

'I am part of that generation...'

PBS Student Poetry Competition Anthology 2014

Selected by Jane Yeh

The Poetry Book Society would like to thank Jane Yeh for judging this year's competition and for selecting the work in this anthology. We'd also like to thank everyone who submitted a poem; the overall standard was again very high this year.

The title of this anthology, 'I am part of that generation...', is taken from Talin Tahajian's winning poem 'With pretty legs'.

Poems © the contributors 2014

Design: Dave Isaac
Published by The Poetry Book Society,
The Dutch House, 307-308 High Holborn,
London WC1V 7LL
www.poetrybooks.co.uk

Contents

Judge's Preface		4
Talin Tahajian	'With Pretty Legs'	5
Jamie Osborn	'Gobabis'	7
James Giddings	'James Franco'	8
Aria Aber	'cousins'	9
Robert Harper	'It doesn't matter if I'm a clown'	11
Theophilus Kwek	'A417'	13
Rachel Long	'Sandwiches'	14
Lucian Moriyama	'Ode Home'	15
Emily Oldham	'The Journalist'	16
Hannah Tran	'Fox'	17
Jerrold Yam	'Domesticated Triptych'	18
Aria Aber	'André'	19
Karl Astbury	'Graham Over'	21
Karl Astbury	'A means, a stage, a cow in a calf'	22
Natasha Bailey	'Cheshire Ghazal on a Train'	23
Sohini Basak	'dim light'	24
Mary Anne Clark	'9 Haikus for lovers living on the same corridor'	25
Alastair Hale	'London (for J M W)'	26
Sarah Keary	'Siward Street'	27
Talin Tahajian	'Baptism'	28
This year's results		29



I was privileged to read the submissions for this year's National Student Poetry Competition. The diversity of subject matter and styles was a pleasure to encounter, as was the multiplicity of voices – lively or meditative, classical or colloquial. I was truly impressed by the quality of the winning poems, which I think equal or surpass anything being produced by 'professional' poets today. The talented writers featured here will surely continue to invigorate British poetry in years to come.

For the judge, the task of singling out some poems for praise (and turning down others) is never easy. All of the entries were passed on to me in anonymized form, without names or university affiliations attached, to ensure fairness. In assembling this anthology, I tried to choose work in which language came alive in some way – through a distinctive voice ('With pretty legs', 'It doesn't matter if I'm a clown'), through wordplay ('Domesticated Triptych', 'Ode Home', 'The Journalist'), through an exacting precision ('Gobabis', 'cousins').

In terms of content, the poems here address everything from teenage longing and gender issues to adult desire and envy, from domestic abuse and relationships to astrophysics and art. The sense of place – landscape, streetscape, nature, home – is a theme in a number of pieces. What all of these poems share, however, is a wonderful level of imaginative power and a high sense of craft. This collection is proof of the sheer variety and vitality of poetry today, which (despite efforts to pigeonhole it) contains multitudes. I hope you enjoy reading these pieces as much as I enjoyed selecting them.

Jane Yeh, Judge of 2014 PBS National Student Poetry Competition

Jane Yeh was born in America and educated at Harvard University. Her chapbook, *Teen Spies*, was published in 2003 by Metre Editions. Her first full-length collection, *Marabou*, was published by Carcanet in 2005 and shortlisted for the Whitbread, Forward, and Aldeburgh Festival poetry prizes. Her second collection, *The Ninjas*, was published by Carcanet in 2012. She has been the recipient of an Academy of American Poets Prize and a New York Foundation for the Arts Fellowship. She lives in London and lectures in Creative Writing at the Open University. She was selected as one of the Poetry Book Society's Next Generation Poets in 2014.

With pretty legs

These are facts: I am part of that generation
that everyone seems to want more of.

This is no coincidence. *This one's for the girl
who just walked by / with the pretty legs.* Things

I have learned about myself: street musicians
love me. The girl at the coffee shop with all

those red tattoos. I am listing all of the people
who love me. Facts: Each day, at some point

between dawn & noon, I turn into a hawk.
A casual metamorphosis. There's something

about thunderstorms. More facts: I wake up
when the electricity comes back on. A family

of buzzing ghosts. They live in the dishwasher
& inside every warm lamp. This is all I know

about crystal balls. Seeing spirits. Animals dying
in the snow. *Love you, beautiful.* I am an animal

& someday I swear I'm going to die in this snow.
A sexy death with lots of wildfire smoke. *Hello*

beautiful. Moral: If I'm lucky, when the vultures
convene to love me, I will already be dead.

