

Poetry Day Ireland

THURSDAY 26 APRIL 2018

#PoetryDayIRL

Read about this poem on poetryday.ie

POETRY SURPRISES!

washing
my mum's feet
i'm afraid
i will hurt her poor
hammer toes mis
shapen from years
of having to wear
high heeled shoes
apparently President
Duterte of the Philippines
has banned companies from forcing
women to wear high heels
such policies
are sexist
say the unions
high heels put dangerous
pres sure on joints
the same year the
UK government
re jected
out lawing workwear
rules specifying women must wear heels



Shoe Politics

Katharine May

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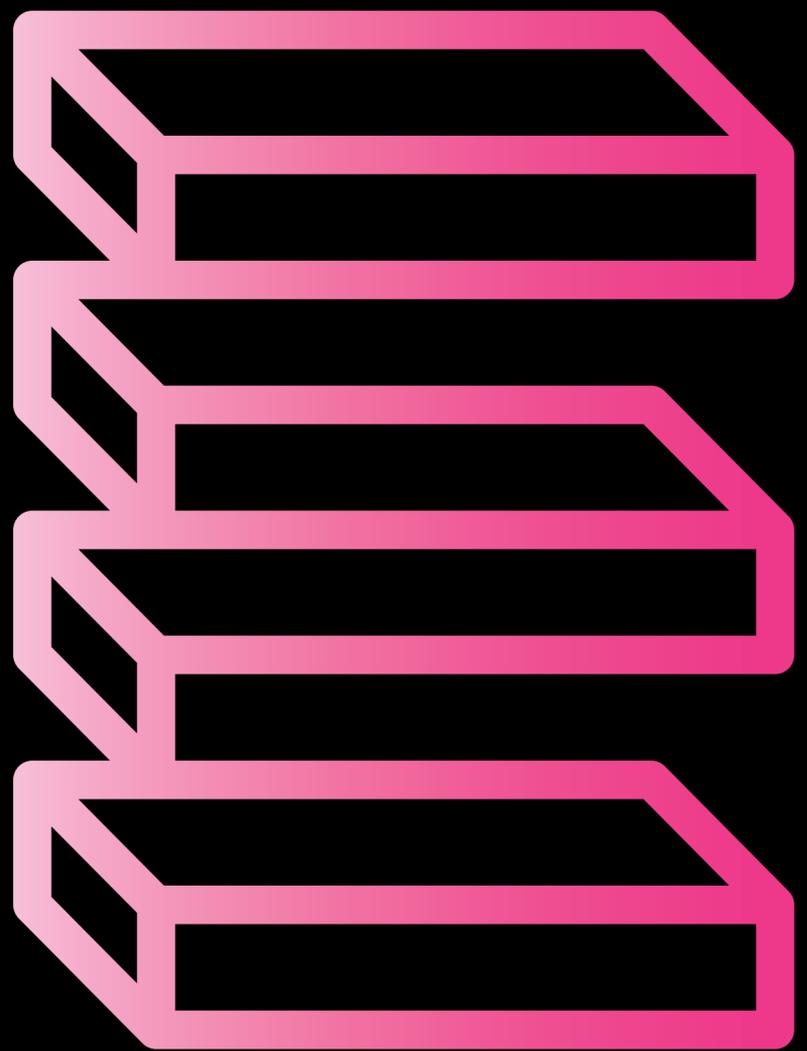
A Phone Call from Peter

Mary Melvin Geoghegan

From the top of the Empire State Building
my son rang to say, *Mum, this is great,*
and that passion reached down the line,
despite the reversed charges, to lift me
beside him with Macy's Dept. Store where
my mother once worked just in view,
down to Central Park where my father
Played as a child.

Also, he had found a long-sought-after
poetry book unavailable over here.
Two months without seeing him
had so cleared the lines between us
he remembered what I had been looking for.

From *When They Come Home* (2008), by kind permission of the author and Summer Palace Press



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Cinderella, Backwards

after John Glenday
and Angela Carter

Claire Dyer

Happily Ever After he unbends his knee,
plucks a glass slipper from her perfect foot,
thinks, *Surely, this should be fur?*

Next, he uncurls his lip at the bloodied
stumps of some sisters' toes, mounts
a vast black stallion and rides away

as an invitation is unprinted,
a Ball unplanned, exquisite footwear
is never left upon a stair. And she goes back

to midnight to unchime the clock,
dance in reverse with a man who will one day
unsearch for her while six footmen

return to mice, a golden coach to pumpkin
as an orchestra untunes, her dress re-rags,
an impossible Fairy Godmother dissolves to dust.

