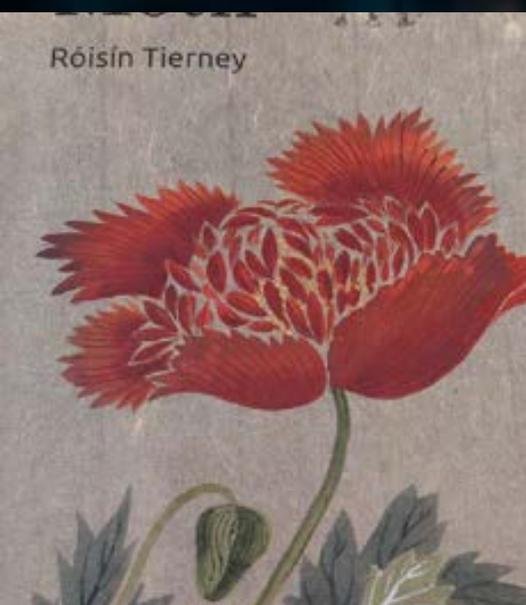


HEM



D. S. Maolalai



Róisín Tierney



SECRET POETS

Darren Donohue



CHRIS



What to Put in a Suitcase



# Catalogue of poetry and fiction 2017 - 2022

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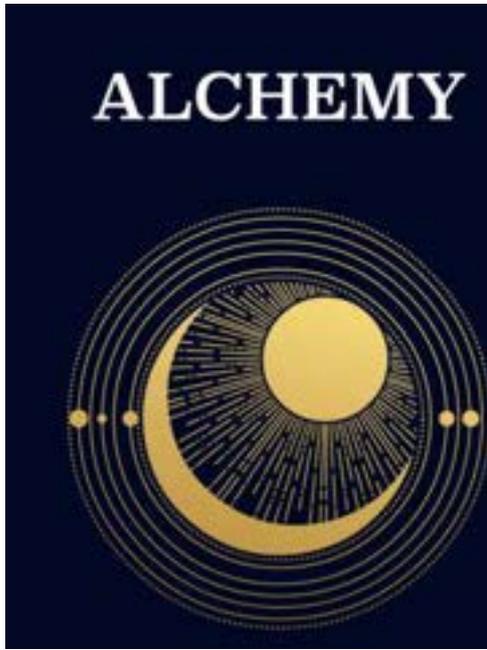
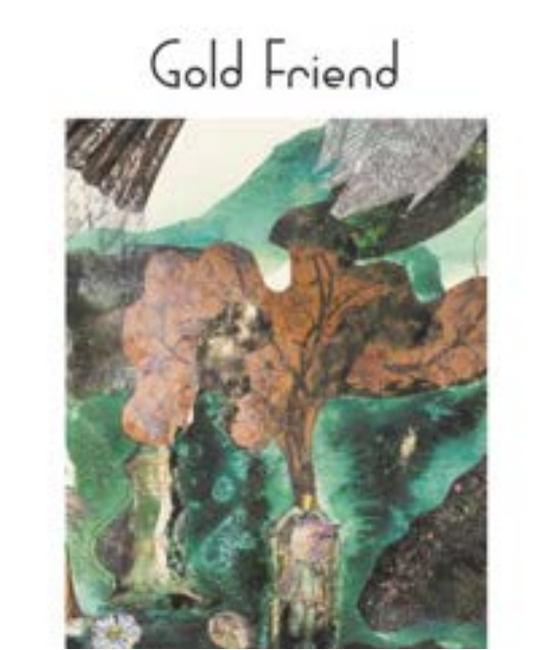
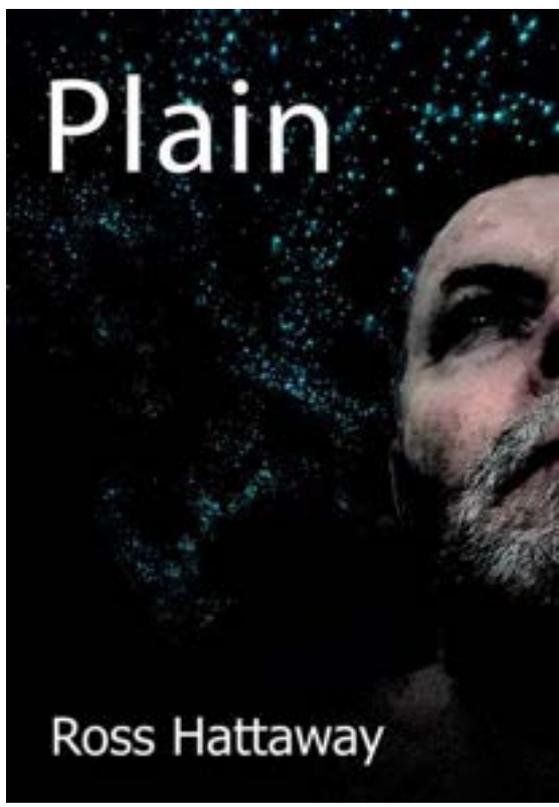
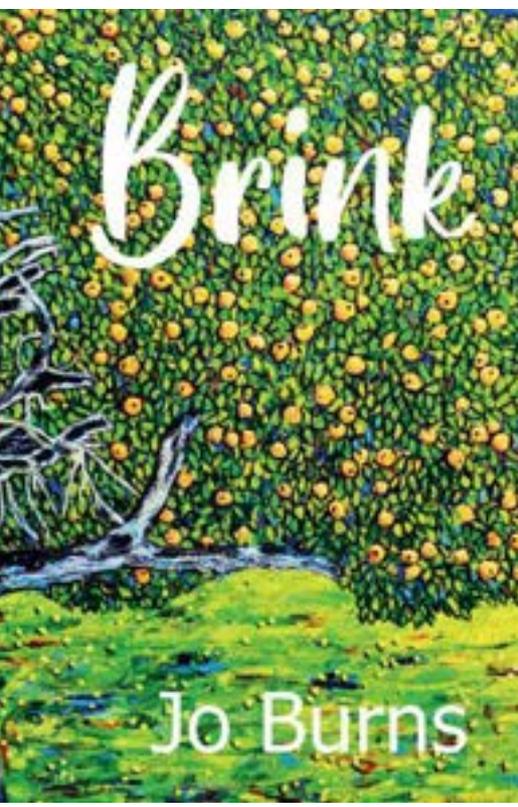
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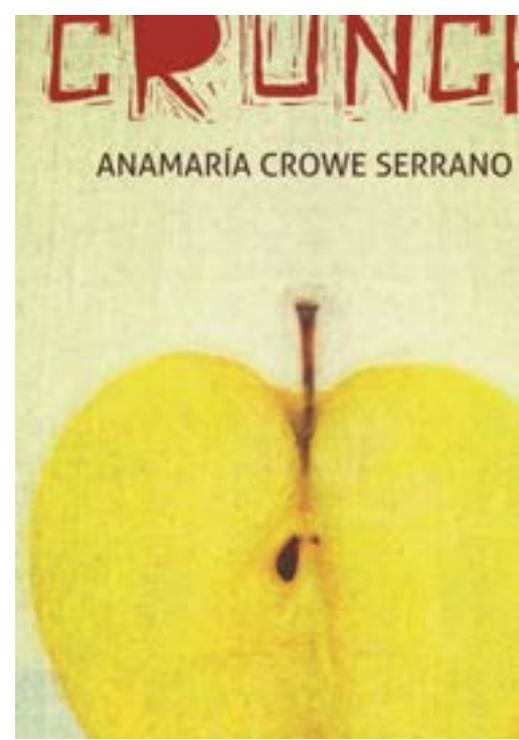
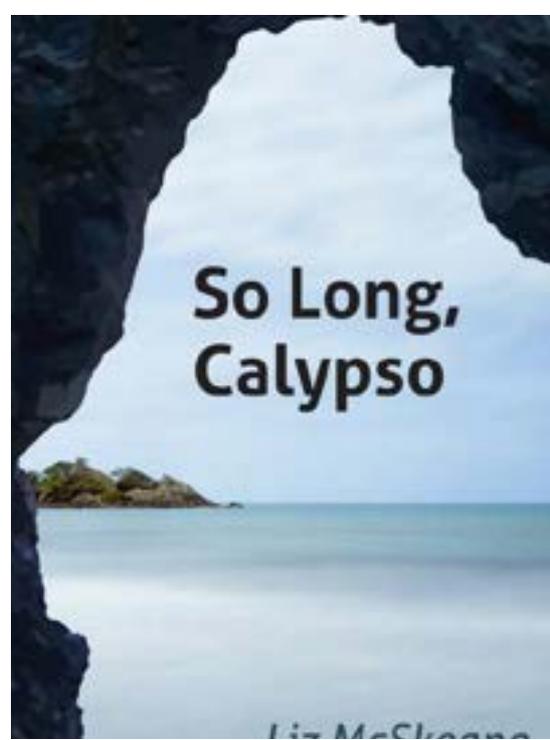
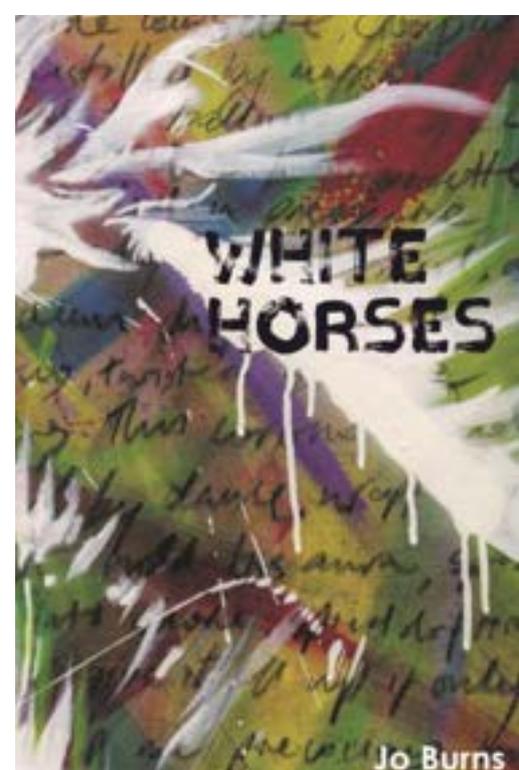
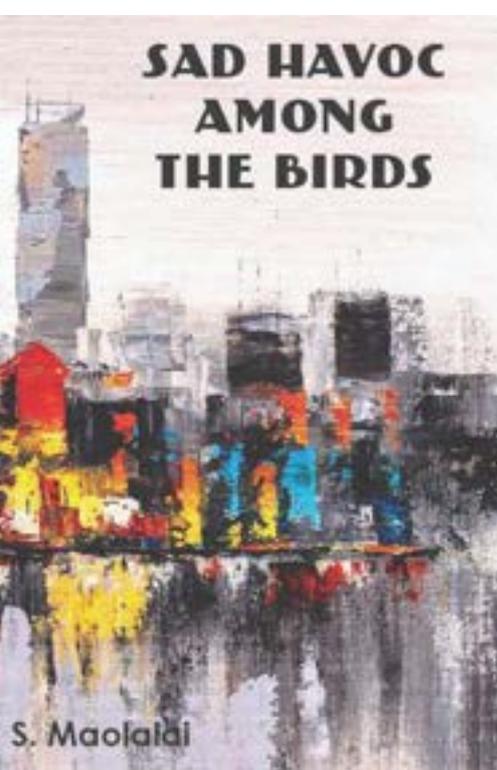
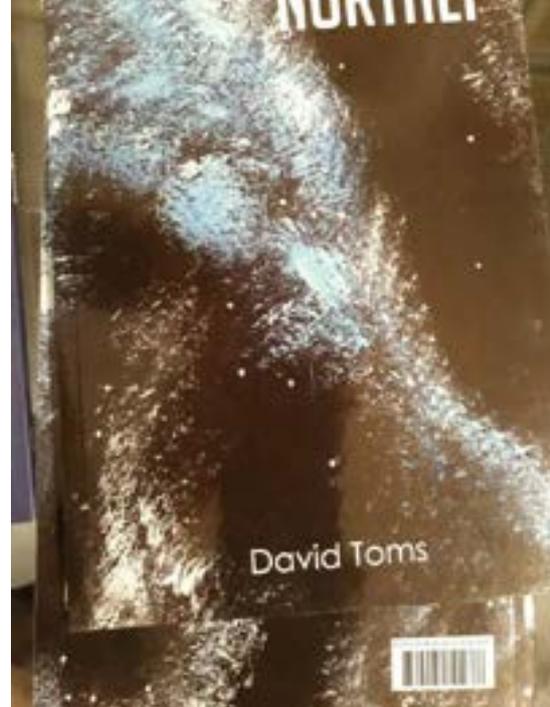