Talin Tahajian, University of Cambridge

Judge's comments:

This dazzling and electric poem stood out for me as the clear first-place winner. Astonishingly assured, this poet's voice is bold and declarative, razor-sharp in its observations and consistently surprising – every new sentence is a revelation. The sophisticated use of enjambment, fragments, and italics only adds to the singular music of the piece. With a magpie's logic, it ranges from street harassment to coffee shops, tattoos to crystal balls, in a bravura display of free association. I look forward to seeing more of this poet's work published and rewarded, as it justly deserves.



Talin Tahajian grew up near Boston. Her poetry has appeared in *Indiana Review*, *Kenyon Review Online*, *Best New Poets 2014*, *Columbia Poetry Review*, *Washington Square Review*, and elsewhere. She serves as a poetry editor for *The Adroit Journal*, and recently co-edited *Poets on Growth* (Math Paper Press, 2015). She is currently an undergraduate student at the University of Cambridge, where she studies English Literature.

Gobabis

I wait on the thin grass behind Shoprite.
Lorries unload white, dusty sacks;
the clerk drags her foot through patterns
in the sand; a quiet, large-eyed family
squats beneath the trees, eating meat
from plastic bags; an old Herero dame,
selling braai-vleis, pokes at the concrete
fire-pit; a man in ragged overalls sprawled
on his back nods and smiles, as I
half look away. Across the street,
three boys, cracked and patched as the walls
they shiver into, rifle through the bins;
a policeman stops to watch them, adjusts
his cap, ambles on to Chicken King.

Jamie Osborn, University of Cambridge

Judge's Comments:

I was deeply engaged and haunted by this quiet 14-line poem (an unrhymed sonnet?) set in Namibia, whose apparent simplicity belies the skill and delicacy of its writing, just as its speaker's detached tone of reportage belies the undercurrent of unease, even distress. Each detail is precisely calibrated, building up into a complete evocation of a particular place and society. This impeccably crafted piece shows a subtle, discerning intelligence at work, proving that less is indeed more; the speaker's confession, 'I half look away', says it all.



Jamie Osborn is a 2nd year English Undergraduate at Clare College, Cambridge, where he is also chair of Cambridge Student PEN. He is poetry editor for the international arts and literary magazine *The Missing Slate* (<http://themissingslate.com>). He is working on a sequence of poems based on his experiences as a teacher in Namibia, and his work was featured in *The Mays Anthology 2014*.

James Franco

You have the face of a laureate, a sort of Californian Keats, fed on wheatgrass smoothies and outdoor sex.

Teach me about fame and education; you have more degrees than a hot day and I can't keep up with your output.

What shape of Band-Aid is best suited to the human ear?
How does it feel to lose an arm, if only for the length

of a film? There are so many questions that I want to stuff them in a sock and beat the answers out of you. I don't know

the true weight of money, and can't spot a look of genuine affection. I wish cultural wealth

was transferable, that we could sip on martinis in a bar someplace; I would hold your hand and know Paris

through the glitter of your eyes, the shade of your sunglasses. We're not so different, you and I, we share the same name.

Do you dislike cauliflower as much as I do? You're a great actor; sometimes, in the right lighting, I pretend to be a poet too.

James Giddings, Sheffield Hallam University

Judge's comments:

I couldn't resist the tongue-in-cheek humour of this poem, a preposterous paean to James Franco that charms the reader with its inventiveness and brio. 'There are so many questions that I want to stuff them / in a sock and beat the answers out of you' is the killer line I wish I had written, while the line break in 'I would hold your hand and know Paris / through the glitter of your eyes' adds the coup de grace to the joke. The poem might look like a one-note gag at first glance, but in fact the author never lets the ball drop, what with the poem's perfectly pitched, seriocomic tone of longing and its multifarious twists and turns. This writer makes the difficult look easy.



James Giddings is studying for an MA at Sheffield Hallam University, which was funded by the Arts and Humanities Research Council. He has had poems published by *Antiphon*, *Black and Blue* and *Butcher's Dog*. When he's not writing poems he is unashamedly writing bios to guilt the reader into giving him writing work. So how 'bout it?

cousins

1.

tiles cold, carpet
enameled with cream.

i am five years old,
you show me how to
finger myself in
grandmother's bathtub -

her forehead against
the prayer rug, dawn
a matte gleam guttering
her veil, promising nothing.

