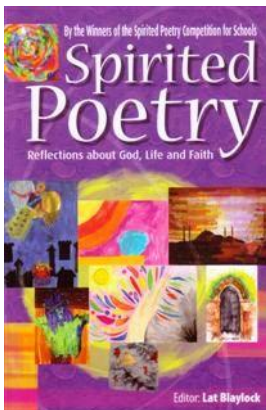


Spirited Poetry

A Competition for Creative RE

NATRE 2005-6



Nearly 100 entries in all have been selected for publication, and appear in a book of spirited poetry, jointly published by NATRE and Religious and Moral Education Press. Many more were excellent in their own way as well.

Judges: Penelope Wilcock, published poet. Lesley Prior, RE lecturer and chair of the Shap working party on world religions. Lat Blaylock editor RE today and NATRE project worker.

“The judges’ task was difficult because the quality of entries was high and impressive. We looked for originality, insight and good use of language in the interpretation of the them pupils made. We wish to thank all teachers who enabled pupils to take part as well as the pupils – judging spirited poetry has been a wonderful experience.”

WINNING ENTRANT	POEM TITLE	AGE
James Potine	Life is like the sea	7
Joseph Sibley	Will there be a third world war?	7
Nicholas Martin	God is everywhere	8
Dominic Halter	Beware Goliath Comes	10
Peter Blowfield	Heaven	10
Max Cobb	Faith: The Gates of Grace	11
Thomas White	Apple of Eden: after the event	11
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LIFE IS LIKE THE SEA

Life is like the sea
It is calm
It is strong
It is dangerous
It has dangerous animals
It is scary
It is gentle
It is peaceful
I like Life

James Potine (7)

WILL THERE BE A THIRD WORLD WAR?

There have been too many wars.
We don't deserve
The torture of the human race.
Can't we have peace for once
And let the flowers bloom?

We see the men approach coming to kill.
The sound of the enemy's trudging boots.
The children and women squealing and crying.
Our men dying and fighting for our country.
WILL THERE BE A THIRD WORLD WAR?
Of that I am not sure.

Joseph Sibley (7)

GOD IS EVERYWHERE

God is where the sea meets the land
And where the land joins the sky
Where sky ends and storm starts
And where earth becomes space
God is everywhere

Nicholas Martin (8)

BEWARE GOLIATH COMES

A wave soars towards the shore,
As colossal as two elephants on the plain,
Tourists rooted to the spot,
Like an iceberg of terror has wrapped itself around
them.
Beware Goliath comes!
Fill your sling with sunshine
And evaporate their grief.

People sit paralysed,
Having forgotten how to live,
The strength of independence faded,
Their spirits left with the terrible company of loneliness.
Beware Goliath comes!
Fill your sling with desire
And bring life.

Minutes fly passed,
Hours go by,
Starvation glides through the atmosphere,
Children lie waiting,
Patiently,
Waiting for the taste of death
That swims across the landscape.
Beware Goliath comes!
Fill your sling with the light of hope
And let the starving see the silver lining.

Mothers grieve for the loss of their babies,
Children cry over their dead parents,
People fall into the depths of despair,
Tramps find the door of life shut,
Locking them in the room of death.
Beware Goliath comes!
Fill your sling with people and loved ones
And bring them back into the joy of our world.

Woodcutters destroying rain forests,
Insects, animals, birds left homeless,
Fleeing from the chainsaw of terror and death.
Falling down like the trees....
Dead!
Beware Goliath comes!
Fill your sling with compassion and respect
And bring laughter.

See Goliath fall!

Dominic Halter (10)

HEAVEN

Heaven, Heaven, what does it mean?
Is it a giant recycling machine?
People go up, people come down
When people are old
They go through God's machine
That crushes and pounds

But don't be afraid
Of God's machines
Be grateful, be keen
This will not damage the body
But increase the soul
So please don't be scared
About the recycling machine in the sky
Learn about heaven
And you will fly
(at least you don't have to moan about getting old)

Peter Blowfield (10)

THE SLAVES AND I: A POEM FOR MOSES

I'm walking down this dusty unknown path
Not knowing which road I should take.
I think,
Should I go left?
Or should I go right?

I have people,
Lives, upon my shoulders
Crying out for help.
It is my duty to help them live
Not to leave them alone, abandoned.