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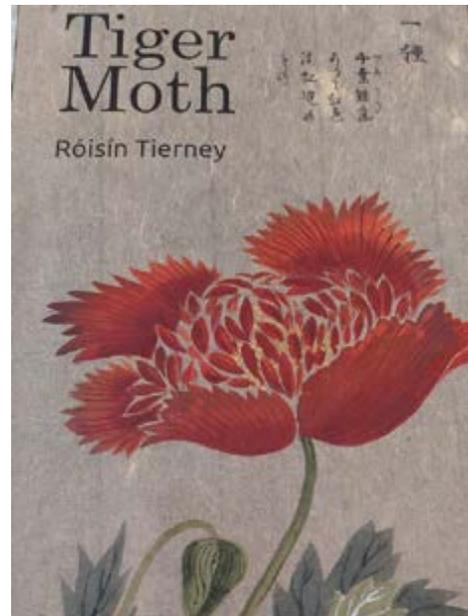
## *Tiger Moth* Róisín Tierney

*Tiger Moth* is a magical collection of poems whose themes range over memories and emotions evocative of key moments and milestones in life. The natural world plays a central role in the poetic vision of this collection, which illuminates numinous elements of the human condition. Woven throughout these poems are the humble details of daily life that are so often missed, yet here gleam with a transcendent shimmer, where the particular expands to embrace experiences that are universal, yet imbued with the poet's unique vision.

### Praise for *Tiger Moth*

"These unsettling, dark lyrics have a wonderful verbal energy; a mythic imagination. *Snowberries* have a 'pale gleam', a 'halo', a texture like 'a mortician gently filling a bruise.' Insects and birds come as harbingers, as though from another world, and are both read as symbols and also dexterous in their evasion of the speaker's quest for applied meaning. Through a careful balancing, Tierney manages to chart the mind's search for significance with poems seeking similarities between the natural world and the traumas of human life."

*Seán Hewitt*, Irish Times



Paperback: Poetry 85 pages  
ISBN: 9781913598334  
Published April 2022 €13/£12

"Here is a collection that calls up deities and fallen figures as well as bats, tractors, and squid. This clash of worlds gives Tierney's work a singular, playful energy, a kind of re-invention and humanising of myth that may sometimes be light in tone but is utterly serious in intent."

*Greta Stoddart*

"...the work of a seasoned storyteller with a rich, descriptive eye and a knack for conjuring the slippages of time."

*Sarah Howe*

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## The Author

Róisín Tierney was born in Dublin and studied Psychology and Philosophy at University College Dublin. She lived in Spain for several years and is now based in London. Her poetry has won prizes in many national competitions including the Strokestown, the Brendan Kennelly, the Bridport and the Winchester Poetry Prize. Her pamphlet *Dream Endings* (Rack Press 2011) won the Michael Marks Award. Her debut collection, *The Spanish-Italian Border* was published by Arc in 2014, followed by *Five Poems* (Clutag Press 2016) and *Mock-Orange* (Rack Press 2019). She has been a Hawthornden Fellow. Check out Róisín's website at [www.roisintierney.blogspot.com](http://www.roisintierney.blogspot.com)



### Insect Reverie

If I am not entirely glad to contemplate  
 this gown embellished with wing-casings  
 of the iridescent jewel beetle –  
 thousands of tiny body parts sewn on  
 to the delicate cream muslin  
 of a Victorian evening dress –  
 their nacreous lustre and opaline sheen  
 setting the whole ensemble a-shimmer  
 in the carefully lit display case  
 at the museum – so many deaths! –  
 neither can I say I never hanker  
 after my own insect-gown, or beetle dress,  
 to put to shame the rufous, dull, sere  
 attire of my rivals as I enter a room,  
 sundry candles lit up in its green glimmer,  
 a chitinous bristle and crunch as I dance,  
 the whiskery feel of my antennae  
 tenderly stroking your face,  
 mandibles firmly holding your chin,  
 carapace pressing in  
 against your soft underbelly,  
 our elegant waltz and eventual  
 clackety beetle-fuck,  
 our leavings (may I say our?)  
 a glister of eggs on the rug,  
 my exit swift, through an open window,  
 a dark scarab aiming  
 for the moon.

### Io Rising

There she blows, a shadowy speck  
 a black marble thrown, a pea of jet.  
 There she blows, she rolls across  
 the tiger stripes of Jupiter looming.

Now change your position, adjust, sit back.  
 See how she comes, how she rises,  
 golden, speckled, gorgeous, volcanic,  
 hot and fiery, a Klimt painting, glittering

eruptive, volatile, spewing lava  
 (and sulphur dioxide, her toxic breath).  
 This sultry lady's not for the taking,  
 she'll burn you up, she'll leave you panting.

Now she hangs there, brilliant, gibbous  
 – Swing thurible! Swing gilded censer! –  
 wafting her fumes throughout the void,  
 spent gunpowder, sour, stinky amberggris.

# 8

## *Noble Rot* D.S. Maolalai

This is a compelling collection from a young poet whose uniquely witty and reflective voice engages with the joys and losses wrought by the passing of time. In these laconic, yet thought-provoking and often heart-rending poems, the writer grapples with the challenges of youth edging into maturity, dealing with grief, loss and love. The style is sharp, playful and often seasoned with an undercurrent of sadness which lends a bitter-sweet flavour to the whole.

### Praise for *Noble Rot*

"There's a gorgeous vulnerability to D.S. Maolalai's *Noble Rot*. These poems, rich in variety and location, capture an accumulation of small moments and gestures that reflect back to us the inevitable progression of time: 'I guess this is my first shot/ at becoming old, really.' Whether set in Canada, Kilbarrack, Istanbul, the poet...returns again and again to small, local, incidental details that one suspects his younger self might have missed, which alchemise the fleeting experience into something precious and lasting. The down-to-earth tone and language used throughout gifts the reader an intimacy. A full-bodied read, *Noble Rot* will have you calling for another, and another round."

*Anne Tannam*



Paperback: Poetry 97 pages  
ISBN: 9781913598273  
Published May 2022 €13/£12

"There's a confident, and deceptive plainness to the language here, a voice that is comfortable with words and with a reverence for quiet exploration, calm observation of mysteries that may or may not unravel, almost a plainsong acceptance of world and community. In *Noble Rot*, D.S.Maolalai holds a steady eye on a brittle, shifting present."

*Ross Hattaway*

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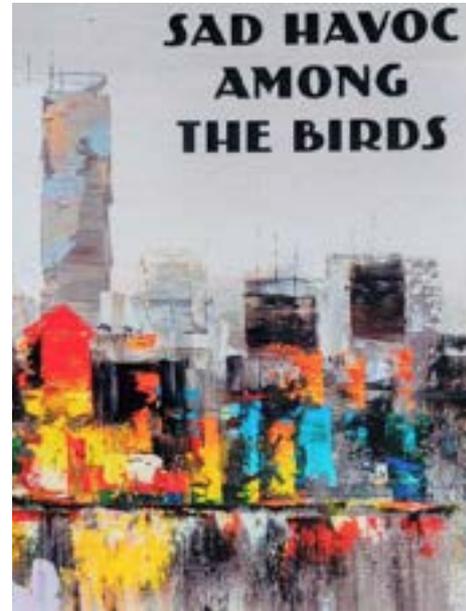
## *Sad Havoc Among the Birds* D.S. Maolalai

This is a beautifully-crafted, witty and sometimes sad, exploration of the challenges of youth and contemporary life. *Sad Havoc* draws on the poet's memories, often viewed through the prism of his later experience of different countries and cultures. The poet's unique style, often playful, occasionally irreverent, is arresting in its evocation of the chaos, humour and pathos of urban living.

### **Praise for** *Sad Havoc Among the Birds*

"*Sad Havoc* contains wry, sometimes beautiful, sometimes sad observations on people, things, nature and art itself. These poems seem to have arrived fully formed in the poet's mind though obviously carved, planed and shaped to fit the page and get right down into the guts of the moment. Here's a poet with some moxy, some style and some grace who sings like a wounded bird and is worth listening to."

*Karl Parkinson*



Paperback: Poetry 108 pages

ISBN: 9780995791664

Published March 2019 €12/£10

"Of *Love is Breaking Plates in the Garden* (Encircle, 2016) "...done with such craft and immediacy that even the jaded are compelled to feel again the bewildering, blessed wind of youth's finest mistakes."

*Frank Montesonti*

"...a wonderful introduction to a self-deprecating wordsmith."

