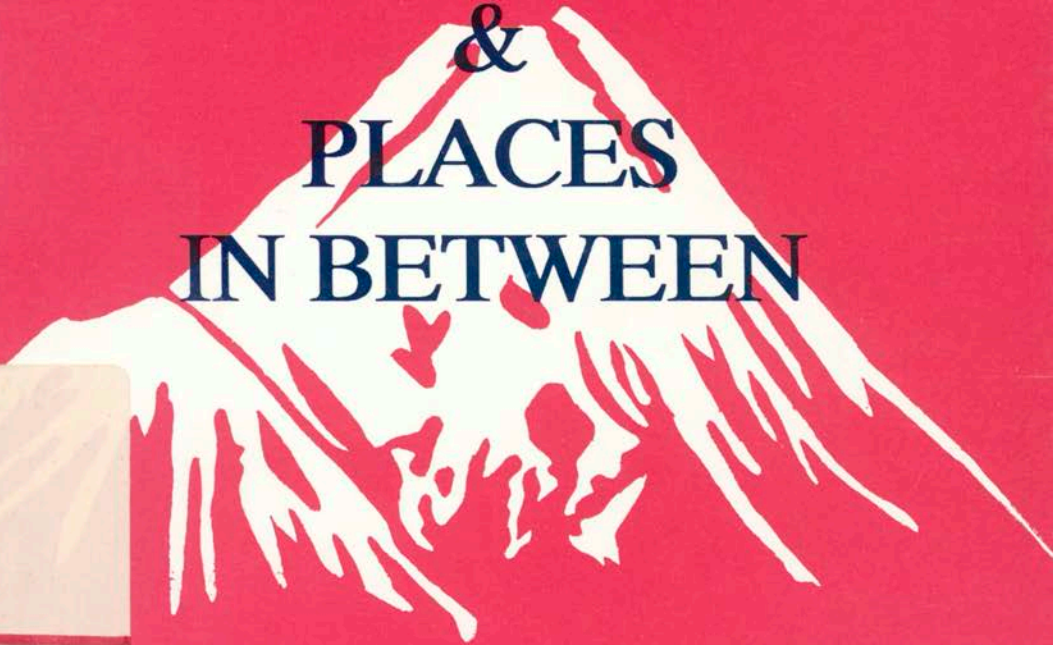


POEMS
FROM
HEAVEN
HELL
&
PLACES
IN BETWEEN



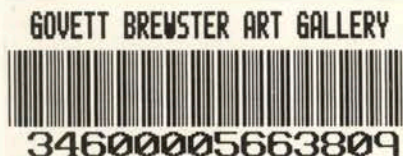
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POEMS
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INTRODUCTION

The poets in this collection represent a monthly group which first met in December 1988 at the Govett-Brewster Art Gallery, New Plymouth.

The initial gathering was something of an experiment. Who knew how many poets were out there, and whether they would want to share their work with strangers? The first meeting attracted over sixty people, poets and poetry lovers, and the atmosphere was electric. So the Gallery poets' group was born.

Most of the poems in this collection have been read at the monthly meetings. It's not easy to read your own work - when you write poetry you bare your innermost soul, and it is difficult to hold out your soul in your hand for the instant judgement of others. But everyone listens, because they know that when their turn comes the group will listen to them. People of diverse ages whose daily lives have absolutely nothing in common and whose social and moral codes may be mutually strange and repugnant find a common ground in poetry, and learn to understand one another a little better in the process.

This is the first book from the group. It has been produced with the generous help of a grant from the Central Regional Arts Council. The Govett-Brewster Art Gallery has supported the publication with funding, compilation and design.