And there will be a Prince somewhere
who unbelieves in love again as she sweeps
Once Upon A Time back in through the door.

From *Eleven Rooms* (2013),
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The Poets

Orla Martin

There they are, The Poets.
Great at funerals, are The Poets.
Crumpled in pews, compassion by the verse,
by the haiku.
They do write a good card, do The Poets,
so they do.

Handy at weddings, are The Poets.
Meaning to the missalette, will they lend.
Happiness outside their comfort zone,
can stretch to contentment for a couplet or two,
before descent into Merlot infused ramblings
on life, on death.

In relationships, can The Poets be found, or lost.
Angled over pints in Grogan's or at The Library bar.
Intense over coffee, are The Poets.
Eloquently worded, grammatically correct sex texts,
The Poets do send.
On occasion.

For there they are, The Poets,
Cycling along the South Circular Road, a car they
do not own –
they cannot drive.
They are there, The Poets, in sickness as in health,
in Tesco as in Aldi, in publication or rejection,
in darkness, as in light.

From *Poetry Ireland Review* Issue 123, by kind permission of the author



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Mindfulness

Colm Brennan

Don't tell me about silence.

Don't tell me you made yourself sit
Cross-legged on the bedroom floor.

You gotta just be, you know? Don't say it.

Without your phone, like, truly alone.

Don't tell me about living in the moment.

Don't tell me the bloody alarm bleeps when
ten minutes of being present have expired?

I already know what it's like. To lie in a darkened room
with nothing but my life to distract me. To stomp
over the slippery leaves and resilient needles
of a forest floor on a crisp November morning
and peer past bare branches at the bright grey sky.

And I know what it's like to wait in line,
wipe someone's breath from the tram window
and hurry, forcing a path through the throngs,
just in case, god-forbid, I miss my stop.

Don't tell me I *should* try it sometime.

From *Poetry Ireland Review* 124, by kind permission of the author

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Planet Farage

Jackie Kay

We closed the borders, folks, we nailed it.
No trees, no plants, no immigrants.
No foreign nurses, no doctors; we smashed it.
We took control of our affairs. No fresh air.
No birds, no bees, no HIV, no Poles, no pollen.
No pandas, no polar bears, no ice, no dice.
No rainforests, no foraging, no France.
No frogs, no golden toads, no Harlequins.
No Greens, no Brussels, no vegetarians, no lesbians,
no vegan lesbians.
No carbon-curbed emissions, no CO₂ questions.
No lions, no tigers, no bears. No BBC picked audience.
No loony lefties, please. No politically correct classes.
No classes. No *Guardian* readers. No readers.
No emus, no EUs, no eco warriors, no euros,
No rhinos, no zebras, no burnt bras, no elephants.
We shut it down! No immigrants, no immigrants.
No recycling global-warming nutters.
Little man, little woman, the world is a dangerous place.
Now, pour me a pint, dear. Get out of my fracking face.

From *Bantam* (2017), by kind permission of the author and Picador

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[Read about this poem on poetryday.ie](http://poetryday.ie)

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Dear Ugly Sisters

Laura Mucha

Bread has been baked, veggies are chopped,
salt in the pan – floor has been mopped,

skirts have been washed, hoovered the floor,
took out the bins – polished the door,

cleared up the kitchen, cleaned up the sink,
washed all your socks – still really stink,