*Liam Murphy*

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# 10

## The Author

D.S. (Diarmuid) Maolalai was born in Dublin and began writing poetry when he was studying English Literature at Trinity College. He spent five years travelling, living in Toronto and London and working various dispatch jobs. He returned to Dublin in late 2017. These many experiences have contributed to the urban, cosmopolitan flavour of his work, melded with his Irish roots. Diarmuid's poetry has appeared in many publications all over the world, most notably *The Stinging Fly*, *Smithereens*, *The Passage Between*, *The Phoenix*, *Shearsman*, *Two Thirds North*, *Hong Kong's Voice and Verse* and *The Poetry New Zealand Yearbook*. Diarmuid's work has been nominated for Best of the Net and twice nominated for a Pushcart Prize.



### No skyline

sky tonight  
like underdone eggs, and soft all over.  
and I don't know  
if I've ever  
thought this before. but tonight, seeing dublin  
from the coast at kilbarrack,  
I saw it resting  
easy on the wicklow hillsides. here  
there's horizon  
but we have no skyline –  
cities with mountains  
never do. sloping  
up smooth, piled lumpy  
and curving like butter  
in the morning on a rounded blade  
butterknife. I remembered toronto  
and new york, those jagged,  
key edged reliefs. then pulled sharply on the leash  
and glanced downward. the dog had been squatting;  
she looked at me offended. we both stood there,  
surrounded by shadows,  
waiting for her to finish  
in a world with no edges  
like ice-cubes on a hot day.

*(from Noble Rot)*

### The Fear of Empty Spaces

*Dublin, November 2017*

I go to the liberties.  
I go down the little roads off camden st.  
I go all along the quays  
and look at the closed faces of shops  
and the facades of abandoned pubs  
saved from demolition  
by the civic fear  
(understandable)  
of leaving  
empty spaces.

sometimes there's a new build  
office block up  
or a set of shiny apartments  
like the scrubbed deck  
of a ship in dry dock.

around me  
the city  
falls down  
so beautifully.

*(from Sad Havoc)*

## Secret Poets

### Darren Donohue

In this remarkable début collection, the poet reflects on a medley of chance encounters with strangers, on joyful or poignant moments with loved ones, on art and the creative process. Mining the minutiae of memory and daily life, these poems explore the challenges of grappling with the modern world, with technology and the many facets of communication, with both strangers and loved ones. The poet's themes are imbued with the flavour of his home place, the Irish Midlands, which he evokes with great affection.

### Praise for *Secret Poets*

"Wry, witty and surreal, the poems in Darren Donohue's first collection demonstrate a confidence rare in début poets. Cosmopolitan in his sensibilities and attuned to the complexities of Irish and international history, Donohue is an heir to greats such as Matthew Sweeney; poets who challenge us to look outside our narrow selves, and glimpse the world through fresh eyes."

*Jessica Traynor*

"Even as he contemplates terrible things, the unutterable tragedies that can befall the world, this is a collection of vivid imaginings and our world is the richer, the better, for it."

*Derek Coyle*



## SECRET POETS

Darren Donohue

Paperback: Poetry 74 pages

ISBN: 9781913598303

Published May 2022 €13/£12

"A strong collection showcasing years of work with experiences of illness and respite, belief and questioning, mixed with shots of surrealism - crocodiles in hospitals and Philip Larkin taking selfies. I, for one, am glad that Donohue's work is now out there and he is no longer a secret poet."

*Simon Lewis*

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## The Author

Darren Donohue is a poet and playwright living in Goresbridge, Co. Kilkenny. His poetry has been published in many outlets, including *Poetry Ireland Review*, *Irish Times*, *Irish Independent*, *Cyphers*, *Banshee Press* and others. In 2020, Darren received the Dennis O'Driscoll Literary Award. He was writer-in-residence at Carlow College, St Patrick's in 2019 and at the Science Gallery, TCD 2020. As a playwright, Darren has worked extensively with the Abbey Theatre in Dublin and his plays are produced internationally. His work has garnered several awards including the Bread & Roses Playwriting Award and the Radius Playwriting Prize, in association with Finborough Theatre. His play *I and the Village* received its world premiere at the Bread & Roses Theatre, London, and an Offie nomination.



### Late at Night

Late at night  
when the moon rolls on its side  
and empty fields mourn history,  
dictators kill poets.

Surprised in their pyjamas  
stolen from their beds  
they're marched to where firing squads  
miss their target,  
taking one, two, three bullets,  
to send geckos flying  
in the hidden dark.

A wooden-legged school teacher  
and two anarchist matadors  
are trapped like paper  
between scissor-blade headlights.

Lorca, standing apart,  
dips his pen in their shadows  
and draws their faces  
in rings of gunsmoke.

The briefest silence  
and petty rage  
whistles through him,  
dragging the poet  
from his balcony of stars  
into an unmarked grave.

### Secret Poets

Like a symphony  
of secret poets  
they convened  
nesting on a masterpiece  
of secret web branches.

Ashen clouds,  
bark and feather,  
each perfect.  
Synapse hopping to and fro  
like the birth  
of some beautiful thought.

With a climax  
beyond me,  
they rise.  
They send the air spinning  
leaving the tree to mourn  
the loss of such life.

## Plain

### Ross Hattaway

Hattaway's signature pared-back style reveals the starkness at the heart of life experiences – the joys, griefs and expectations of family and interpersonal connection. The satirical, playful flavour of these poems is tinged with an underlying sadness, seasoned with a dash of optimism. This interwoven, complex psychological and emotional landscape imbues this collection with a multi-layered complexity that belies the clarity and simplicity of expression. The detached voice, now teasing the reader with deadpan wit, now teetering cheerfully on the abyss, unflinchingly gazes upon 'sadness/at the heart of things' yet emerges resilient, resisting, surviving.

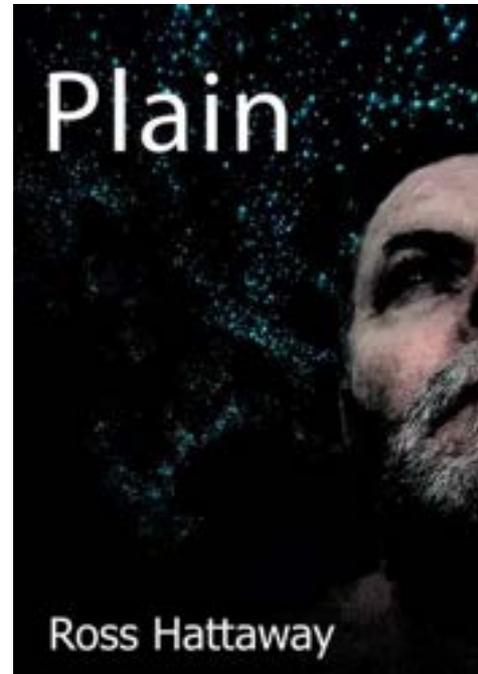
### Praise for *Plain*

"In this collection, Hattaway is speaking to us from the shadows. These poems are tunnels into darkness, while reminding us also that 'we do not do these things alone'. The poet does not tell us what we want to hear, but asks questions 'like ratbites that fester and swell'. This is a collection of probing, reflective poems, with flickers of light at the end of their dark tunnels."

*Fíona Bolger*

"A literary observer, a witty witness of his own foibles and the quirkiness of others in his orbit."

*Liam Murphy*



Paperback: Poetry 56 pages

ISBN: 978-1-913598-20-4

Published October, 2021 €12/£10

"Ross Hattaway's new collection, *Plain*, lays bare the shadowy ambiguities with which every life...is riddled. There is a glorious flat wit to many of these poems, which fizz like some strange sherbet sweet. Hattaway is an adept satirist of the small but crucial things of life...In Hattaway's poems, the blood still absolutely pumps."

*Kevin Higgins*

[Click here to order a copy](#)

## *How to Sleep with Strangers* Ross Hattaway

These innovative, contemporary poems both entertain and challenge readers to examine assumptions and stereotypes. Hattaway's laconic and playful tone often lulls the reader into a false sense of security, until the poet expertly delivers the incisive line or phrase that stops us in our tracks. The succinct expression and deceptively straightforward language distill the poet's message to intense and powerful effect. Funny, often poignant, always compelling, *How to Sleep with Strangers* is a triumph of wit and wisdom.

### *Praise for How to Sleep with Strangers*

"*How to Sleep with Strangers* is a mix of obliquity both alarming and reassuring – like the idea of fate. These poems play and pun, and sometimes come close and whisper something terribly sad and shocking in your ear."

*Elizabeth Knox*

"Ross Hattaway is often 'seeking the vertical' in the shape of short-line, page-length poems that range from the archaeology of a compost heap to a lover's revelations...He walks the reader through the minefield of human relations to relative safety."

*Iggy McGovern*



Paperback: poetry 70 pages

ISBN: 9780995791619

Published November 2017 €12/£10

"*Strangers* is an examination of parameters and possibilities. It explores spaces, concrete and metaphysical, easily moving between the natural and the manmade... Hattaway chooses to answer life with whimsy in places, but bemoans the certitude of heartache as well."

*Colin Dardis, Lagan Online*

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## The Author

Ross Hattaway is originally from New Zealand and has lived in Ireland for more than two decades. He has four poetry collections: *The Gentle Art of Rotting* (Seven Towers, 2006), *Pretending to be Dead* (Seven Towers, 2012), *How to Sleep with Strangers* (Turas Press, 2018) and *Plain* (Turas Press, 2021). His work has been published widely and also, translated into Russian. He has performed his poetry in Ireland, the UK, the USA, Australia, New Zealand and Lithuania.

Ross is a founder member and organiser of the Sunflower Sessions, a monthly open mic event held in Dublin city centre on the last Wednesday of every month.



### Slip

I climb the hill  
 behind the house  
 and sit above a small lake  
 next to a bigger lake.  
 There is snow  
 though not on my hill.  
 My hill has only sunshine  
 and a cold breeze.  
 The cattle watch me  
 but refrain from judgement  
 even though I have no horns  
 and am not covered in excrement  
 like a respectable creature.  
 Perhaps they think  
 I am avoiding imitation  
 in a perverse display  
 of bad manners  
 presented as courtesy.  
 On the way back down  
 I will slip in some  
 and they will nod to each other:  
 try-hard outsider  
 trying to fit in.  
 Some days  
 you just can't win.

(From *Plain*)

### Black Cottage

What we have here  
 is a phatic gathering,  
 a celebration  
 of what we want in common,  
 raising the group to its good.

Gather is the key.  
 We come together for what  
 we count as needed  
 - friendship, family, milestones,  
 pockets of hope and shelter.