Gill Winter
Extensions Officer
Govett-Brewster Art Gallery

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LEAD ME

Come, come whisk me away
come sweep me off my feet and lead me
Lead me - no not to temptation for I can find that myself
But lead my blind eyes and my untravelled feet
come show me the way
and I shall follow.
Take me to the place
of inner contentment and acoustic guitars
Lead me not to the bright lights of the big city streets
not to the racy nightclubs where
money and virginity are frittered away
as if there were no tomorrow
come lead me past the places made of concrete and steel
past the glamour drugs and live sex shows
with people and contact lenses
But come take me
take me to the green where the moon still shines
where people smile and there are no cages
Release me from this life of the modern world
release me from money and fast cars and microwave ovens and
pantyhose
release me so that my spirit may rejuvenate
my soul raise uninterrupted by plastic satellites
my slumber proceed unblocked by screaming horses
Yes come show me, show me the light
No not to religion
where people invade private property
and pray for the souls of unbelievers
where people preach that peace and brotherly love are sacred

yet is it not the Holy Wars that are so notorious
and a woman becomes a man's wife
No, not that light
but come show me
show me the place where the only things poached are eggs
where people eat and drink and make love but don't fight
where races are run with legs and not arms
where colour is to do with nature and not skin
and where we can all be free
Free from the pressures
of violence, famine, rape and war
Yes lead me
Oh lead me to this place
and I shall follow.

Elizabeth Singh

BUSINESS MAN

Hey businessman
come down out of your concrete tower
amid the highrise of our capital
come, shower me with false truths
From the other side of your face
Come meet me on the streets, businessman
where we belong
and I can lick your feet
and tell you that the sun shines out of your arse
and you can give me money
and I'll trick or treat you to silent favours.
Hey businessman
don't treat me that way in public
arrogant, ignorant businessman
with the world at your feet
Say hello to the working class
cynical, hypocritical businessman.
You in your grey Commodore with gold cufflinks
and straight umbrella of black
phone your wife and tell her you're working late
once her own entity
poor, waiting woman
businessman, the mother of your children
I'll call her for you
then what would you do
staunch and powerful businessman.

Elizabeth Singh

QUIET OF THE BUSH

The quiet of the bush
Is nature's rejoinder
To a world that is weary
Of hassle and buzz

The wind sighs from
Tree top to tree top
As one sits and listens
To bush noise and silence
So intertwined
Inseparable opposites
Life and decay
The quieter it gets
The more you hear

Bush is growth, death and decay
Life too has growth
Death and decay

Just like the bush
Life needs the shit of decay
To fall to our roots.....
Not to swamp but to feed
So put down the shit in your life
Rise above it with new growth
And let it decay.

Noel Sinton

HARD AS GLASS

The ice on the shrine
Gleams in the sun
And the desire to climb
Pulls you apart

The snow slopes beckon
To unsuspecting souls
That find themselves bitten
By the spell of the shrine

For nothing compares
With the crunch of crampons
As the teeth bite deep
Into the crust

In the bright light
Beauty is so harsh
Only low light
Softens the scene

Beauty is so fragile
Anywhere you go
You have to get out
To take part in the wonder

Noel Sinton

There is many a man
who lives in a box
and when he goes out
travels by box
along straight lines
to work in a box
then home again
along those same straight lines
home to his box
where he leasures his hours
in front of a box
we fill our lives
with boxes and straight lines
and cannot understand
the circles we find.

Amber Lahikainen

LOST IN A LIFT

Here I am
lost in a lift.
Of all the places
my sanity could slip,
of all the cases
my mind would shift,
to get lost in a lift,
lost in a lift.

Crawling crawling
everyone's calling
so sure that this will be my crypt.
I'm totally lost,
crossed in a lift.

A cruel cool mist,
to seek out the twist
lost in a lift
red at the wrist
death she has kissed.
Lost and found,
dead in a lift.

Amber Lahikainen

LIFE'S FARCE

Just imagine people thinking
people thoughts.
Life is just a tunnel full
of stupid lies
This is just a tunnel where
Nobody goes
Forever's too cold

Ride a train to where your thoughts
began
There you will find
Eternal youth
Wisdom is lost through careless mistakes,
reflected in your face

This is just a dream amongst my open mind.
I see creatures stranded, lovelost
out of sight
I can't help my feelings if I
wanted to
Maybe we are just the dreams
Inside the tunnel of lies.