2.

maryam, you are beautiful,
your face is
the sunburnt elsewhere.
we lick freckles,
count bruises like lemon drops.

elope

return.

tramped stalks, the whole
farm a mouth of smoke:
you have killed
your parents' goats.

they halo your head
with burnt esfand seeds, knot
you a crown of
incensed cardamon beans.

you are silent

still.

3.

picnic into a
glade of trees: your daughter
now is two years old.

chew cherry blossoms,
crush tobacco with chestnut brims.

see our scars. lilaced bruises
bloom like artichoke plants.

and they come
from the men
we believe we love.

Aria Aber, Goldsmiths, University of London

Judge's comments:

This is a vividly evocative piece in which the spaces between the stanzas, between each section, say as much as the lines themselves. The spare, elegant writing offers a series of intimate snapshots of a pair of cousins' lives by juxtaposing unexpected images and descriptions – the work of an abundantly gifted writer.

It doesn't matter if I'm a clown

If you need me to explain then let me
tell you simply that my brain doesn't work
in the same way you think
it should. It has a hinge
not unlike a piano lid; my teeth
the keys that play Beethoven
across a tongue speaking
Chopin as a prelude to good-
bye. I can dress up

sentences with taffeta, twinkling
lights to shine some sense of *what*
was that to our discussion today. I
can fill your ears
with consonants that pop
your synapses and play tricks
on temples that pray
for regularities and seventy-five beats
or less at resting. If you need me

to explain, I know that I'm the one
who sees the clown is happy
when his mouth's the wrong way
round a custard pie, upside down, bleeding
diamonds into cheeks that rub
frowns away beneath a big top, hopping
on one leg. I can tell you once
again but this time boxes
and not parcels; this week
isn't next; I told you yesterday

at dinner, you were listening to—
who was that—something else and then
we talked with eyes instead of words,
both understood. Our daughter
knows. I'm sure she's heard it all
before in the way you think; I tell you
simply that my brain doesn't work.
If you need me, too, explain,
then let me.

Robert Harper, Manchester Metropolitan University

Judge's comments:

I admire the effortless-seeming verve and freshness of this piece: the contemporary, conversational voice and rush of phrases breathe life into the depiction of a fraught relationship. This is a highly accomplished and compelling poem that displays a spirited imagination at play.

A417

“This was what I had prayed for: a small piece of land with a garden, a fresh-flowing spring of water at hand near the house, and, above and behind, a small forest stand...

It’s perfect. I ask nothing more.”

– Horace, Satires and Epistles, ll.6.

Begin at the motorway. Between gravel and green find, in place of kerb, cleared dirt. Tall poplar rows, scaling birds. Song hedged against sound. Near a half-mile on, signs into town save one: *To Haffield*. Climb the wrought gate with the factory stacks. On the far side the circling path turns to give you time alone in uncut grass. Daffodils in clumps. Chestnut skirl. Step forward, then sit. Watch as clouds curl.

Imagine you have enough time here for a meal. An afternoon. The sun does not set. Your phone does not ring. Either side, the valley is a somnolent sea, two pairs of cresting sails, the walls of your street, back home. Woods along both ridges peer into the centrefold. The silence is warm, unfenced; a parcel at the foot of the stairs. Today is none of the days of the week, so tuck your legs in. Listen for a creek.

Write nothing down. This is a day to need and keep in the heart’s hollow, one to allow for all the others, otherwise spent: between two cities, or discontent in one you have always known. Perusing books in known languages, a safe distance from the moving crowd, where airports and platforms become one. Look how each branch above makes space for one more. See how they say, this is higher that is not all.

Theophilus Kwek, University of Oxford

Judge’s comments:

A richly detailed, densely packed piece, this poem portrays an oasis of all-too-fleeting rural calm amid the bustle of modern life. The striking form expertly frames and contains the flurry of sentences, while the second-person point of view (‘you’) makes the poem jump off the page at the reader.

Sandwiches

Tiff's pressing me against school railings,
doing my eyeliner. This is how we meet
proper, I say in class, 'Hey, can you do that on me?'
And she goes, 'Wot?'
I say, 'Your eyes. Can you make my eyes look like that,
like graphic novel knives?'
'Yeah alright. Break-time.'

So now we meet every break-time
against make-up rules and railings – the diamonds
we chat with our fingers inside. We want
engagement rings this big
so big we can see freedom on the other side.

Her weight against me is solid and soft, a bomb
before and after it goes off. A weight inclusive
of the glitter on her lids, the oil spill on her lips, the sandwiches
padding her bra.

Yes, the sandwiches padding her bra
– unbuttered, no filling.
This is their purpose, not privilege.