We hope for something  
 of this to linger, delay  
 endings, disaster.  
 We give layers of ourselves.  
 Not enough, but what we have.  
 (From *Plain*)

### The Balance of Pāua

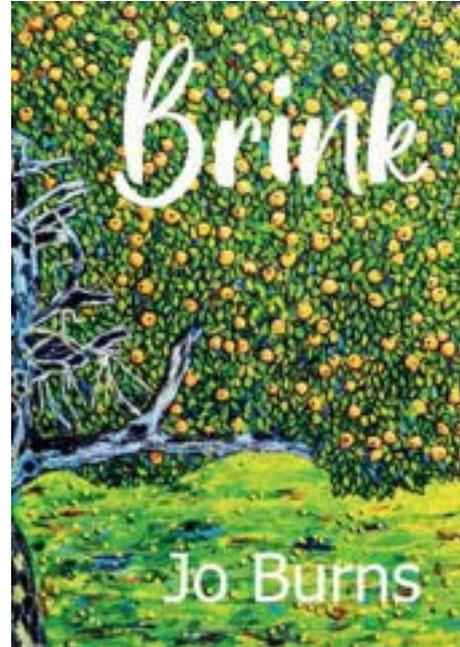
Which is not balance  
 but suction, tenacity,  
 gripping rock and fate.  
 Sensing surges, with one foot  
 holding out, facing the grave

(From *How to Sleep with Strangers*)

# 16

## *Brink* Jo Burns

*Brink* is a work that bears witness to a world hovering on the edge of crisis, yet sees hope in the compassion and empathy in personal relationships which forge the unbreakable bonds that bind us. From her vantage point of the post-truth, pandemic-afflicted present, Jo Burns turns her fierce analytical powers on the most tragic historical events of the 20th century, and on the impact of propaganda and conspiracy theories on public and private discourse in the present day. These arresting poems are imbued with the multi-layered, highly textured craft of a poet at the height of her powers, engaging with the most urgent questions of our time.



### Praise for *Brink*

"The poems in *Brink* are charged with an exceptional grace, gravity and heft. Jo Burns' erudition and unflinching gaze evince the fragile brilliance of the human world, where dark social history is tempered with gentle humanity."

*Eleanor Hooker*

Paperback Poetry 64 pages  
ISBN: 9781913598242  
Published October 2021 €12/£10

"These poems are subtle, lyrical and elegant but they also insist: *Brink* charts a pivotal moment and challenges its readers to reconsider the lessons of history. It is a profoundly wise collection, but it never preaches. These are poems of humility, and vital reading for our times."

*Helen Mort*

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## White Horses

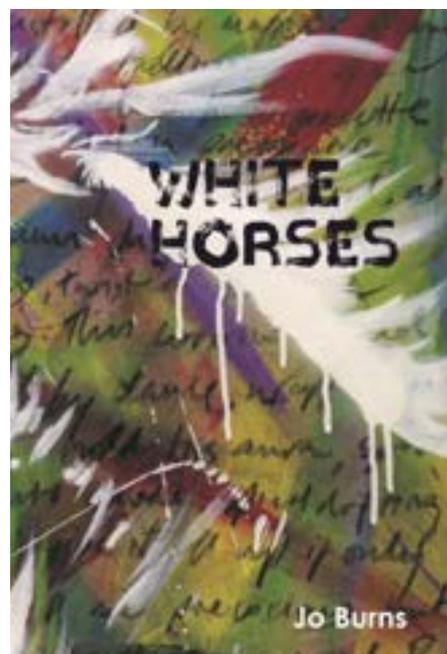
### Jo Burns

In this remarkable début collection, the poet explores the legacy of growing up in Northern Ireland during the Troubles and how her world view matures through engagement with other countries and culture. These beautifully crafted poems, which include a series giving voice to the lovers of Pablo Picasso, probe a diverse range of social and personal topics: gender equality, motherhood, faith and social justice. *White Horses* contains several prize-winning poems, including *The Cosmic Horseshoe* – winning poem in the Magma Poetry Competition (Judges' Prize) 2018 – and *Hard Borders*, which won the New Irish Writing in Germany /Wild Word Award, 2018.

### Praise for *White Horses*

"*White Horses* draws on a heritage of ethics and strong-mindedness that extends worldwide, through Germany and Europe to post-colonial Africa and the Himalayas, from the patriarchal and biblical past to a future where reason and the heart lie down together."

*Harry Clifton*



Paperback: Poetry 112 pages  
ISBN 9780995791657

Published November, 2018 €12/£10

"To read Jo Burns' poems is to feel exhilarated and enthralled. She makes bold, unexpected leaps with language, able to mine history and place with authentic poignancy. This collection will move you, and excite too, as Burns explores the spectacular and the strange, gifting us with vivid poems to be savoured. Poetry has a new, accomplished and necessary voice."

*Rebecca Goss*

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## The Author

Jo Burns is originally from Northern Ireland. She lives in Germany and is an English Lecturer and translator. Her poems have appeared in *Oxford Poetry*, *Poetry Ireland Review*, *Poetry News*, *Southword*, *The Stinging Fly*, *The Tangerine*, *Magma* and elsewhere. She won the McClure Poetry Prize 2017 at the Irish Writers Festival CA, the Magma Poetry Competition 2018, the New Irish Writing in Germany Poetry Award 2018, the 2020 Listowel Irish Writers Week Single Poem Prize and the Poetry Society Hamish Canham Prize. She was shortlisted in 2020 for Irish poem of the year. Jo's debut pamphlet, *Circling for Gods* was published by Eyewear Publishing. Her first full collection, *White Horses* was published by Turas Press in 2018. Jo is currently completing an MFA at Manchester Metropolitan University.



### The Time it Takes, Revisited

Only a minute to spread false facts or a day  
to seed dreams of new regimes. Only an hour  
to cast a vote or a week to see propaganda spin.

Only a week to plan murmurs on the street  
or a month to group on social media, a season  
to entirely change your colours,

as you strut on the brink with extremists.  
A year to debunk experts, with the right  
agenda. Under 90 years for blind mechanics

to wind watches back to 1933. Three generations  
to replicate old, feathered nests of fear and panic.  
Some sentences take only five seconds to say,

like Let's never repeat history. You will  
believe in silence and think that's all long gone,  
but it takes only one swing of the cuckoo clock.

(From *Brink*)

### Smuggling Apples

*For Irena Sendlerowa (codename Jolanta)*

Picture this: Beside *Jurisprudence*,  
Klimt's Golden Apples is engulfed  
when the SS detonate

a castle full of plunder, as they flee  
*Schloss Immendorf*. And you and I,  
transported, cast a final look

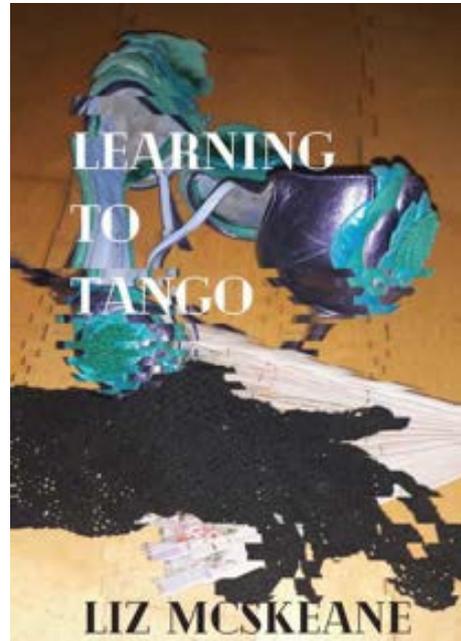
at the canvas, bearing witness.  
Under branches we'd hope to find  
*Aigle, Hesperia, Arethusia,*

the dancing nymphs and maids,  
guarding jewels while they sing  
among the green and gold in flames.

(From *Brink*)

## *Learning to Tango* Liz McSkeane

This collection is an exuberant, playful, sometimes intense reflection on navigating the challenges of movement, the dynamics of the dance floor and the world beyond it. The poet makes many discoveries along the way – about the dance, about the quest for the ideal and the necessary acceptance of imperfection. Throughout the collection, the mischievous use of traditional and non-traditional poetic forms conveys the variety and skill of tango itself. And at the heart of the endeavour is a passion to imbue every step, however basic, with balance and grace, for 'in tango the walk is simple/and therefore takes a lifetime to learn.'



Paperback: Poetry 62 pages  
ISBN: 9781913598181  
Published April 2021 €12/£10

### *Praise for Learning to Tango*

"The playfulness of these poems has a serious intent...A sort of Zen and the Art of Tango, McSkeane's collection is a joyful exploration of not just the dance, but of a way of living."

*Nessa O'Mahoney*

"A splendid collection of tense embraces that gradually open up under the distant sounds of the bandoneon, violin and drum of life and all its light, lust, lessons and longing."

*Damien Donnelly*

"*Learning to Tango* is a poetry collection that leaves me feeling exhilarated, thanks to its balance of passion and grace...It is beautifully crafted, using the tango dance as a foundation for poetic form."

*Eileen Casey*

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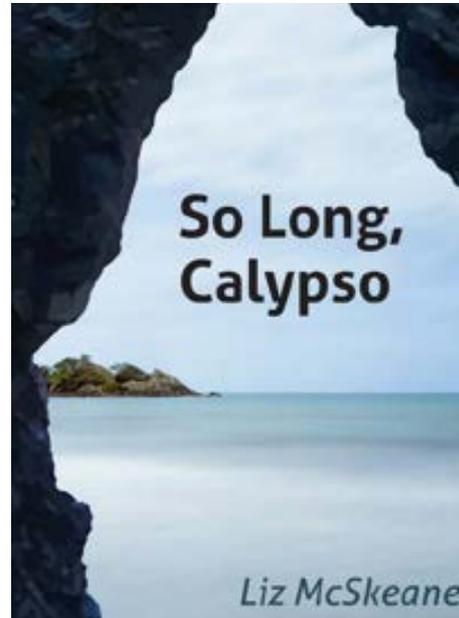
## *So Long, Calypso* Liz McSkeane

The conversational tone of many of the poems in this collection belies the subtle craft that underlies and unifies disparate themes. *So Long, Calypso* is peopled by a cast of characters recognisable from ancient history and myth, from recent history and from contemporary culture. The musings of these various personae are by turns reflective and urgent, their concerns social and political, as well as deeply engage with navigating the challenges of different stages of life.

### Praise for *So Long, Calypso*

"Empathetic, unsettling and engaging – it is rare to read any book, be it fiction or poetry, that deals so scrupulously and wisely with the subject of age and ageing. Yet Liz McSkeane's humility of attention and her brilliant sense for form – especially the sonnet – sharpen and shape the perception of the speakers and characters that inhabit *So Long, Calypso*."

*David Morley*



Paperback: Poetry 62 pages  
ISBN 9780995791602  
Published May 2017 €12/£10

"In poems of both expressive energy and technical skill, she lays bare an underlying order that most of the time we only guess at....Hard-won insights here, compassion and a measure of clear-eyed joy, sustained and framed for us in humane, beautifully-achieved poems."