I can trust no one except Aaron
The one who speaks for me, the one whom I will al-
ways trust.
And God above us all
The one who gave me this task to take.

But it is the slaves and I who walk on,
It is the slaves and I who take this path
But we are unsure of where we should go
As we have never been here before

The only thing we can do
Is put trust in each another
To help one another,
As it is the slaves and I who are taking this path.
The path to freedom.

Isabelle-Rose Tulloch (12)

APPLE OF EDEN: AFTER THE EVENT

Colour flowing out like radiant waves,
The night time star awakening below.
As round as a ball, a small, thin pole my only life
line.
Spots like freckles and juice like blood.
Juice flowing, swishing like the sea,
Juice exploding, my insides a blast.
My core shining like the sun,
Skin like leather, as smooth as a young child's skin.
The rusty insides where my lungs used to be,
Seeds raining from the soul.
Our souls as white as the moon above,
One crunch, another and that's the end.

Thomas White (11)

FAITH: THE GATES OF GRACE

My weak prayers are not enough to heal
The ancient wounds so deep and so dear
This is the revelation of hatred and fear

What a wicked game to play
To make us feel this way
Are we going to heaven
Or shall we just wait

So keep on pretending
It will be the end of our craving
Keep on pretending
It's all right

When your passing comes
The game begins
The one we will never win
The only way to heaven

It could be all right
Don't let us grow cold
We pray to him
But does he listen?

Softly the light shines in
Through the gates of grace
On me and you
Deceiving our restless hearts

Stop being what you believe in
And start being who you are.

Max Cobb (11)

SPIRITS

The spirit of goodness says:
"Rejoice ye peoples
Overlook your differences.
Forget your woes."

The spirit of Godliness says:
"Live in harmony my children
Lead good lives
And God's grace be bestowed on you."

The spirit of science says:
"Do not be blindly led by
Spirituality and its promises
They are all false"

The spirit of humanity says:
"Worry! Stress! These things are your life
Vote and grow
And breed and die"

The spirit of death says:
"Life is but a flicker
Welcome its passing
Into the infinite death"

The spirit of reality says:
"I will kill you all.
I am wealthy and powerful
I run your lives"

The spirit of morbidity says:
"Life is not worth living surely
Better to embrace death
Which I pretend to know"

The spirit of pain says:
"You people are revolting
You think you have it bad
And you spit on those who do"

The spirit of power says:
"Squabble, fight
It makes no difference to me
I run the world"

The spirit of optimism says:
"Surely things will work out
In heaven at least
Things will be peaceful"

The spirit of nirvana sighs:
"I am empty to those
Who believe not. To those who do
You'll have to wait and see"

The spirit of hell says:
"You'll all be under mine own care
Soon enough
You think your selves pure..."

The spirit of spirits looks down
On the people's beliefs and sighs
Thinks to itself
'My people have truly created some wonderful
things.
If I were to be as heaven to them
It would be a just reward
But can I?
Is there a heaven for me to promise?
Or will they all fall from my grasp
When their lives slip away?"

Caspar Jubril van der Sman, (12)

I WONDER WHY WE BREATHE

I've wondered for a while now
What makes us breathe
In and out

With languorous effort
Ambrosial air is acquired
Without second thought

Souls drown in ecstasy
As lungs seep in nothing
Invisible nourishment

An amazing process
Constant fabrication
In with the good
And out with the bad

Heads are comforted by pillows
But still the cycle goes on
Consciousness is done away with
And yet a breeze
Still moves the soul

Nadia Al-Refaie (15)

I AM GOD

I am the sun that shines for you,
I am the rain that rains for you,
I am the wind that blows for you
I never ask for thanks, nor ever will.

I am the food that grows for you,
I am the drinks that are made for you,
I am the meat that died for you.
I never ask for thanks, nor ever will.

I am the stone that was cut for you,
I am the brick that was made for you,
I am the house that was built for you.
I never ask for thanks, nor ever will.

I am the life that lives for you,
I am the death that dies for you,
I am the morning and the evening star that shines
for you.
I never ask for thanks, nor ever will.

I am the hope that was given to you,
I am the love that is in you,
I am the happiness that smiles on you.
I never ask for thanks, nor ever will.

Jayne Perks (13)

WHERE IS GOD? I'VE GOT HIM

I have God tied up in my basement
I have tied him up using ordinary string
I have tied him to an ordinary chair
Doesn't seem so great now, does he?