See, the boys know the difference
between tissue and tit,
a sock and a tit, but not yet
a tit and slice of bread.
Tiff's smart
so smart my new eyes weep.

Rachel Long, Goldsmiths, University of London

Judge's Comments:

I love how this poem crackles with life, its teen characters sparky, beguiling, and adroitly drawn. A sense of semi-thwarted hope shines through the images: 'We want / engagement rings this big / so big we can see freedom on the other side'. A real storyteller's eye and way with words are in evidence here.

Ode Home

The last time I saw you against the meridian
true high summer had passed. I crossed the chiaroscuro:

You were laden in the deep Latin hues of viridian
while I'm still not sure if the ground floor is zero

Or one. As evening fell, you sundialled your antique
flower-press geometry onto the folded square of the meadow.

I tried to scry my woodcut-fate from where the light fell
or did not fall, but found I could only speak

Victorian: *Eglantine, Heliotrope, Helleborine*. The libretto
proved too open to interpretation. I refused to spell

The vulgar cloud-shapes as they appeared and faded
back into dandelion-tuft. The Edo-period sky grew

Mountain-pale. The spectre-ghost of Gilbert & Sullivan serenaded
The flowers that bloom in the spring, tumbling as a light haiku.

Watching the light strokes of the quaver-cavalcade above,
I heard the echoes as they must have haunted the Savoy,

Ringling under the chandeliers, candelabras, and compendiums.
It recalled a childhood girlfriend. Once, she found her true-love's

name on a Ouija board. She asked me just how much I was fate-savvy.
It wasn't me. Wit jumped into my bones and answered *Medium*.

Lucian Moriyama, University of Glasgow

Judge's comments:

I was drawn in by this poem's flamboyant sense of artifice, with its elaborate rhyme scheme and esoteric references. Gleefully inventive and knowing, its cavalcade of remembered events entices us to enter its speaker's unique inner world.

The Journalist

I wipe my eyes and my fingers turn black
and murky. Into the shower before nine
like a story into a notebook. I can't see for news,

news, news. The headlines crawl over my face,
weaving confusing communing contriving,
A horizon of black mascara. Empty shelves

court clammy cells. Skin chewed up,
cut away; coffee-stained by the printer.
The more I see the world about me,

so much more I let the liquids rain within
me. Debt-black ink combs out my hair,
its darkness tracing over my blank skin:

The veins of hope, the arteries of wordless
gracefulness. It snakes, curving my neck,
my papyrus stomach, my fountain legs.

Kettle eyes steam. Can't paint history
choking in fuel. I try to quit at five,
but the pen slips, and ink drips from my hair.

Emily Oldham, University of Oxford

Judge's comments:

*This poem appealed to me for its unusually extended and arresting vision.
The literal rendering of news as ink pouring out of a journalist's body is
imaginatively executed and novel, while the last deadpan stanza adeptly seals
the deal.*

Fox

Come a shadow
into an unrest of chickens.
Soiled bronze bolt
at heel to that heckling humidity,
it shifts,
 a lower darkness.

Panic stirs.
Chickens know fox –
it has the livid gold eyes
red smile
of a fox. They jangle
and squall their heads off
but cannot deter that calculated
freeze-leap-
 pounce –

and stillness.
A taper psychotic
no quivering tenderness
of domestic,
it shuts an instant mind
and fierce pleasure
in the sudden slow bloom of feathers.

When farmer
comes up the following dawn, he
wipes his fingers slowly, and softly
hinges and click-clicks
the gun.

Hannah Tran, UCL

Judge's comments:

I enjoyed this poem's memorable characterisations of animals, as well as its stylised use of language. The dramas of life and death are skilfully and concisely enacted. The 'sudden slow bloom of feathers' is an especially fine image that lingers long in the mind.

Domesticated Triptych

After Francis Bacon's Three Studies for Figures at the Base of a Crucifixion

pond	table	window
<p>pour me its looking glass, family of algae and stone, enough vision for no one but myself, tapping crass</p> <p>fingers on the brim of another world, sated as this unabated rhythm or hymn</p>	<p>thin as scrying bones, yet bearing our ambitions on stunted legs, children not home before sunset</p> <p>to breathe its tinder sighs, all is oversight and varnish, a family urged to garnish each other's disguise</p>	<p>one despair at a time in its callous mirror, clouds imitating dearer family, how rhyme</p> <p>is also a gesture of rain, cumulonimbus antics, the business of becoming plain</p>

Jerrold Yam, UCL

Judge's comments:

This poem's innovative form is matched by its unexpected content, a group of fluid and impressionistic images that continually surprise. With its deft use of enjambment and rhyme, it more than lives up to Bacon's well-known painting.