Andrea Goodman

4 shooting stars have slipped away to the unknown

I can still hear the sound -
the sound that is bound -
bound from heaven

4 shooting stars have cast a shadow of
pleasure across my mind
4 shooting stars have rushed within my soul

I can still hear the sound -
the sound that is bound -
bound from heaven

4 shooting stars are etched within my spirit
4 shooting stars have shone upon my flesh

louder in my ears

roaring pouring storing soaring mooring
in my heart.

Paula Frost

YOU AND I, MOZART, ARE ALONE

In much the same way
you would have analysed
the dying of your flower's head.
Succinct, and without a notable despair.

Inside your chaste arms I am numb.

How like a moth I have become
soft and stunned
against the glass of
your bright light.

To the closing of a door
I go into the garden
your music about me.
Damp on my face
the heart of a flower
attends my grief.

J.H.Talbot

PARITUTU

Straying hunters
would have marked your
cragged face, your surly coat
of flax and toitoi
from great distance.

Before the first ships,
bellied out with heaving cargo,
yellow-eyed dreamers
whispering of England,
deferred to you.
Masts trimmed of sail
anchored on still water.

Before the spires
of stone churches
pressed into the unwilling sky
their slate and iron.

In the local museums
there may be still
the odd ball and chain,
a manacle or two,
from the holds of ships,
(in case of frenzy)
in the bowels of churches
a chipped cup or chalice
for blood or wine,
(the droppings of pigeons)

You crowd the eastern shore
thistle and thorn your tapestry coat.
There are dead sailers
at your foot.
Numberless lost brides
and pregnant daughters
(black capes and locks of hair)

For centuries you have
watched the parade.
Your great shoulders
hunched as if in prayer.

AWAKENING LOVE

Her sweet face rested against the satin pillow.
Her brow untroubled in peaceful sleep.
Cream smooth cheeks with warmth aglow.
Eyebrows curved in silken sweep.

Lashes stir as sunlight strengthens into day.
Golden hair tumbles as she stretches hidden limb.
Dreams that lingered in her mind now lose their way.
In awakening she vainly seeks the sudden light to dim.

Her eyes stay open now and gaze at me,
In recognition of a love she knows is there.
Their clear blue depths happily appraising me.
Pellucid mirrors of her dear soul laid bare.

I saw in them an answer to my prayer
That set my very heart ablaze.
They showed such beauty and such loving care,
My whole being thrilled with thankfulness and praise.

Charles Baddeley

YOUR WAY AND MINE

Why can't you agree with me?
So different must we always be?
You, a prize in woman form.
Me, a man, needs must conform.

Must we ever be this way,
like two puppets in a play.
I'm sure that now you will agree
that this is not the way to be.

Then, let's change our lifestyle fast.
Kind treat the other to the last.
For we love each other don't you see.
Let's pull together, you and me.

We must face each problem eye to eye.
It's never easy, yet must we try.
Gone are the days when we can say,
"I'll go mine - you go your way."

Charles Baddeley

ATOMIC

Atomic fingers fill my mind
Separating war from peace.
Men madly waste energy,
making POWER!
We people use our fuel,
Ironic!
While we work to make it Atomic.
This world till now our mother,
Shall be forgotten,
Replaced by her Atomic brother.
Trees and waste could serve,
more than landfill and pulp!

Atomic madness grips our minds,
Ships, planes and electric lines,
Atomic rockets could go to the stars
Instead you aim them at me.
Supersonic Atomic dreams in the heads,
Doctors not healing the children.
While the millions starve and bleed,
Where is the Atomic food?
Can the dead eat Atomic dreams?
Life must go forward,
Ahead of the dying thousands,
They are dead.