*Paula Meehan*

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## The Author

Poet and fiction writer Liz McSkeane was born in Scotland to an Irish/Scottish family and has been living in Dublin since 1981. In 1999 she won the Hennessy/Sunday Tribune New Irish Writer of the Year Award for her poetry. Her historical novel *Canticle* was joint winner in the 2016 Irish Writers' Centre Novel Fair competition. In addition to her four collections of poetry and novel, her short story collection, *What to Put in a Suitcase*, is due out in October, 2022. Liz's poems and stories have been widely published and anthologised in Ireland and the UK. She is founder and Director of Turas Press. Follow Liz on Twitter @EMcSkeane and Instagram @lizmcskeane



### Waiting Time

some of the best moments in tango  
are those emptied of motion  
ghost notes of calm that brim with purpose

yet have no end            but to focus  
the instant            on a pause    chosen  
to propel a shift in stance  
or make ready for a change  
of direction            to open

a pathway through            or around  
an obstacle ahead            to adjust  
a misstep taken or            warn against

this  
    or just bathe in the instant  
        when there is no advance    no retreat  
no empty stasis            only these seconds

of serenity    fully charged    complete

(From *Learning to Tango*)

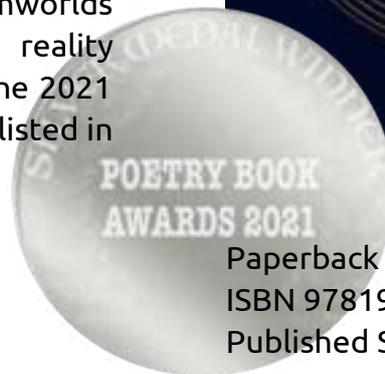
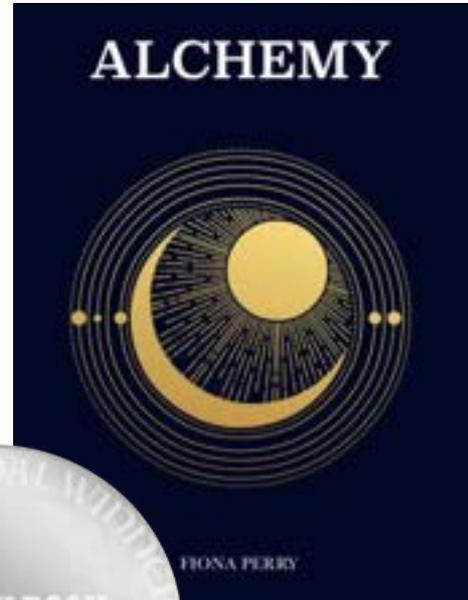
### Lot's Wife

I know. It's just that it's not possible  
to leave without taking a moment first  
to look around, ask yourself if this worst  
-case scenario was always where the idyll  
had to lead because – although it's awful  
to remember – we were happy here once,  
were we not? Still, long before the bubble burst  
I did wonder – is this it? Terrible  
suspicions stir: there must be something more;  
and then that long-awaited something else  
turns up. The second chance to, whatever.  
Make amends. Take another route before  
there's nowhere left to go. Drop the pretence.  
I heard. It's time to move. I'll be right there.

(from *So Long, Calypso*)

## *Alchemy* Fiona Perry

*Alchemy* is an intriguing and compelling début collection from a poet who is already strikingly in command of her craft. Mingling daily life with the numinous, these poems reflect on love and loss, on the milestones of lived experience. Travelling through time and space, this collection evokes the magic of ancient birds in a New Zealand landscape, the intensive care ward where a loved one lies dying; the daily round of household tasks and the dreamworlds where memory, imagination and reality merge. *Alchemy* was runner up in the 2021 Poetry Book Awards and also, shortlisted in the 2022 Rubery Award.



Paperback Poetry 62 pages

ISBN 9781913598129

Published September 2020 €12/£10

### Praise for *Alchemy*

"Perry's sumptuous collection shifts through memory, family and nature with consummate ease, journeying through vivid landscapes whilst describing in unflinching detail formative events and places. She draws upon spiritual and historical sources to create these revealing pieces, all delivered in her unique, eloquent and fearless voice."

*Glen Wilson*

"A gifted raconteur, Fiona Perry beguiles with whimsical and vibrantly etched narratives. Skilfully interweaving sensuous imagery, wry humour and poignant retrospection, Perry dazzles with dalliances into the mythical, and her own vividly imagined other worlds. This first collection is a heady elixir of sublime poetry and captivating story-telling."

*Anne Casey*

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## The Author

Fiona Perry was born and brought up in Northern Ireland but has lived in England, Australia, and New Zealand. Her short story, *Sea Change*, won first prize in the Bath Flash Fiction Award in 2020. Her short fiction was shortlisted for the Australian Morrison Mentoring Prize in 2014 and 2015. She contributed poetry to the Label Lit project for National Poetry Day (Ireland) 2019. A graduate of Queen's University, Belfast, and Lancaster University, she worked previously as an environmentalist in a unitary authority. She is currently a teacher, editor, and proofreader and lives with her family near Oxford.



### Stepmothers in Fairy Tales

*After Judith Ortiz Cofer*

They are dangerously sexy  
and always married to a king,  
generic wealthy man or stonecutter,  
living out their tumultuous lives  
in the first wife's home, altered first  
of course; scarlet-draped boudoirs, gothic  
windows opening on to moors  
where deformed trees loom.  
They harm stepchildren in  
enchanted forests by incising  
their subcutaneous fat with blue light  
turning them into swans, proffering  
poisonous fruit or exposing them  
to the vagaries of witches. They have a thing  
for mirrors, lakes and strange headgear.  
Age toughens them; keratin scales within  
their nails and hair. When they die, it is  
by bitter herbs, their spirit thrashing  
like a hammerhead shark, never  
in history going down without a fight.

### Breakers

Before they are born  
breakers swell and loom  
in rolls of blown glass  
I would like to step inside,  
to be statue-caught  
in their crystal corridor  
like an ancient body  
preserved in a glacier.  
Then –  
I can cut the white  
noise. Reboot. Prepare  
for my second coming,  
as foaming diamonds  
released from saltwater  
ectoplasm thrown on  
to warm, restorative  
sand. Equipped for terra  
firma dwelling.

## Gold Friend Chris Murray

"At a time of environmental crisis, Gold Friend speaks powerfully of the ties that bind our living world. Chris Murray illuminates the relationship between dependence and freedom, and meditates on the creative necessity for close observation. These oblique poems can suddenly dazzle with their play of substance and light, as they move from the hidden intricacy of root systems to the beetle's reflective sheen. As well as bearing witness to the strange beauty of the natural world, these innovative poems testify to the remarkable intensity of human perception. They deserve our closest attention."

*Lucy Collins*

### Praise for *Gold Friend*

"Murray's poetics call for a bond between the eye and the imagination...the acute perceptiveness of Murray's poetry, her empathetic and sensitive vision, is extended first to nature and then, very movingly, into a series of elegies."

*Sean Hewitt, The Irish Times*



Paperback: poetry 70 pages

ISBN: 9781913598105

Published September 2020 €12/£10

"Chris Murray is making sense. In a world-defining time of environmental crisis, here is a poet writing about the microcosm of her life, a garden, a tree, birds, buttercups, breaking day, darkening dusk. She has the ability, the care with words to surprise...they curl into their dreaming. They are so beautifully accomplished."

*Liam Murphy Munster Express*

[Click here to order a copy.](#)

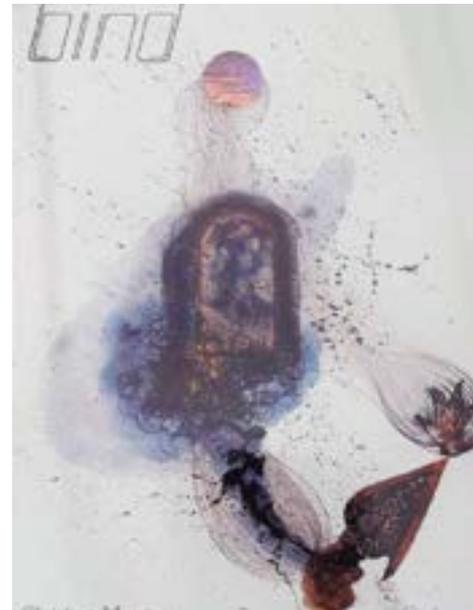
*bind*  
Christine Murray

*bind* is a daring, experimental meditation on the natural world, traversing the course of the day, from daybreak to dusk, in different seasons. The poet's magical, mysterious vision draws the reader into an interior world conveyed by delicate, startling images. These are not separate poems but rather, a single, book-length poem set out in fragments that are bound together by the poet's unique sensibility and her intriguing use of space and punctuation. The skilfully wrought poetic fragments which make up the fabric of this remarkable tapestry of light and shade, plant life and human, find their way into the reader's consciousness like a haunting melody.

### Praise for *bind*

"These elegant and impressionistic poems work with a fractured landscape, one that will haunt and engage the reader...poems will remain in the reader's memory long after they have caught the reader's attention."

*Eavan Boland*



Paperback: poetry 58 pages

ISBN: 9780995791640

Published September 2018 €12/£10

"The graceful control of the poems demonstrates skill and understanding of lyric and subject. *bind* is a book to dip into and return to with the possibility of seeing something new on each visit."

*Emma Lee*

[Click here to order a copy.](#)

## The Author

Christine Murray is an eminent poet and literary activist. She is known internationally for her work as creator and curator of the website [Poethead](#), which is a free, open access database of women's poetry throughout the world. She is a member of the group [Fired! Irish Women Poets and the Canon](#), who campaign for parity of esteem and inclusion of Irish women poets in the literary canon. Christine's own poetry has been widely published, both in print and online, in chapbooks, anthologies and journals. She lives in Dublin with her two grown children.

**The Rosemary** (from *Gold Friend*)

She said that Aisling  
let her cut the sprigs.

It is 3.15 p.m, it is Thursday,  
I am examining two rosemary sprigs

their blue-green  
their silver underlights –

She is stripping the small base leaves from a third,  
tapping its heel,  
putting it in a glass  
of crystal-clear-water  
for planting out with the roses in October.

I can taste lamb stew  
with rowanberries,  
counting her trees

alternating Crab-apple,  
Rowanberry, Crab  
-apple, Rowanberry  
they syncopated her drive –

Memory insists that I stand on a bank of the River Tolka,  
upstream from Socrates  
and his garden of roses,  
those colours we tasted –

for here is the place  
that we committed him  
to memory,

that black water –  
Glas Naíon,  
the stream of the infants

With petals,  
With flower-heads.

