

THE POETIC BOND™ NEWSLETTER – Issue 4

Got something to say, and it's all about poetry, why not write an article and send it in (email poetry@trevormaynard.com). You can download Issue 1, 2 & 3 from <http://www.thepoeticbond.com>

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1. Call for Submissions, THE POETIC BOND IIII, 2 April 2014, closing 30 June 2014

One month down and less than two months to go until the submission window closes for THE POETIC BOND IIII, this year's must have anthology of contemporary poetry. Everyone who submits work, whether selected for inclusion or not, will be entitled to a discount on the finished anthology when it is published in September 2014. The Poetic Bond is a communal project for the global poetry community. Every poem will be read by two independent readers, whose reports will be sent back to the editor, and can be forwarded to the poet, should they request so. Of course, not everyone wishes to hear an outside voice on their work, but for those that do, the opinions given can offer useful advice. That said, the poet should always remember the most important opinion on their work is their own, so should they accept any advice it should only be to complement their own poetic voice.

Want to know more about the poets involved in The Poetic Bonds I, II & III then visit “Meet the Poets” at www.thepoeticbond.com.

Selection for the anthology is based on emergent themes evident within the pool of work submitted, the idea being that the work in the anthology reflects the contemporary zeitgeist of work produced in the new media, professional and social networking community. All poems remain copyright of the author, this is your work, not ours; all we ask is that you allow us to promote your work as part of the anthology. There is no restriction on theme, subject or form, and there is no line count! The submission fee of £7/\$12 (for up to three poems), and further details of all guidelines, including the copyright statement are available at www.thepoeticbond.com

2. Spotlight – Bonnie Roberts

Bonnie Roberts is an Alabama poet, editor, lecturer, columnist, ocean-swimmer, silent-retreatant; former poet-in-residence, graduate poetry-writing guest professor, Fulbright Scholar, NEH Fellow, who book, “To Hide in the Light” was 1998 Alabama Book of the Year. She was published in THE POETIC BOND II in 2012 with “In Lieu of Flowers”, and in THE POETIC BOND III (2013) “Spirit Animal” and “God’s Opposable Thumb Leaves My Heart Uncomforted”.

Bonnie, what inspires you to write?

My usual writing process happens this way: It begins either with a single visual or visuals; or else it begins with a word or words in my head. It's not a matter of sitting down at my desk to compose something I have experienced or seen. However, what comes out has to do with something I'm experiencing that "wants" to make itself known to my consciousness. I must go with the image or the word immediately, or stand to lose it. Once begun, I begin to "choose" what goes in, what stays out, and the final meaning of the poem.

Tell us a bit about your featured poem and how it came about

"In Lieu of Flowers" concerns both wrath and the desire to forgive. Usually not an angry person, I had tapped into "old wraths" never dealt with. I expressed these symbolically to distance both myself and the reader. I might never be able to forgive in the sense of "feeling good" about the people. Yet, I can "will them" forgiveness. This is my purpose in the last stanza. The challenge in writing "In Lieu": I did not want to overwhelm the reader with grotesque images, only to capture the attention. This was a fine line to walk.

What plans do you have for the future?

I plan to keep writing poetry. When I'm not, I don't feel nearly as alive, or "myself." I plan to write more blogs and continue writing a column for **The Valley Planet**, in which I promote my most current humanitarian, animal, and environmental causes. I occasionally edit online and plan always to mentor young poets. Recently, I started a non-vanity press, "Mule on a Ferris Wheel." As a micro-press, I publish 2-3 40-page chapbooks a year. My press is publishing older poets in Alabama who have been overlooked for publication. After these publications, I am opening "Mule" to other poets.

In Lieu of Flowers

I have five wraths.

One is blue. It is as blue
as large stones of western turquoise.
It is a well-strung wrath.

One is red. In a child's nightmare, it is the bright red cat
that eats a pink baby mouse, still blind and hairless.

One is pure white. It is deceitful and stinks more than any
other wrath. It rises like billowy clouds from industrial
chimneys, takes paint off walls, skin off faces. It can leave
permanent scars on the retina and tongue.

One is green. Few wraths in this world are green.
But I have one.

One is purple. Made of thick-skinned grapes that grow wild
on country fences and the violet eyes that watched me suck
out the pulp and spit the seeds.

These wraths could kill me.

Or, they will fall into the grave with my ashes,
grow up as
white asters, irises,
blue hyacinths,
tangles of miniature roses

or a dark green vine.

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Issue 5 will feature Lewis Bosworth and his poem “Coloring Kids” from THE POETIC BOND II

3. Poetry, Review and Discuss is a discussion group on the professional networking site LinkedIn.com. The aim of this group is to look at poetry that is about love, life and the world; poetry that explores issues, that wants to change things, and gets the work out there.

Current discussions

John Kuforiji’s poem #bringbackourgirls at <http://lnkd.in/d73jmui> is worth your time and comment.

There’s determination in Sean-René Pierre-Olivierre “I Laugh In The Faces of Idiots” <http://lnkd.in/b-nT34H> prompting an equally good poem from Rae Desmond Jones “Spraycan sonnet” – be positive people, don’t let the nay-sayers grind you down!