We are safe if it comes,
We men can handle anything.
The fallout the meltdown we have it in hand
Like a dog it and us can be trained.
We the people need,
We the people will bleed.
All men have this need,
Atomic.
The brains of our great land,
have this Atomic monster in hand.
We, grown stone age man.
We, man has the Atomic monster.

Atomic dog is chained to a tree,
Mother nature struggles to carry,
Helpless upright ape.
Chain strains,
Tree dies,
And rots.

R.G.L.Paton

BEYOND

As I look beyond to the fresh green of the
rolling hill sides, I see the sheep like maggots
eat away the coat of green beneath baring the
shadow of a drying land.

Below the hills lies the twisting river,
curling, turning monotonously,
turning carelessly over all in its path
toward the impending sea.

The sea where all is born and all returns.
A pool of all human desires,
hope, sorrow and tears.
Tears of a million broken souls.
Hopes of a million hopeless hearts.

But below the surface of the sea
lies light and joy of iridescent coral,
vibrant fish of many colours,
there much love flows.

But we fear to look again deeper into the
endless void of the great arms of the ocean,
Here all that live are parasites and sightless
fish with all but a death wish.

Jessica Talbot

MOTHER'S BIRTHDAY

Another birthday today
Good grief
Where have the years gone?
Who is the thief?
Time to reflect on what next to do
And of the years to do a review.
Doesn't it seem like yesterday
You were a girl
The years seem to go faster
Gone in a whirl
And as you think about your life
Take a pat on the back
As a Mother and Wife
And if there are things that you haven't yet done
That will make life richer and more fun
Do them today
Call it a fresh start!
Love and Best Wishes
Straight from my heart.

Lorraine Gibbons

OPEN YOUR EYES. OPEN YOUR EYES.

Open your eyes. Open your eyes.
open those closed eyes to this world.
Wake up to this summer, just this once.
we don't want to see you lie
as still as still as can be
on the
bed.

So be a good patient for me.
Say you'll pull through.
All that is needed's to move a finger.
To make me smile.

I'm standing here,
by the bedside,
waiting and wondering
For you to care about
Me wanting you to see
once again in your life.

I'll take the sheet off,
then there's more reason to show
signs of life, you know.
There we are.
Now I'll touch your hand.
Now shift the finger if you can.

Good girl, you can do it
Your doctor has a smile on his face.
You'll be alright, all you do now's
To Open your eyes, Open your eyes today. Try,
Try a little harder, come on.
Don't tell me you don't know how.

Hello there.
I'm Dr. Care.
what's this tear in that eye
when you can see alright, now
you have

OPENED YOUR EYES, OPENED YOUR EYES.

TANGI

Dearest Queenie,

Goodbye, I somehow knew
I wouldn't ever see you again.

Poor running eyes, absent limbs.
Sheer determination, gutsy lady.

Much bitterness in this heart
misunderstanding, but much love to share.

Unexpected surprises
Clothes for Graham

easter eggs for Allie and Rose
The smile on your face when "manners"
are shown.

I miss you, not many tears,
aching emptiness. A hard knot of
tight blackness, a voiceless void.

Good-bye Queenie
I love you.

Helen Sinton

TRAVELLING ON

Yet again
the new dawn
breaks the starry night.
Sending colours flying through
time and space.
Endless always and forever
the timeless dance goes on.
Unfolding its wild spirit.
Sunrises go on throughout
the world's stupidity
Wars, famine, plague and poverty
all receive the same portion.
Dawn light makes all men equal.
We are all rich and all can share
in the experience.
Quicksilver shadows and
softlights flickering on the
blue haze.

I stand alone and watch.

Helen Sinton

EDUCATION ?

Guts growling and stinking pie in hand
I sit to write out the thoughts of a job
Over a desk and a room gone quiet
Except for the lunchtime burble and squeals
as energy is gulped to steady
The afternoon attack.

A normally noisy bluefly zips
In weaving swings at desk height
As my nerves twitch from a windblown door,
Thoughts to the staffroom wander
Can I face the stench of smoke
And useless drift of conversation
Bemoaned remarks of what should've been
A worn out phrase of uselessness
Isolated pockets of human flesh
Sitting in THEIR USUAL seats.