**Periphery** (from *Gold Friend*)

Be near enough to the periphery  
to discern the wing-settle-sounds  
small birds make in thickets,  
their halls –

Near enough for red to insist  
that you regard it as haw,  
rose-leavings

Know, bird-panic sounds  
differently to wing-settle's  
soft-rest after the flurry of  
flight,

– they say

## *Quarantena* Nina Karacosta

*Quarantena* is an intriguing meditation on the fifty days of the Paris lockdown, from March – May 2020. The collection is composed of fifty poems, one for every day, and reflect the practical, emotional and psychological journey of the writer through that strange time, as well as the wider social roots and impact of the experience. *Quarantena* explores the nuances of interpersonal communication, and the ways in which isolation and connection with the deepest recess of identity echo different facets of the self. A profound reflection on the strangest of times.

### Praise for *Quarantena*

"In *Quarantena*, Nina Karacosta's verse journal of fifty days of lockdown in a 'city of masks', the poet's fine perception is directed onto those things we generally take for granted. Under such close scrutiny the everyday acquires a hallucinatory quality, so that 'the lamp stalks me in the house'. In the disturbing reality of a city under quarantine, identity itself comes under threat, until we all might ask, with Karacosta, 'is a clown the face seen or the face hidden?'"

*David Butler*



Paperback: Poetry 60 pages

ISBN 9781913598143

Published November, 2020 €12/£10

"Nina Karacosta beautifully records the eeriness of lockdown as experienced in a densely populated district of Paris – the bottomless dive into oneself and the weirder depths of the imagination even as you try to keep your sanity, the importance of the prosaic details that structure and prove the indispensable to survival, the sense of yourself expanding to fill the emptiness of a whole lost world of human activity."

*Anne Ortiz Talvaz*

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## The Author

Nina Karacosta is an actor and poet. She was born in Athens and has lived in London, New York and currently lives Paris. She has studied physics, as well as theatre and poetry at the Poetry Project in New York. Nina has acted in New York City and now performs solo theatre pieces in Paris and around France. Her poetry has appeared in many outlets and journals, including: *Pomegranate Seeds: An Anthology of Greek-American Poetry*, *Ditch*, *Upstairs at Duroc*, *UpStart*, *Tears in the Fence*, *Core*, *can can*, *Shearsman*. Her books *Previous Vertigos/Vertiges Précédents* (released in both English and French) and *Kaleidograph* were published by Corrupt Press. Nina has been a poetry editor at *Upstairs at Duroc*, an Anglophone literary magazine based in Paris.



### Day Fourteen

*black & white* escaping from prison  
in old american film mode  
only that now  
we pretend to be a film  
and the escaping is towards inventiveness

Not friend! Not far from my window I saw a  
passenger in the street  
We didn't wave

Everything still lives  
the lamp stalks me in the house  
the walls of the house vibrate in their own voice

I might not see you for sometime friend  
but you'll be in a passageway between thought and  
feeling  
and I will keep you alive

keeping some notes in a foreign language notebook  
isn't everything a foreign language?

### Day Eleven

Every moment just is

you are inside this now  
and here you are safe

Within  
are castles  
gold eye of the tempest drownedships  
waves and waves and waves  
and behind this frost  
the wheel of inner breaths

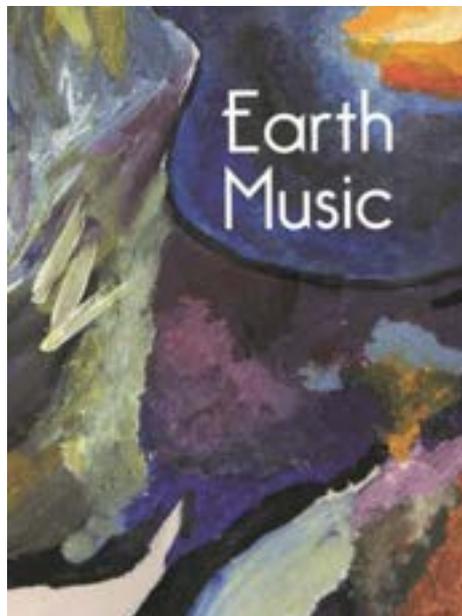
It seems paradoxical  
a very low density of air in the streets  
and the eye-mouth people: closed like silent rats

yet in the present moment nothing to fear  
in your aliveness a drop of water  
and from this drop the ocean

[Click here to order a copy.](#)

## *Earth Music* Eithne Lannon

This compelling début collection is imbued with a profound sense of place, rooted in memory and history. The poet mines her own lived experience with a delicacy of language that is also muscular and engaging. These are poems which are deeply imbued with the physical environment, evoking the natural setting of North County Dublin, a landscape that inspires the poet to poignant reflections and insights. These beautifully crafted poems, both accessible and profound, make this an outstanding début. *Earth Music* was short-listed for the 2020 Shine/Strong Poetry Award as part of dlr Mountains to Sea Book Festival.



Paperback: poetry 68 pages  
ISBN: 9780995791671  
Published March 2019 €12/£10

### Praise for *Earth Music*

"These poems are studied presences, careful of concept, sound, syntax and grammar, able to transpose an extraordinary sensibility into a careful system of lines. Lovely surprises gleam in the tracks and pleats that take you into brisures of received reality."

*Máighréad Medhb*

"This is a collection which revels in language and its ability to render the everyday beautiful...Lannon is a poet of great linguistic facility, whose work is suffused with the numinous."

*Jessica Traynor, Poetry Ireland Review*

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## The Author

Eithne Lannon is a native of Dublin. She has won several awards including the Ballyroan Library Competition 2018, and been commended in many competitions such as The Blue Nib Chapbook, Against the Grain, the Dermot Healy Competition, 2017, the Jonathan Swift Award and others. She was Artist in Residence in Loughshinny Boathouse in summer 2016, an experience which inspired her Loughshinny Trilogy. She regularly hosts readings and performs her own work at literary events in and around Dublin.



### Thin Places

The wild meadow weave, the strand,  
places of late summer, autumn,  
  
a stone skimming water, suspended  
in air, its slow motion glide punctuated  
  
by the drop, touch, rise of a ghostly presence,  
this wary hesitation between water  
  
and stone, mysterious as the rift between  
music notes in air, unsettling the familiar light  
  
which shudders again with tiny rainbow bubbles  
holding air-drops in. And then the final slide over  
  
gravity's edge, into polished bottomless depths,  
beyond the belly-aching threshold –  
  
dropping, ever dropping, into the quiet  
whispering, the unspeakable tenderness.

### Bach's Cello

In this other country you find  
your way by sensation, by touch;  
  
the wide body, the tender neck,  
the slender waist, the belly.  
  
If your hands could speak  
they'd be tongues of sound,  
  
your fingers ask to be water, to flow  
like a dark string of starlings from a stave.  
  
And in the vast orchestral silence  
where sound begins slowly,  
  
in the long bow drawn to taut string,  
your high note arches over my ear,  
  
into my throat where the other  
voice listens –  
  
for a moment, all that is wounded  
dissolves,  
  
my heartbeat holds still  
and music pours in.

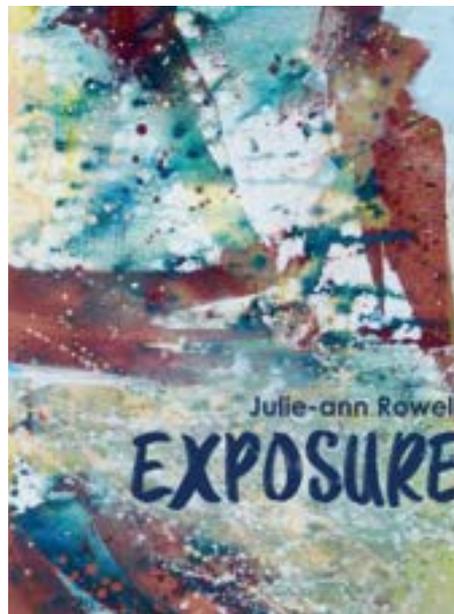
## *Exposure* Julie-ann Rowell

This finely wrought, dramatic collection gathers together haunting poems woven from the landscape and folklore of the Orkney Islands, where Julie-ann Rowell used to live and still frequently visits. *Exposure* is the poet's homage to the environment, culture and history of the archipelago. Her personal response to this mysterious world imperceptibly urges the reader to reflect on universal themes: grief, loss, and the primitive strength drawn from the natural world.

### **Praise for *Exposure***

"In these poems Rowell sets herself up as observer and narrator and it is this distance that allows for an unusual, unsentimental telling of the islands' history and people. *Exposure* is a very fine book, a dark hymn to the wonder and mystery of this most remote and fascinating of archipelagos."

*Greta Stoddart.*



Paperback: poetry 72 pages

ISBN: 9780995791695

Published October, 2019 €12/£10

"Such is the psychological strength of these poems, they pitch us with them, where 'the hour is tawney at the heel of the hill'...These poems are no place for the faint-hearted, are where 'a single stone has been cleaved by lightning' yet still 'survived thousands of years'."

*Martin Figura*

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## The Author

Julie-ann Rowell is a Devon-based poet, teacher and editor, whose work has won and been short-listed for many competitions including the Frogmore poetry competition, the Michael Murphy Poetry Prize for Best First Collection in Britain and Ireland in 2011, the Bridport Prize, Strokestown International Poetry competition 2018 and a poetry Book Society Award for her pamphlet *Convergence*.

Her poem *Fata Morgana*, one of the poems in *Exposure*, was Highly Commended in the Single Poem category of the Forward Prize, 2020.



### Hether Blether Island

the one off Rousay's south coast has gone missing  
again. I saw it once, those moors  
of violet and cream. A glimpse when  
the sun folded back the film of grey  
that persists, a flash of what might have been:

a rocky spire, a single croft, its smoke sideways on  
and a woman, who's gone missing too,  
coming out of the door in her apron  
shading her eyes from the brightness of the view.  
I think she sees me smiling and smiles in return,

sharing a moment of her day with its neat edges,  
faintly familiar from another life  
secured at the rim of the tide on the weedy  
juttings where sheep graze absently, until the  
mist once more fills in the gaps, hills, sedges.

