other oars waving in the spray like the feelers of a giant praying mantis – they wouldn't allow that kind of exhibitionism in Melbourne but hey, this is Sydney,

Right? And anything goes – the boat smashes down onto the back of the wave – you duck as a chopper roars over the crowd from somewhere behind the beach and whistles out to sea, rotors flailing the air

And beating the surface to a creamy froth that leaves a lacy pattern of foam as though a huge doily was racing over the water, flying on a mission to protect the eastern flanks of the city from ever-present death.

It's hard to imagine that dark force reaching up and taking you in daylight under the glaring blue sky, death

Belongs to midnight and silence, to the long quiet end of things, to shadowy corridors and empty rooms, to the hospital ward where my father's life leaked away, the starched sheets where my mother's tiny body lay curled in the gloom like a child's, the polished lino floor of the kitchen where my uncle Martin pitched forward and fell, surprised, and in the silence heard his poor battered heart stumble to a stop – it doesn't belong with us gathered here on the sunny crowded beach

With the cries of children and the tinkle of the ice-cream van a few blocks away and the squawk of seagulls filling the windy air.

But death doesn't answer our queries, it doesn't bother laughing at us. It drifts in with the morning breeze, it mixes with the smell of burnt sausages at the family barbecue, with the hiss of gas escaping from a keg of beer, it blends with the chlorine crystals filtering to the bottom of the municipal swimming pool, it blinks in time to the fairy lights and bounces along with the party balloons and the fun

At Mardi Gras and it washes into the gutters that drain the streets of Sydney

And down the sewers into the Harbour and out to the Pacific, a spreading stain, it takes your friends and your enemies alike, and in the middle of the good times it tugs your sleeve and murmurs to you whether you want to listen or not. One summer evening when I tilted into Martin's Bar on Oxford Street – this must be twenty years ago – and asked for a drink

The topless waitress – her pretty tits tipped with pink lipstick wobbling in time to the disco music pumping from the speakers – she asked 'What kind of drink? We've got hundreds,' and I said 'How about a martini?' and she blinked and said: 'Martini, ahh... I know, that's the one with the olive, right? Sorry, pet, we're out of olives, how about a strawberry, okay?' I said 'Are you kidding? A strawberry? Just give me a drink

Of gin with a dash of dry vermouth, please, no strawberries.' And in the shadows a ghost touched my shoulder and whispered in my ear 'Hey, have you tried this? It's better than drink. Friends of yours have gone to sleep in its arms. How about a shot of death?'

No, no thanks, no death. In Sydney

Let's say there's no more dying, each word we speak holds it at bay for one more minute, and where there's a party there's music and happiness, so no dying on and beyond and behind the beach

And in the sloping layers of rented rooms and apartments and human cliffs that stretch uphill, a tilting layer cake made of brick and tile behind Bondi glimmering in the twilight and pulsing with life, under the shade of the trees in the empty avenues, the cars asleep under the street lamps that swap glare and shadow, shadow and glare, you hear the shuffle of stealthy

footsteps, clink of a bottle, happy whispering, but no sadness, just a perplexed and sometimes tiring kind of fun,

Okay? – just fun, don't ask questions – in the warm air.

So quick, drop your book, get a drink, breathe in the air and laugh at death. Under the bright blue canopy it's time for fun; it's a summer's day in Sydney, and everyone's going to the beach.



Rae Desmond Jones

How long must I dream

To Helen

Above the strip of beach a full moon
Skewers the Northern sky,
Just beyond the city's phosphorescent
Fingers of light.

From the cabin behind the dunes
Roy Orbison's soul is making
The silver darkness shiver & gleam.

His sweet grieving song mingles
In the grumbling tide.

On the edge of the water
Where the sand is firm an old man
In a suit with no shoes dances
A foxtrot alone.

As the tide draws & drags his feet
He places his hands where his partner's
Hips would be & holds her steady & firm
For one long gentle kiss

from *Blow Out* (Island, 2009)



Front page & photograph here by Rick Warr

CONTRIBUTORS

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John S. Batts is a retired academic whose university career involved giving many courses on poets and poetry. Having spent too long living 1000k from the sea, John is now an enthusiastic resident of Bronte. His own writing has appeared in sundry PU anthologies as well as in fugitive magazines in the UK and Canada.