Cracked up half hatched women
Who are neither teachers nor mothers
With a desert longing to be both
Moneymakers all for the "better things"
In life.

Office sitting cigar smoking retiring
Authorities on Education chat about
The weekend trots and if this year's " Team"
is comparable with the 1928 side.
Easy to see where the thoughts come from
And where we are going!

POUAKAI HIGH!

Moss rock cradle sitting sunned
high above the world I know
Michael's clouds greyed form filled
floating forever, drifting through
the world of now.

These are ancient hills to sit on
wise filled and knowing the essence
of the trick of time.

Perhaps this may, my
time last to sit and think
of homeland
Family land
birthland.

In life we know not
where
we
die.

Andreas Ries

THE FUGITIVE

The man they sought was hidden now
high in the mists on a rocky brow
Where the clouds and the fog
joined one to another
And covered the fugitive
Like an ardent Lover
While the men below in desperation
Prayed to their gods for inspiration
To gain some distance on their prey
before the gloom devoured the day,
But such prayers displease the gods
and often make them change the odds.
Then, before they could start the steep ascent
Those men found the day was spent
so they were forced to turn around
and make their way to safer ground.
While high on the mountain the fleeing shape
of the wanted man made his escape.
Then the gods looked down upon the scene
Where the hunted man and his foes had been
and let the night come drawing in
upon this place they'd saved from sin.

Jim Hall

I LOVE YOU

I want to tell you of
My love for friends and family
But I find it really hard
We aren't told to speak feelings.

But Anyway

I want to tell you of
My love for friends and family
We take each other for granted
Until the last day comes

There are moments,
sporadic moments
when I could take you in my arms
And hug you so hard
And I don't really understand
Why I don't do that
Perhaps 'cos I was never shown how?
I wish I could do that
Before we say goodbye.

I LOVE YOU

Greg James

TREASURE RED

The colour of passion is red
Red is hard warmth
and caressing stroking beyond measure.
It is sweet sucking
and love licking
Red oh red is raging pleasure.

Belindalee Hope

ONE STRONG LOSS

Droog of gentleness and passion
Stood strong and proud all along
Life exulted in amazing artistic fashion
How can your fire be gone.

Laughing boy Dodger of fate
we laughed, we partied, we cared
Respected and loved a mate
others will never know what we've shared.

Your life opposed oppression and weakness
We had to fight most of the time
and you, you had found your perfect uniqueness
such a bullshit waste really is a crime.

We are still trapped in this life of pleasure
but your spirit is unconquered, your soul is free.
Only fragments are left for us to treasure
like your distinctive art and horrorshow memory.

Belindalee Hope

NOISE

The siren ripped through the valley
Tranquillity no more
The real world is waiting
With a story of war
Panic stricken
As the whirl noise
Permeates my being
An aircraft thunders
In the sky
Tranquillity no more
A cacophony of sound
As the raindrops drip
From the heavens
Solitude so close
Peace so near
An engine working
The person speeds
The waiting
For the next
Line
It will be better
Like a new morning in the valley
Or like a cat
Lapping up milk.

John Ellis

CELEBRATE THE SUN O PEOPLE OF THE EARTH

The town is sleeping
Cry the youth
Drowsy with ignorance.
The old woman strokes her hair
Sensuously,
Forgetting her age

I long for a nocturnal gathering
Spurred on by the rhythm of drums
And the sound of merrymaking
For what have we to celebrate?
Nothing other than life

Individuality will crack the seams
And explode
Onto the town's billboard
Creativity Awaken and rise

For a new age is dawning
Our numbers are few
But we are united
with the strength of a lion
And the will of the universe.