(after the romance between Léona Delcourt & André Breton)

André,

I still feel you bright as a blaze
that flutters and flashes
around my calves.

Remember how you hit me,
André, your voice was soft,
the light behind your lashes yellow,

and me, my elbows in the sink,
you watched me recede into a shiver of atoms
in front of the cold water tap,

which is also only a little fountain that calms.
This is the winter in our Neukölln apartment:
we were a ripple of crush and stroke,

we were so poor, we chipped off
the paintings and chewed and chewed on
the crumbs of imagined faces.

And I was waiting for you, André,
those days, I flirted with the neighbour's cats,
I froze edible flowers into ice cubes

only to melt them in my lap.
I was waiting for you to touch me again,
constant in my hope that

after the blow in the arm/face/back
I could shut you between my thighs again,
André, I wanted to breathe in your neck

and not breathe out
until the sun died again.
But most nights I just lay my head

onto the seedy rug,
bruises swelling to their mothy suits
as I watched the wet petals on the floor

convolve into their tiny selves
again and again, their hearts

limp and scared, as if the universe
might not have enough space for them.

Aria Aber, Goldsmiths, University of London

'Graham, over'

Eager and hunched forward, tightly trimmed beard like a worn out broom, sweeps the airwaves with his candy store purchase. 'CQ ... CQ ...'
Seventy-three, eighty-eight, best regards, love and kisses, the angled net has caught most of the old listeners. He sits alone, his handle, his call sign, his shed. Looking towards the grey line – the moment where daylight separates from darkness, the critical angle is found, Earth – Moon – Earth, rebound to his anchor. Rag chew sessions bounced in from Artemis, 'Copy ... over'

The transmissions, like neutrinos, swim through the telescope, Hubble, buoyant on cat-fur black, its massive mirror glimpsing the dead, the pregnant bangs forming and unforming, a mechanical eye bearing witness to the end of time, existential disasters and awkward galaxies, fixed intermittently with human hands, gloved to shield from radiation. Soon it will glissade into disrepair, no longer viable, superior vessels expected to launch 2018, blood soaked Drua, waiting for mana, sacrificial bottles become innumerable pieces.

All the hydrogen atoms in the known universe weren't enough to write down the numbers. Still aren't. Bigger numbers, bigger than Graham, where tens sit on top of tens which sit - on top - of tens - like a circus trick, tables balanced on a clown. Googolplex, super-massive, the successor of Graham will someday be given its overcoat before time, a carriage clock, working linearly to twelve, the moment of atmospheric change, the grey line, and will paddle brass, dot-dash.

Karl Astbury, University of Manchester

A means, a stage, a cow in calf

You extend yourselves, dip
into water
and on the waves
collapse and pull back
leaving the white
foam and detritus
for the beach combers

who find the boot
kicking in the surf
and leave it there
while they look
for the thing as removed
from the bleep
of the metal detector,

and the tiny feet, which kick
like all others have.
The white noise engulfs
you, a thousand people
applaud, and then there's just the kick
pulling you back
to attend to that boot.

Karl Astbury, University of Manchester

Cheshire Ghazal on a Train

Sing then of the ribs of railways, drink their rain
Transit, to cross fields, unwetted- my distant heart
Waits for no-one. Stockyards, I see abandoned engines
And always crates. Yang Ming, shipping freight to China.

Homeward then, our kid, and if you can, don't mention
Mercury's broken fingers, his poisonous planet.
Little black god of travellers, herd those sheep to Stoke
And thereon who knows, perhaps to China?

Given a place to hide, I'll choose the old grinner every time
Cat-country: passing through I should renew my lives
Top-up on northern winds, my dead-leaf quota, use my time
To brace myself. Evacuee, sent here if not to China.

Or even as you travel, say nothing- my chuck,
I'll understand, in the year's dead-end, to let go
Of borders seems easier, to melt old sand
At the birth of our lord and turn it at last to china.