Never mind why I have him.
If he got himself into this mess,
Don't you think a great lord could get out?

If you ever want to see God again
Send me £100 000 in an unmarked bag
Or alternatively
£5 a viewing
£10 a picture
£50 a punch!

Jon Ord (16)

PRAYER OF A DYING AETHEIST

Dear Nobody
I'm here
Judgement day arrived
And there's a few things I'd like to say
I wish I wasn't dying,
Or praying,
Or anywhere near this place.
I wish that I was crying
So I could wash this cheap mascara off my face

I wish this bed was soaked
In all the blood you've supposedly wasted
I wish that I could tell them about the darkness
I wish I was an angel
With perfect paper thin wings
And beauty unmatched
By any one or any thing
But I never believed in that stuff.

I wish I hadn't watched the news
Been a player in the awful, unimaginable game
I wish I had believed in you just once
So I could see what they all loved to see.

So thank you God for proving me right
For showing me pain
And allowing no light
It means a lot to know I really was alone

And I believe I'm done
Have fun with creation.

Daisy Johnson (14)

DEEP

When I was a child I asked someone of great wisdom
Who is God and where can I find him?
Is he in the sky?
The beauty of a new day breaking?

Is he the elegance
With which we dance, laugh, smile?
Is he in the sky
Or in the whispering trees?
Is he in me: in all the good I do?

I stopped.
I wondered.
I waited.
And then I thought...

If God is so amazing then why does he allow such
disaster and despair?
Where is he when I need him?
Where are the angels when I need a lift?

I got angry...
Upset....
And as a single tear fell down my cheek I saw it.
I saw the beauty,
And I realized
What I had missed all along

He is always there,
In everything.
He is substance,
He is light,
He is love,
And he is good.

Georgie Shipp (17)

LIFE'S DRAMA

The spotlight switches on
The rest is dark
Nothing else matters
Nothing except you
Then your spotlight fades
Not much, but enough
Others join yours
And light is shared out
Friends join your spotlight
The stage lights appear
They guide you one your path
Round the twists and turns
That tell your life story
People all have a part in your play
Some come and hide behind their masks
They're so convincing
But near the end the masks come off
And you see their true colours
Another spotlight appears
It's your true love
You join and are happy for many scenes
Small spotlights now join you; children
Some scenes later
The spotlight disappears. Darkness
Fast, unfair and cruel

Kate Turner (13)

WHEN THE MORNING BIRD CRIES

When the sun comes up over the hazy horizon in the morning
When the dew drops sprinkle their diamonds on the grass
When shades of blue paint their way across the dawn sky
And when the morning bird begins his cries
You will hear me

When the bees fly round the honeysuckle's sugar scent
When the wind spins and dances amongst your hair
When the grasses rustle and whisper around your ankles
And when the morning bird flies across the fields
You will hear me

When the sun burns its golden halo up high
When the maple leaves glisten on their branches
When water trickles and tumbles gently down a stream
And when the morning bird swoops down on its prey
You will hear me

When the soft rain drops like silk on your head
When the darting fox dashes over the hills
When the skies clap and the clouds rain down
And when the morning bird takes shelter from the rain
You will hear me

When the clouds clear their thunderous grey curtains
When the water drips from the gleaming trees
When the puddles evaporate up into the skies
And when the morning bird emerges safe from shelter
You will hear me

And you will hear me when the morning bird cries
For I am with you when the morning bird cries
And I am always walking with you
For you will hear me...

When the morning bird cries.

Becky Bennett (13)

DISGUISED

You try and find the answer
though the question is not there
Locked inside the mind:
what's left? Happiness? Despair?
The scars erase, the cuts they heal
You struggle to recognize
Is this a phase? What do you feel?
Who is this in disguise?

Crystal memories mockingly shine
Reminding you of that place, that time
You see it all with a sinister sheen
Kodak thoughts for Kodak dreams
Climbing the floors you arrive at the sign
"You are here" but what did you climb?
The arrow it murmurs, aware of direction
The arrow it blurs: now where's your reflection?

You'll try and find the answer
Though the question is not there
'trapped' inside the 'mind' you'll struggle
Living on this prayer
The scars erased, the cuts now healed
You'll finally recognize
There is no answer to this question
No truth to all these lies.

Laura Tully (17)