John Ellis

LEATHER

Soft and Shiny, all shapes and form
Designed for Safety - Looks - and to warm
Costs so much, it denies a whim
Loved when owned,
By her or him

A Protective Shield to save the skin
rare beauty with Style
thick and thin
Not only for subject of my thought
But listening few, may be taught

Value in looks ain't always there
For yards of skin can disappear
When you've given the Road
More than yore best
and She invites you down
to take a rest

Bird!

THE ROADWAY

He clicks his pride into gear
And starts the motor whirring
the finish of a Working Day
emotion then starts stirring.

A Crazy Feeling as if the Road
somehow seems to say
I'll provide yore freedom,
until yore dying day.

Bring yore Bike along me
Through Straights and Corner Bends -
Through Brain and Soul it's calling
A Message it clearly sends

But man must make a living
No matter how nice a day
to earn the Mighty Dollar
and be Society's Slave

But there's many kinds of freedom
Of this I am aware
But riding favourite Roadways
Is a feeling Bikers Share

No Words have to be spoken
Nature sez it ALL
And back at Work and thinking
AND ONCE AGAIN It Calls -

Bird!

SUNDAY AT THE POOL

In the darkness of the morning,
Lightning lashed out
And a tortured sky bellowed

Embittered it hurls down angry tears,
That try to split the cold concrete
And drive me into the ground.

Beneath a raintorn surface
The deepest pool water, still, lies untroubled.

And hurling my weight forth
I split the barrier
To escape the skies grief.

Breathing in
Exhale down,
Down into the water.
(Thrusting forward kick turn)
My cheek dragged softly over the ripples...
(Breathe looking up)
...At the towering grey...
(Breathe down)
...Green Pohutukawas...
(arm up breathe kick)
...Over the brown...
(Down pushing forward)
...Fence,
Are moving slowly by.

Olivia Harding

COME LAY WITH ME

Come lay with me, and let me smooth your brow.
I see your wounds laid out wide;
Come lay with me, let me come inside.
I lay within your arms, you lay within mine
I lay breathing in your anger, hate and pain.
Let me bathe you within with oil of warm love a
miracle within. Come lay with me.

Marie Frost

Over the hills not so far away
there's a place where people don't need to pray,
A mushroom field where visions grow,
A river in which our feelings flow,

**BUT THEY BLOCKED IT UP WITH A CONCRETE WALL,
AND BURNT THE TREES TILL THEY HAD TO FALL,
KILLED EACH OTHER IN BODY AND MIND,
SOLD THEIR EYES AND CHOSE TO BE BLIND,**

Now on the hills falls an Acid Rain,
of all the things we can't explain,
an endless sea of voices speak,
of a human future sad & bleak.

Jeff Baker

COME LAY WITH ME

Your emotions are paint;
and alcohol is turps;
So drown all your sorrows
in Methelated burps!

Your thoughts can't swim,
your spirit is broken,
your feelings are leaking;
the spirits have spoken!

Jeff Baker

small hours creeping into my study creeping
crawly insect hours creeping in here
up my legs and
across the table
into my little bottle crawling
draining all that's left

this silence lit by candles

prayer and silhouette

tree stands alone at night-time
staring in my window staring
straining for the light

now what will become of us

I here with my halo of
candle lit madness
and you where you've stood all these
long silent nights

through the marching of armies
as the seasons overcome us

pray what will we be then
who will remember...

Dean Brown

she turns, it is a restless sleep
he lies there and watches with
unbelieving fascination
to fit so much beauty in
so small a space
the Gods must be Gods the
world must be good

but even now
as he watches her sleeping
he knows he can't hold her
knows even now that
with the love there and everything
he knows that one day
she will be gone
and he lies there terrified
of her, of himself
and remembers the nights
the uncertainty
the stark cold terror
of being alone

as the rain rips down rips down brings
flowers to their knees

he prays to idols of flower and flame
he prays to small dogs and
beasts of the field

bent down in a cynic's grief
he prays to mothers and children
to the moon and the stars
and all the cars as they
pass on the street
he prays and the sweat drips creasing
down from his bended head
and he chokes and gasps and spits it out
pathetic in his weakness
but the Gods do not listen
they will not keep her.