On a lighter note, Bonnie Flach has the “mornin’ blues” <http://lnkd.in/deWHjA>, while this next discussion seemed to dive off at a tangent I was not expecting (all the better, I say!) – “Are animals people too? Actually, the question is vice versa.” <http://lnkd.in/dwAV-KJ>

Below are links to some of the poems posted in the group recently which have caught my eye, but search for yourself, everyone has their own opinions...

“The Fallen Trunk” by Abinash Das http://lnkd.in/bU_atN9

“Access Denied” by Jai Garg <http://lnkd.in/dUqYxh5>

“Coconut Tree” by Rod Adcox <http://lnkd.in/d23jSqh>

4. Article – “Smell me a poem” by Trevor Maynard © 2012

Smell me a poem

Sight and sound are often the primary senses used in poetry and in fact most fiction, but what of our sense of smell, is there such as genre of *The Poetry of the Nose*? The London Literary Gazette of 1831 had an article with the rather grandiose title of *On Genius and The Poetry of Nose*, but quite forgot the purpose of the nose itself is to smell and concentrated on the visual protuberance, though it does quite sensibly point out

*“Oh! Queen of Flowers! Lovely rose!
What would thou be without a nose?”*

Sa’dī (The Rose Garden, circa 1280)

William Carlos Williams, always one for innovation and taking on a challenge gave us SMELL (around 1912) with “a festering pulp on the wet earth” but maybe this was more about his nose than describing through smell. On the other hand, Erica Funkhouser’s THE WOMEN WHO CLEAN FISH (1990) gives us more a feeling of the quality of eponymous workers with “the smell of themselves more like salt than peach”, but even here the effect of smell is reported; we are told there is “chlorine” and “dead fish”, so we have to bring our version of the smell to the table, rather than being engaged directly. You could argue this example from CORRESPONDANCES by Baudelaire (1850’s)

*“There are perfumes fresh like the skin of infants
Sweet like oboes, green like prairies”*

attempts to use our olfactory sense, but even here, you have to have some pre-knowledge of infants, oboes and prairies, and anyway, the oboe; it sounds good, looks good, but what does it actually smell like? Changing tack, is a bad odour easier to describe than a pleasant one?

Try these two examples that may fit into Roethke’s “congress of stink”

*“Sickly sweet the maggots grasping rotting
Flavouring the monkey-jack of this and every town”*

Trevor Maynard (No Progress 2012)

Or

*“Her kitchen reeks of gas leaking,
Sour bacon, stale apples, weeping pee.”*

Hilary Sheers (Smelling the Past 2000)

As well as his own;

*“Roots ripe as old bait,
Pulpy stems, rank, silo-rich,
Leaf-mold, manure, lime, piled against slippery planks”*

Theodore Roethke (Root Cellar 1948)

Is it possible to have a poem just from an olfactory view, or do we have to accept, smell is a trigger, and sight and sound are always the dominant senses in poetry? Then again, maybe this is perfectly acceptable and it is a false, and indeed, pointless plan to look for poems just based on odour. Michael Ondaatje’s THE CINAMMON PEELER (1989) certainly evokes a series of powerful, and sensual, images through smell with the use of “smoking tar”, “honey gatherers”, “the grass cutter’s wife”, “the lime burner’s daughter” and of course the finale

“I am the cinnamon Peeler’s wife. Smell me.”

You can also get a whiff of how the scents associated with food are used to elicit emotions in this example

*“scented with ackees, sno-cones, dunks,
sugar cakes, nut cakes, tamarind balls”*

Mark Jason Welch (The Truth About Oranges* 2011)

Finally, maybe a poem can only be truly constructed from our sense of smell if we use fragrance instead of words as our only tool, for example, visiting one of the many perfumeries in Grasse, South of France, and wandering through their rooms and gardens with your eyes closed and earmuffs on. Alternatively, try your own back garden or a local park. Breathe in the poetry!

(*Published on the anthology, *THE POETIC BOND*, ISBN 9781466498419)

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5. Classifieds - Publications

The Poetic Bond, ISBN 1466498412

The Poetic Bond II, ISBN 1480209732

The Poetic Bond III, ISBN 1492384194

Keep on Keepin' On (Trevor Maynard) ISBN 1480052493

The Watcher from the Beacon (Peter Alan Soron) ISBN 1480108804

The Light That Shines Inside Us (Marguerite Guzmán Bouvard, Dailogos Books)

ISBN 978-1-935084-38-9

What We Don't Know We Know (Jessie Brown, Finishing Line Press, 2013)

Lucky (Jessie Brown, Anabiosis Press, 2012).

NEXT, ISSUE 5, 21 May 2014

PBN Issue 1 <http://www.thepoeticbond.com/PBN1.pdf> featuring Peter Alan Soron and Trevor Maynard

PBN Issue 2 <http://www.thepoeticbond.com/PBN2.pdf> featuring Graham Bates and Marguerite Guzmán Bouvard

PBN Issue 3 <http://www.thepoeticbond.com/PBN3.pdf> featuring Belinda DuPret and Rayan Abdul-Baki

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