Margaret Bradstock has published four books of poetry. The most recent are "The Pomelo Tree" (which won the Wesley Michel Wright prize) and "Coast" (2005). In 2003 she was Asialink Writer-in-Residence at Peking University. Currently Hon. Visiting Fellow at UNSW & co-editor of "Five Bells."

Colleen Z Burke is a Sydney based poet whose latest poetry collection is *Fermenting*, 2007. She's also the co-editor of *The Turning Wave – Poems and Songs of Irish Australia*.

joanne burns is a Sydney poet. Her most recent book is 'an illustrated history of dairies' Giramondo Publishing 2007. A new collection of her poetry 'amphora' is forthcoming from Giramondo in 2010.

Kris Calhoun is an avid traveler and snaps photos everywhere she goes, a practice she learned from her father who also loved both of these activities. Kris also loves vintage photos and is her family's photo archivist. She works as a University administrator in an English literature department.

Jane Connors grew up at Collaroy Plateau. She now lives on the other side of the Bridge but often visits Dee Why, Long Reef and Fisherman's beach.

Brook Emery has published three poetry collections, *and dug my fingers in the sand* (FIP 2000), which won the Queensland Premier's Prize, *Misplaced Heart* (FIP 2003), and *Uncommon Light* (FIP 2007). All three were short-listed for the NSW Premier's Prize. Individual poems have won the Newcastle Poetry Prize, The Bruce Dawe National Poetry Prize, the Max Harris Award, and the Australian Sports Poetry Award. He is the Chairperson of the Poets Union.

Penelope Evans' first book was published by Bemac Press, titled *CROSS-HATCHED*. Most of her inspiration comes from the immediate environs and some from regular overseas travel.

David Falcon's work has been published in various anthologies and literary journals. He has performed his work at Varuna, NSW Writers' Centre, Poets' Union Venues, Radio Station 2NBC; and the Live Poets at Don Bank. He was a winner in the 1996 Sydney Writers' Festival Poetry Olympics.

Jean Frances is widely published here and overseas. Appeared in *Best Australian Poems* 2004 and 2005 (edited by Les Murray). *Blinkers Off*, her first poetry collection, published by Pipers' Ash (UK). *daring to taste the wind*, her second was published by Ginninderra Press.

Denis Gallagher lives in Blackheath NSW. His publications include four books of poetry, recently displayed in the Sydney Museum of Contemporary Art's exhibition (2009), *Avoiding Myth & Message: Australian Artists and the Literary World*.

Amelia Gledhill is a producer with the fine-music company Symphony of Australia Pty Ltd. She has a doctorate in English from the University of Sydney and lives an unrepentantly undignified life with her husband and daughter in Newtown.

Linda Godfrey has published poetry and short stories in anthologies and magazines. She has a Masters in Professional Writing UTS and is working towards a Masters of Creative Arts-Research from the University of Wollongong.

Alan Jefferies has recently returned to Australia from Hong Kong where he lived for a decade. He is the author of 5 books of poetry, his most recent being "Homage and other poems" (Chameleon, 2007). He keeps a musical alter ego @ www.myspace.com/psychicstreetsweepers

jeltje has performed her work solo and, for more than a decade, in collaboration with other performance poets and artists including the soundscape at the Scienceworks exhibition Big River for the 1995 Melbourne International Arts Festival. In 2003 she compiled and edited a CD of poetry and sound poetry by the late Jas H Duke accompanying a commemorative edition of his work. In 2005 jeltje collaborated with English improvising musician Harry Williamson on the CD of poetry and music *Dreaming in English*, and published her translation of *De Zon en de Wereld* (The Sun and the World) by the Netherlands poet Arjen Duinker. Other publications include her collections *Living in Aboriginal Australia* (1988), *Catching Worms* (1993), *Poetry live in the House* (2004), and the anthologies *Blowing out the Candles* (1988), *Poetry for Peace* (CD 2003) and the 2008 tribute to the late Lisa Belleair, the CD *Heart to Heart/Reconciliation Poetry at La Mama Poetica* (2004-2007). Since 1995 she has performed and recorded improvisations with the improvising group Unamunos Quorum, and in 2006 she performed with Sjaak de Jong from UQ at the Polypoetry Festival krikri in Ghent (Belgium). In 2007 she produced and performed in *La Mama Poetica: Voiceprints*, a short season of staged polypoetry celebrating La Mama's 40th anniversary, for the Melbourne International Arts Festival. jeltje has been convening poetry performances at La Mama Poetica since 2004.