Love lassooed
my soul
And tied me to a tree
Said so long as I's
On the dole
I could never really be free

Now the tide come taken
me away
And you wonder why I wear
my water wings
When I come to see you today

I live in a place where
it snows all year long
never reaching the ground
When the moon is full
I still feel the strong pull
Of the mermaids to
the drowned.

Kevin Thomas Rock

Most poets die
Poor or crazy
Glad I'm not a
poet
This is not a poem
This is my
spit.

Kevin Thomas Rock

THE WAY

The taste is so sweet
A tongue tip taste of Tao
Sweeter than Haiku

Can you tell me why
moments are so beautiful
when You're near to me?

Divya

AN ERSTWHILE FRIEND

it was my fault, I thought you knew.

You didn't understand that one week's starve-in
sincerely done
could be followed by luncheon of pheasant.

If I explain this paradox in Life
I do injury to the mystery.

So, you can try to judge me if you like
and make an enemy of your own divided self

perhaps leave me a little hurt again
but nothing that the muse will not fix up.

Divya

So my friend How are you today
Are you intoxicated enough
are you sure you won't remember this meeting

Oh my friend The price you pay
You are so wasted
It's time to announce my greeting

I'm pain I'm Pain
Your deep innermost fears
I only come out at this time
When you've had too many beers
I come to torture
I come to maim
(I also come to drive you insane)
You say you don't want me
yet you secretly desire
To feel my hurting flame
To feel my raging fire

So my friend How does it feel
It's so hard to understand
You say you don't need me I know you do

Oh my friend Get down and kneel
Bow your head to me
This suicidal love has come for you.

Anita Sturt

AFTERWORD: THE SPIRIT OF POETRY

Poetry lives and flourishes in the hearts and minds of many creatively motivated people, but should evidence of it be confined to idle columns in throwaway magazines and newspapers? Poets come out! Out from the countryside, cities, flats and houses, spread your inspirational spirit among and with us.

In bygone days to be a poet was to have a revered and enjoyed occupation. Poets were important recorders of history and entertainers of their people; some outstanding literary figures captured the souls of their times. Artists exemplified and exalted language to achieve marvels of poetic wisdom.

In this modern age, the age of compact discs, of holograms, of videos, of Rock concerts and of Mills & Boon, something has been lost - the poet's status but also something more. Poetry needs to rise to equal the challenge of the times; to be the vehicle that expresses the upbeat tenor of today's times.

In my opinion, to write good poetry is to so concisely express a feeling or situation in words as to evoke a similar feeling or understanding in the listener. It is a two way creative communication process which can penetrate unseen barriers to energise and uplift the inner self some people call the soul.

We poets should have the strength to believe we can lovingly or otherwise play with language to surprise and delight anyone. We can raise poetry to the call of today's society. We have a legacy to fulfil now and in the future.

Belindalee Hope

THE POETS

ELIZABETH SINGH

1984-85: Two poems accepted for publishing in an American journal

First public recital: Cuba Mall, Wellington 1987

What I write: Abstract, political, thought provoking, misunderstood, depressing, intense

Inspiration: Street life, what I feel hear and see

Motto: Smile, grow some flowers and don't believe what you read

Favourite Poet: David Eggleton

HELEN & NOEL SINTON

A fairly untypical married couple who enjoy whales, poetry, climbing and outside baths. We have three kids, seven cats, one dog and a rabbit and we reside in Opunake.

AMBER LAHIKAINEN

Well what can I say? I was born and bred in the big A with all its mirror glass monstrosities. I wrote my first poem at the age of 10 and have been scrawling such writings as you will find in this book ever since. I've had two years experience as a dole bludger and over 17 months ago with the lure of local fruits decided to rest my hat in this beautiful town between the mountain and the sea. I'm 19.

ANDREA GOODMAN

Taranaki born and educated. Has just completed 7th form year and intends to go to University to study Archaeology in 1991 after a year of freedom. Enjoys yoga, meditation, poetry and designing clothes.