Natasha Bailey, University of Manchester

dim light

not a degree of brightness but a thing
shaped by soot glassed by kerosene
this egg or egg plant bellied chimney lamp
would be set down by my grandmother
as soon as the lights went out—on table-tops,
bathroom shelves, stairway corners, and being
set down it would conjure fist-finger dogs, doves
in flight without feather, crickets with legs
full of song, all in the backdrop of those garrulous
frogs. what is remarkable is not how, if a storm
hit the electric poles, I will automatically recall
the dim light's perfect curvature but that I cannot
simply remember where it was stored, behind
which cupboard door that dim light stood when
not in use, where it waited wireless for a darkness,
exposed to the sun, alive with fluid blue and how
the dim light would just appear, out of nowhere
every time I needed it, like a prayer, but mostly
like the hands that carried it towards me.

Sohini Basak, UEA

9 haiku for lovers living on the same corridor

Twelve metres or so
Dividing me and my love
Approximately.

I hear the floor's pulse,
Body a raw waiting wick –
Twenty-one footsteps.

I hear all doors here
(So slow to close but so loud!) –
The absence of knocks.

Only the heart's knock,
The beating of the ear's blood;
The knock of the rain.

*

Acquainted with this,
You sometimes just tap my door,
Or breathe against it.

The door of the heart
Is sensitive, though its walls
Are thick and sound-proof.

For all that, direct
Your quiet steps' artery
Once more to my door.

*

A long journey back
It seems, though you still sometimes
Leave your shoes behind;

Dirty, winter-scuffed,
Still they put Spring in my steps:
Promising return.

London (for J.M.W.)

London does not lie asleep on its river
As another city might, but dances
Day through night and night through day together.
Its static leaps and horizontal falls in marble
And gold twist time and type close but then,
Dancing, spin away again, so that it is indeed possible
To say what, or where, but then never know precisely when
This happened—this step, this move, this column, this brass—
To fix a moment but not a time, a present but not past.

Of the thousands of doors in Mayfair, or Belgravia,
Or Fitzrovia, or Hampstead, I will remember one only,
But this one will not be itself identical with any,
Just as at the end of a friendship, the kindness remembered
Is not the trace of one act, but a passage through the traces of many.

Alastair Hale, University of Oxford

Siward Street

There's pulled grey cotton wool
over the blue, this afternoon.
And the sunlight is fudgy: sticky
honeycomb on the bare brick walls.
But it's bright, a little higher up above,
where the undersides of the gulls shine
as they skate. As though this city breathed
beneath a frozen sea, and the pockets
of freezing breath from winter walkers
rose only to thicken its slow war
with the warmed cotton
beneath.

Sarah Keary, University of York

Baptism

We begin our lives by dying
& waking up again, eyes sensitive
to the kind of light that exists in places
that aren't heaven. This isn't heaven.
I like the way other counties look
after midnight. Ghosts swimming
through empty chapels. That silence
is something sacred. Too dark to see
your reflection as a god in a display
window. Glass is one of the only
honest things. I love not knowing
what it means to be innocent. I rinse
my mouth with every kind of holy
water. By that, I mean I have kissed
the mouths of so many beautiful boys.
I remember thinking or saying *This*
is how I want to finish my life. To unlearn
the Bible, first I would have to read it
until I understand what it means
to be a religion, to embrace that sort
of death with bright things.

Talin Tahajian, University of Cambridge

PBS National Student Poetry Competition Winners 2014

1st Place – Talin Tahajian, University of Cambridge ('With pretty legs')
Also Runner Up with 'Baptism'

2nd Place – Jamie Osborn, University of Cambridge ('Gobabis')

3rd Place – James Giddings, Sheffield Hallam University ('James Franco')

Highly Commended

Aria Aber, Goldsmiths, University of London ('Cousins')

Also Runner Up with 'André'

Robert Harper, Manchester Metropolitan University ('It doesn't matter if I'm a clown')

Theophilus Kwek, University of Oxford ('A417')

Rachel Long, Goldsmiths, University of London ('Sandwiches')

Lucian Moriyama, University of Glasgow ('Ode Home')

Emily Oldham, University of Oxford ('The Journalist')

Hannah Tran, UCL ('Fox')

Jerrold Yam, UCL ('Domesticated Triptych')

Runners Up

Aria Aber, Goldsmiths, University of London ('André')

Karl Astbury, University of Manchester ('Graham Over' & 'A means, a stage, a cow in a calf')

Natasha Bailey, University of Manchester ('Cheshire Ghazal on a Train')

Sohini Basak, University of East Anglia ('dim light')

Mary Anne Clark, University of Oxford ('9 Haikus for lovers living on the same corridor')

Alastair Hale, University of Oxford ('London (for J.M.W.)')

Sarah Keary, University of York ('Siward Street')

Talin Tahajian, University of Cambridge ('Baptism')