Carol Jenkins is a Sydney writer and publisher. Her first book *Fishing in the Devonian* (Puncher & Wattmann, 2008) was short-listed for the Anne Elder Award.

Rae Desmond Jones has written 2 novels, a book of short stories and five books of poetry during an as yet eventful life. His last book of poetry is 'Blow Out', published by Island Press in 2008. He enjoys reading in public and has been recorded doing so. He hopes his life will continue to be as much fun as it has been so far, and won't end any time soon.

S. K. Kelen is a Canberra-based poet. His most recent books are *Goddess of Mercy* (Brandl & Schlesinger, 2002) and *Earthly Delights* (Pandanus Press, 2006).

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Martin Langford is the author of five poetry books, the most recent being *Sensual Horizon* (Five Islands, 2001). *The Human Project, A Selected and New* will be published by Puncher and Wattmann in 2009.

Justin Lowe was born in Sydney but spent large portions of his early childhood on the Spanish island of Minorca with his younger sister and artist mother. He has published four collections and two verse novels and collaborated with songwriters such as Tim Freedman and Bow Campbell. He currently lives in the Blue Mountains west of Sydney.

Susan McCreery's poetry and short fiction have appeared in magazines such as *Blue Dog*, *Five Bells*, *Island*, *Poetrix*, *Page Seventeen*, *Going Down Swinging*, *FourW* and *Tamba*. She lives in Thirroul, NSW, and works as a freelance proofreader.

Paula McKay's collection of poems 'Travelling Incognito' was published in 2003 by Five Islands Press. She is editor of e-magazine *Sydney Mosaic* www.ram.net.au/users/paula

Peter Newton (b 1935, Croydon, Surrey, UK) came to Australia in 1960. He is a specialist editor, author, poet and scholar, and has published widely in Australia and abroad.

jenni nixon is a Sydney author/poet/performer. Poems and short stories appear in small press anthologies and online. Published *Café Boogie* in 2004, Interactive Press. *Agenda!* Picaro Press, 2009. Recently read with Harbour City Poets, *Poems from the Bottom of the Harbour* at Sydney Writers Festival.

Margo Ruckert – a Sydney poet, writer and educator and a former TAFE Science teacher. Winner of the NSW Women Writers National Poetry Competition, 2007. Featured in *liNQ*, *Blue Dog*, anthologies and ezines. omargo.com.au

Brenda Saunders is a Sydney writer and artist, of Aboriginal and British descent. She has had work published in journals, anthologies and on the web. Her poetry readings have been broadcast on ABC RN and 2MBS. In 2008 she won the NSW Society of Women Writers Poetry prize.

John Tranter has published more than twenty collections of verse including a collection of new and selected poems, "Urban Myths: 210 Poems" (University of Queensland Press, and Salt Publishing, Cambridge UK) He is the editor of the free Internet magazine *Jacket* (jacketmagazine.com).

Rick Warr is a Sydney photographer who is making sense of technology through art. Through good design I am seeking to create elegant fusions of art, purpose and technology. I maintain that people prevail but greater heights can be reached with intelligent technology application.

Les Wicks has toured widely and seen publication across 12 countries in 7 languages. His 8th book of poetry is *The Ambrosiacs* (Island, 2009). <http://leswicks.tripod.com/lw.htm>

ABOUT

A Guide to Sydney Beaches is an invitation to explore the greater Sydney coastline through poetry.

It is aimed at an audience that does not usually access the art form.

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