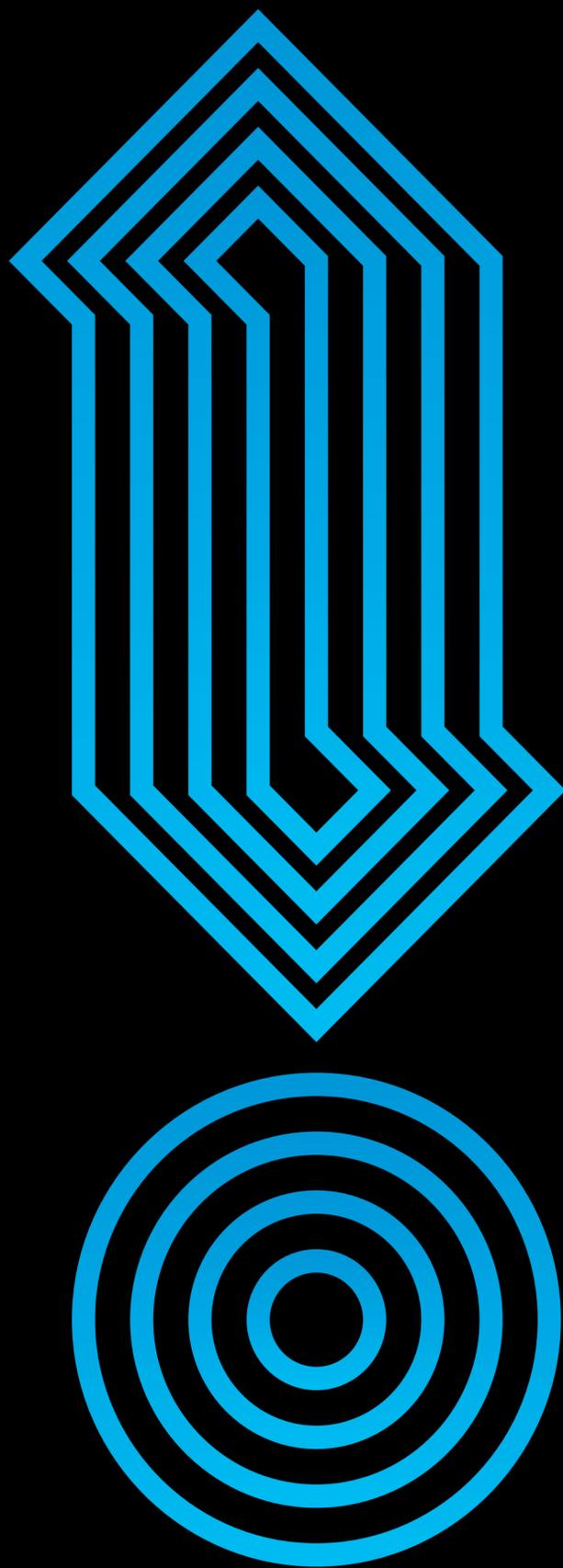
ironed the laundry, folded the sheets,
serviced the car – here's the receipt,

dog for a walk, cat to the vet,
married a wonderful prince that I met,

leaving tonight, so good luck with the chores,
I'm leaving my apron and keys by the door.

From
Cinderella

Winner of The Caterpillar Poetry Prize 2016, by kind permission of the author



Sa Bhaile

Aifric Mac Aodha

At Home

translated by
David Wheatley

Tá, in Éirinn,
bean anois ann
a léann sleachta
d'athair a leannáin,

ceann na leapan
ag fógairt uirthi
labhairt amach,
nach labhrófá amach,

is a chaitheann go minic
sa chlinic iomlán an lae
le hiníon bhán an toilfhir
nuair a atann a béal le cealg.

Aicise tá agus níl
imeacht uaidh —
dá fhad a glúin féin
ón nglúin foirtil,

is díobh í, ar deireadh,
an bhantracht a phlúchadh
glór a bhfear
le hárais tí an doirtil.

'Ní chloisim thú, John M,
a deireadh a mamó,
an t-uisce á bhrostú
d'aon turas aici

is í ag caochadh a súile
le cual na tine
mar a bheadh pearsa ann
i sobal tuaithe.

Now, and in Ireland,
a woman is reading
to her sweetheart's
bedridden father,

the head on the sheets
imploring her:
speak out, won't
you, open your mouth,

and spends whole days
at the clinic with her
lover's darling girl
when her lips swell with stings.

She must and she must
not walk out —
however far she's
come from her roots

she's of their stock, in the end,
women wise enough
to drown their men's words
with the sound of a tap.

'I can't hear you, John M,
her granny used to say,
running the water
on purpose

and slipping a wink
to the female company
by the fire like a character
in a rural soap.

From *Foreign News* (2017) by kind
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