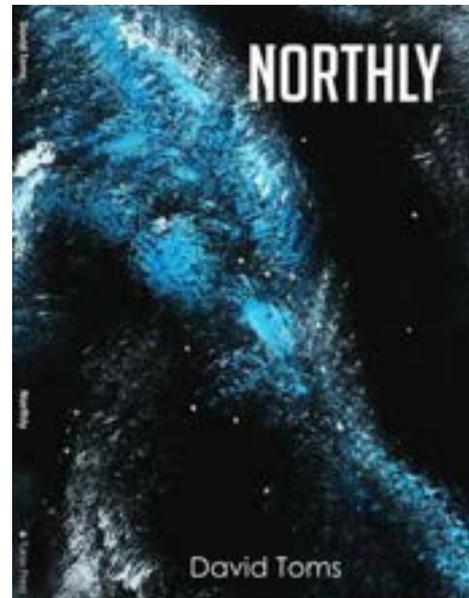
### The Churchill Barriers

Watch the divide the water steeples one side  
the other is a smooth cheek where light lies tame is  
milk-glitter pool not sea ironware revealing  
a pockmark of ship a mast's lift wrecked for purpose  
now two islands are one I remember the first time  
across this tarmac tongue waves surged at the lip  
spray jinxed the windscreen spitting on separation.  
Should we cross or should we wait?

Warning lights were drunk on it their happy day  
even the calm side jiggers now waking the wrecks  
reminding them of voyage we are riding with sand  
beneath our tyres the sea trying to intervene  
feral sea maddened sea no one likes division  
seeking wholeness completion I think of this often  
the two sides coming together how I might drown.  
Should we cross or should we wait?

## *Northly* David Toms

*Northly* gifts the reader a haunting evocation of the culture and spirit of northern lands, especially Ireland and of Norway, the poet's adopted home. The language is stark, precise and unexpectedly poignant, as the poet traces the ancient and contemporary pathways of the wanderer. Out of many strands of history, family and the contemporary world, the poet creates a beautiful tapestry of images and impressions that is both mysterious and intriguing.



Paperback: poetry 74 pages  
ISBN: 9780995791688  
Published October 2019 €12/£10

### Praise for *Northly*

"The nostalgia of the emigrant far from home is here coupled with an unrelenting realism in poems of clarity, vigour and beauty. From his 'water-mouthed' home city of Waterford, to the bitter cold of his new home, Oslo, work and politics, the sea, history and the present crowd this collection. Everywhere is winter, its beauty and its hurt, the loveliness of the ice in the heart."

*William Wall*

"The title poem, *Northly* is such a triumph of images, altering your perception...It was empowering to be as witness to a book of such discoveries."

*Liam Murphy* Munster Express

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David Toms is originally from Waterford, has lived in Cork and in Prague and now lives and works in Norway. His previous publications include several chapbooks and his work has appeared in a number of anthologies. In addition to his creative work, David holds a PhD from University College Cork in history. He is the author of two textbooks on the social history of soccer in Ireland. His historical writing has appeared in *Lookleft*, *History Ireland*, *Irish Economic and Social History*, *Decies*, *Sport in History*, *Sport in Society*, and *Soccer & Society*. In September 2022, Banshee Press will publish his latest book, *Pacemaker*, a memoir of living with a rare heart condition.



### Leif Eriksson Discovers America

& I stand in Altes Nationalgalerie  
staring at the Monk by the Sea

& it put me in Veletržní palác  
in the shade of Slovanska Epopej  
Comenius —  
Jan Amos Komensky  
near his end,  
slumped in a chair

a flicker of hope  
in winter  
Holešovice  
snow at the entrance

his feet, head, body touch  
the earth, sea, sky  
final breath

my feet the gallery floor,  
my neck craning

this poor monk by the sea  
his head can reach no further  
than the wave  
his stand firm

Leif Eriksson points the way —  
all three face the sea  
unbowed  
beyond

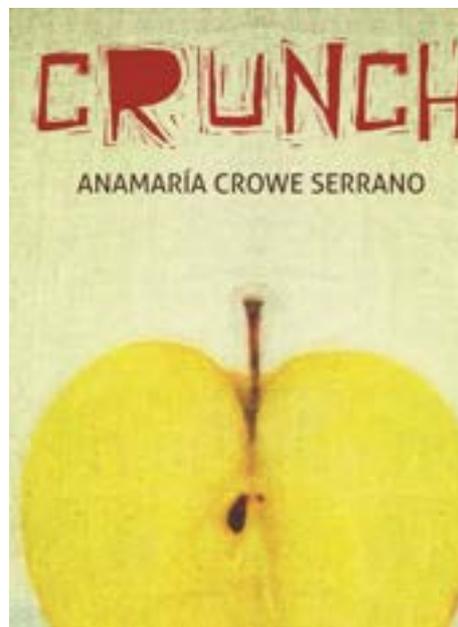
### Urbs Intacta Manet

Wholly men know well  
the way to heaven is as  
good by water as is  
by land —  
standing here in the  
harbour of the sun;  
the as yet unconquered  
city —

You the water-mouthed  
talk on  
taking with you in your way  
the stories that will not wash  
bleeding sounds into sentences  
stories into mind

## *Crunch* Anamaría Crowe Serrano

Anamaría Crowe Serrano's intriguing experimental work pushes the boundaries of the poetic form in ways that invigorate and challenge readers to accompany her as she guides us through this garden of delights. With alternating pitch-perfect insight, deadpan humour and wit, *Crunch* revives old myths and breathes new life into deeply philosophical themes – the dynamics of knowledge and power, the nature of the self. In 2018, María Reimóndez translated *Crunch* into Galician. *Ñam*, published by Malinche Books, was launched at the Poema Ria Festival, Vigo that year. A daring and exciting work.



Paperback: Poetry 52 pages  
ISBN 9780995791626  
Published February, 2018 €12/£10

### Praise for *Crunch*

"At a glance readers will take note of *Crunch's* various font sizes, graphic representations, concrete influences and spacing on the page ...I appreciated the non-narrative sensibility...*Crunch* is an innovative collection which tasks its readers to fully immerse themselves in this exuberant work."

*Julie Morrissey, Poetry Ireland Review*

"An heroic tale, the core of that old telling of Eve and Adam, with all the elements of a great story: desire, conflict, retribution...In this 'memory of the garden' Anamaría Crowe Serrano takes a bite out of life with a taunting sequence of poems that are intelligent and visceral, 'the fruit/in her smile/saying it all.' "

*Keith Payne*

[Click here to order a copy](#)

## About the Author

Anamaria Crowe Serrano's poetry is widely acclaimed internationally. She is an Irish writer, translator and editor born in Ireland to an Irish father and a Spanish mother. She grew up bilingually, straddling cultures. Her own poetry and prose work has been published widely and anthologised in Ireland and abroad. Anamaria has translated many works of poetry and novels from Spanish and Italian into English.

Anamaria is also a highly regarded novelist. Her novel *In The Dark*, set during the Spanish civil war, was published by Turas Press in 2021 and longlisted for the 2022 Republic of Consciousness Prize.



I was neither Eve  
nor Adam  
in the garden of Eden  
nor the arguments between them  
over who  
and why

I was the apple  
bitten  
tossed aside  
her teeth marks  
still on my flesh  
her fingerprints  
warm  
on my skin

Go on,  
bite me  
it's already been done  
I'm crunchy, sweet  
ripe  
and ready for retribution

behold  
the leaf as it grows  
silent leaf greenly  
innocent leaf guilty  
leaf falls  
s t e an  
apple m apple  
this juicy october is tempting  
clinging to fickle stem in the belief that  
there will be growth that there will be pr  
ogress but what is progress if not the need  
to feel alive when succulent october comes  
to think there is something worth being here  
for that there is more behind the surface  
something symbolic third or even fourth dim  
ensions something worth biting worth someth  
ing worth filling the empty space that is left w  
hen the apple falls when the branch is bare  
and the worm is revealed but the apple will  
never be enough its nectar dripping in th  
e green the innocent far away field the  
one we can never reach the one wor  
th having worth dripping for wort  
h risking everything for worth  
blind leaf fighting for brav  
e leaf clinging clinging  
for what it's worth

# **Fiction from Turas Press**

*What to Put in a Suitcase*, October 2022

Short Stories

Liz McSkeane

*In The Dark*, March 2021

Novel

Anamaría Crowe Serrano

*Canticle*, May 2018

Novel

Liz McSkeane

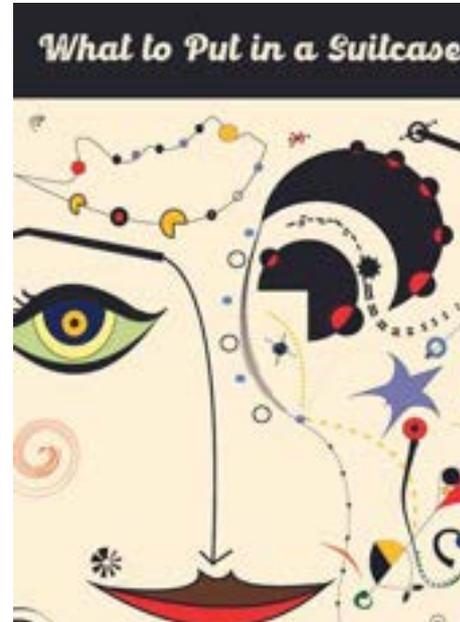
## *What to Put in a Suitcase* Liz McSkeane

These sixteen stories follow a cast of characters destined to navigate a rich variety of situations that are by turns perplexing, stimulating, threatening: a suburban dinner party whose hosts harbour a troubling secret; a childhood prank in 1940s Dublin with tragic consequences; a family fleeing environmental disaster in a Dublin of the near future. Engaged with both the minutiae of thought processes and the impulse to action, these stories grapple with individual psychology and with wider themes of justice and the place of individual in contemporary society, at times seasoned with a sly humour. An intriguing and compelling collection.

### *Praise for Suitcase*

"The world of *What to Put in a Suitcase* is a very uncertain place, full of uncomfortable questions. We are frequently unsure where we are, the terrain shifts, the ground beneath our feet feels increasingly unstable. These are stories written in spare, pared-back language, with images that startle, packed with interior monologues that are rich with insight and observation and reflect the challenges of modern life: immigration, the pandemic, violence against women, society's many inequalities."

*Catherine Dunne*



Paperback: Short fiction 148 pages  
ISBN 9781913598372  
Release date Oct 5th 2022 €14/£12

"In the hands of Liz McSkeane, the everyday – a café terrace, a deserted corridor, an oriental rug, an airport lounge – can be abruptly transformed into a site of conflict and menace. Always meticulous in her choice of language, these stories show her skill in evoking our primal emotions."

*David Butler*

"This is a brilliant, incisive collection of contemporary short stories, startling and unsettling in their profound reflections on the complexities of modern life."

*Lisa Harding*

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## Canticle

### Liz McSkeane

Fray Juan de la Cruz (John of the Cross) – renowned poet, mystic and, with his friend Teresa of Ávila, co-founder of the Discalced Carmelite Order – has been dead for twenty-five years. Fray Martín de Sepúlveda, Dominican friar and former professor at the University of Salamanca, receives a secret commission: to investigate the life and work of the long-dead Fray Juan. As Fray Martín grapples with his investigation and the attentions of the Inquisition, he becomes embroiled in a quest to separate fact from fiction, reality from propaganda. *Canticle* is a historical detective story that delves into a 400-year-old tale of power struggles, political manoeuvring and misinformation.

### Praise for *Canticle*

“A formidable feat of imagination underpins this marvellous detective novel set in late 16th/early 17th century Spain... *Canticle* is a tale for our time, rife with insitutionalised power struggles, truth and misinformation, manipulated in the interests of the elite – same as it always was and is.”

*Anthony Glavin, The Independent*



Paperback: Novel 311 pages  
ISBN 9780995791633  
Published May 2018 €12/£10

“The characters, every one of them, have depth and life... The central theme of what truth is, both in politics and within the Church, remains so relevant today that this is a difficult novel to put down... The complexity of the politics involved, the careful layering of the plot and the unfolding events, make this a novel that you will want to savor... Very highly recommended.”

*Kristen McQuinn,*  
Historical Novel Review

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## About the Author

Poet and fiction writer Liz McSkeane was born in Scotland to an Irish/Scottish family and has been living in Dublin since 1981. In 1999 she won the Hennessy/Sunday Tribune New Irish Writer of the Year Award for her poetry. Her historical novel *Canticle* was joint winner in the 2016 Irish Writers' Centre Novel Fair competition. In addition to her four collections of poetry and novel, her short story collection, *What to Put in a Suitcase*, is due out in October, 2022. Her second novel, based on the Great Lisbon Earthquake of 1755, will be released in 2023. Liz's poems and stories have been widely published and anthologised in Ireland and the UK. She is founder and Director of Turas Press. Follow Liz on Twitter @EMcSkeane and Instagram @lizmcskeane



### Extract from *Exodus*, from *What to Put in a Suitcase* (opening)

The hardest part was deciding who should get the last place in the car.

Most people on their street had already ignored the order to postpone evacuation until the appointed time. The sea had not yet reached the Howth Road and if the lull in the rains lasted another couple of weeks, it looked as though it might not, at least not this year. So the compulsory evacuation orders were confined, for the moment, to occupants of dwellings located on Fairview Strand, also on the lower end of St Lawrence's Road and Castle Avenue, and beyond the Watermill in Raheny, anticipating the new coastline of Dublin Bay by a few days. Over a period of at least two hundred years, some of this land had been reclaimed and built on, lauded by the champions of progress as a magnificent feat of engineering. Now, the sea was reclaiming its own.

For the moment, none of the experts could say for sure how far inland the sea would reach. If the results of the most recent computer modelling were correct, it was unlikely to cross any further than the southern tip of the Malahide Road. This would leave the homes on their street in relative safety, hence the order for those residents not to leave but to stay put and ensure that the routes out of the city were free for those whose homes and lives were in real danger.

It wasn't surprising that most of their neighbours had already ignored the order. They were frightened by the tragedies in the west where flooding had reached the point of no return within hours, surprising the authorities who had deployed the emergency services to the south. By the time the terrifying warning had been broadcast – "It is now too late to leave. Stay and take shelter from the floods" – many fatalities had already occurred. How did anyone find shelter from these swirling waves, for so long having doubted their reach and destructive might? It was only when the Spanish Arch in Galway collapsed before the eyes of horrified onlookers that the gravity of the situation could no longer be denied. Twenty-four hours later, the entire coastline between Kinvara and Connemara was submerged, vast new expanses of sea penetrating almost five kilometres inland. The immense scale of destruction in the last week alone had yet to be quantified.

## Extract from *Canticle*, Chapter 1, (opening)

Seventh day of January in the Year of our Lord, 1616  
 Monastery of San Gerónimo, Madrid

I did not ask for this commission, I do not want it and yet, here I am. I still do not understand what has persuaded me or whether, having agreed to carry it out, I have committed an act of wisdom or folly. It certainly appears to be an act of advancement, as I now find myself in this majestic office, a privilege granted by my new superiors.

I confess, such grandeur does not reassure me. High-ceilinged, oak-panelled, this room is graced with fine, broad windows that frame a pleasing view of the monastery's walled orchard to the east and open countryside beyond. If I crane my neck I can glimpse the meadows around the convent of Atocha in the distance, to the south. A few days ago, when I received the sudden order to come to Madrid, I was sure that Our Lady of Atocha was my destination, being a renowned hermitage and place of refuge for troubled, and troublesome, Dominican friars.

Instead, I find myself lodged in one of the most important monasteries of the kingdom, enjoying the hospitality of those illustrious Hieronymites, gentleman monks who are famed for their table, their herbarium and their skilled apothecaries. And, not least, for their intimacy with the king. I am told he is a frequent visitor to the royal apartments adjoining the eastern wing of the chapel, that he might hear Mass through the wall of his chamber. Of course, I do not expect to see him, my own living and working quarters being perched high above the western cloister. But at last, I am at the centre of things – a great reversal of fortune for a simple Dominican novice master with a suspect past and no future.

"Take heart," Fray Boniface advised me three years since, when first I arrived in the obscure little convent of San Salvador, fresh from the humiliation of being voted from my professorship by my own students. I still choose to believe that they were browbeaten, bullied and bought by certain of my colleagues in Salamanca. For reasons which I am determined to forget.

"At least they did not throw you in gaol, as they did Luis de León."

But Fray Luis de León had actually broken the law when he translated the Bible directly from Hebrew into the Spanish tongue. And it was reckless of him to have distributed his own version amongst his students. However superior to St. Jerome's twelve-hundred-year-old translation it may have been – and I am prepared to believe that it was – Jerome's is still the single version authorised by the Council of Trent, whose lengthy deliberations sought to recover the authority stolen from our Mother Church by heretics such as Luther. The decrees of the Council were devised not only to root out wrongdoing and abuse, but to guarantee consistency of dogma and practice. So. One Bible. One translation. One story.

Still, at least Fray Luis de León got out in the end and regained his position at the university, which I never will.

## *In The Dark* Anamaría Crowe Serrano

Teruel, north-east Spain, winter, 1937. The civil war is raging, pitting neighbour against neighbour, tearing families apart. Franco's Nationalist rebels have surrounded the devastated, Republican-held city. This is the story of a house, of the people who take refuge there – and a dangerous secret within. María and her sister Julita mourn their lost loved ones and try to bury their differences. But only one person knows the secret of the house, hidden deep in the dark– a deserter from the conflict, a soldier who has dared to leave the fighting to come home – and the woman who dares to protect him.

### Praise for *In The Dark*

"A lyrical, richly textured novel of great beauty and depth that pulses with humanity and love amid the heartbreak and desolation of war...A graceful, impactful, insightful read."

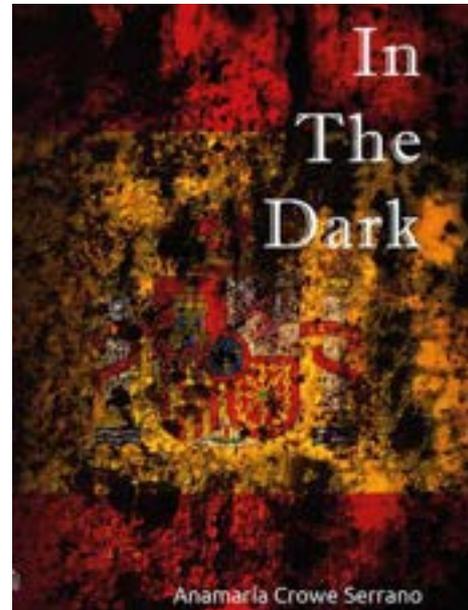
*Lisa Harding*

"A heart-breaking, fiercely honest and formally daring novel."

*Paddy Woodworth*

"*In The Dark* tells the story of how men all but destroy Spain during its civil war – but the women waiting at home hold the country's jagged pieces together. This is historical fiction with the pulse of life in it."

*Martina Devlin*



Paperback: Novel 309 pages  
ISBN: 9781913598167  
Published June, 2021 €14/£12

"A stellar and compelling Spanish Civil War novel cum love story – a mighty tale." *Anthony Glavin*

"A polyphonic prose poem...a tense, psychological thriller."

*Mary Morrissy*

"Crowe Serrano guides the spotlight way from those who manage the war and on to those who manage in a war."

*Keith Payne*

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## About the Author

Anamaría Crowe Serrano's poetry is widely acclaimed internationally. She is an Irish writer, translator and editor born in Ireland to an Irish father and a Spanish mother. She grew up bilingually, straddling cultures. Her own poetry and prose work has been published widely and anthologised in Ireland and abroad. Anamaría has translated many works of poetry and novels from Spanish and Italian into English.

Anamaría is also a highly regarded novelist. Her novel *In The Dark*, set during the Spanish civil war, was published by Turas Press in 2021 and longlisted for the 2022 Republic of Consciousness Prize.



### From *In The Dark*, (opening)

Bar Joselito. The bustle and Joselito's widow, Encarna, are one and the same thing. Encarna is tables and chairs. She is indoors, outdoors, shutters open, sawdust, chalkboard. She is tinkling glasses, barrels and rolling laughter. She is the centre of the village square, Plaza del Rorico, fulcrum of joy and sorrow. Fabric well woven. Encarna holds everything and everyone together. Which is a problem if one thread snags.

María helps out. in Joselito's day, the clientele changed slowly, following the pace of natural lives. But with war, familiarity goes. People disappear, like María's husband, Ramón, and her sister's husband, Antonio. Bar stools are filled by republican troops whose town this is not, but whose uniform gives licence to belong. From behind the bar María observes them and in each one's paunch, shoulders, face, she sees a father, brother, son.

A smile can convey solidarity. Sometimes politeness. Often when these men smile at her, it is desperation, even arrogance. Mostly she wishes they wouldn't smile. She thinks of Ramón, his parting kiss as he left for the front, his squeeze so tight she couldn't breathe. Breathing is hard even now when she thinks of him. He is on the other side — with the military. Not entirely by choice, but the situation had become chaotic. They came for him, the men some call rebels, fascists, and who knows what they'd have done if he had refused.

The things she cannot say about him, she rubs and rubs into the glasses in the sink. There are so many things now that people mustn't say. Every task she performs in the bar is meticulous — chairs, floor, counter, shelves, food, drink. The more meticulous her work the better it hides her fear.

Puzzling, the postman's news. He says the rebels have turned things around and gained some ground on the Republicans. What to make of that. In only a matter of weeks.

Fascist troops now sit in the bar. And these, María observes, are the same as the other Fathers, sons, brothers.

They drink the same. Laugh the same. At the enemy pushed into the hills.