PAULA FROST

Poetry for me is an expression of life - the absence of death - the influences that are without and within. Often words merely ignite a glimmer of what you want but hopefully, enough to share.

J.H. TALBOT

Born and educated in Taranaki. Lived in London for a number of years after completing University degree. Mother of four children. Practises law for a living and lives with children and animals on a 20 acre small-holding. Spare time is devoted to her garden, riding, listening to music, painting and writing.

CHARLES BADDELEY

The sensitive use of words presents a fascinating hobby. Generally, I strive to produce poems of hope and peace. As we try to escape from the trials and tribulations of living, these aims tend to be of benefit to mankind. I believe that all poetry should convey a message to the reader.

ROSS PATON

My interest in poetry came from a need to express deep feelings that I could not express in any other way. My poems are words that come from my heart and say things about life as I feel it. I feel that as tears show feelings and anger shows feelings that we all understand, poems say feelings that are sometimes difficult to know. Sometimes a combination of words can say an easily understood truth or a known lie and sometimes they come from a place inside that is not easy, not at rest and not known so the poem can speak from the innermost self. It is not always easy to know the place from where a poem comes, but that it comes is good. I have written poems because I have known pain and I have known pleasure. I have written poems to say things that I otherwise could not say.

JESSICA TALBOT

Born Auckland 1971. Spent early childhood in England. First year student at Otago 1990. Intends studying medicine. Loves riding, athletics, designing clothes, painting, music and poetry.

SUSAN SHEARER

I am a Jacksoni epileptic of a rare type. I used to have rare Jacksoni epileptic fits and now have Jacksoni fits. I have a disability down the right side. When I was nineteen I went crazy about poetry and wrote as well as read poetry. Today I live in Taranaki and go to poetry evenings at the Govett-Brewster Art Gallery.

LARRAINE GIBBONS

I started writing poems three years ago at age forty, when I was dairy farming. As I milked the cows I recited my poems to them, then rushed home after milking to put pen to paper, before I forgot the lines.

ANDREAS RIES

Roamed the hills of Central Taranaki in boyhood days. Attracted by the city

(Auckland) during University in the late sixties. Influenced by Tim Shadbolt concepts. Married and travelled to England, Europe, Middle East and Asia early seventies. Family of four mid seventies to eighties. Trained schoolteacher/artist early eighties. Variety of jobs through life. Involved in Green politics. Separated and travelling in mind and body at present.

JIM HALL

Most of my life has been linked to the land, working with animals, working with the elements, working with nature. The difficulties of such a life have been for the most part predictable, and therefore manageable. Another major aspect has been working with people. Sometimes exciting, sometimes boring, usually interesting, often unpredictable. My greatest love is in the realm of words, spoken and written, where balance and rhythm can create pictures of enduring eloquence.

GREG JAMES

Manager of the local hardcore band 'Casualty' since 1984; they rocked, toured, recorded a few times, put out an album and generally had a good time. A bit frustrated and probably bored with the size of New Plymouth, Greg and 'Casualty' recently went to Australia to further their musical talents.

BELINDALEE LENA HOPE

Someone once said: "The affinities of the uncommon mind belong to the poet whose job it is thus to point out a hitherto unseen order and pattern in the chaos of experience." And that about sums it up for me. Happy reading.

JOHN ELLIS

23, now resident in Palmerston North, working in the community and writing as often as possible. Regards his poetry as environmental/philosophical. Interested in combining poetry, visual arts and drama. Influences include Daisaku Ikeda, Kenneth Patchen and Walt Whitman. Holds out great hopes for the future. No nukes.

BIRD!

I find descriptive rhyme to be a combination of feeling, learning and enjoyment, not only for myself but more important for different readers. Special loving thanks and appreciation to typists June Simpson and Jill Ansell for giving my work a professional touch. I hope all who read will enjoy.

OLIVIA HARDING

To me poetry is a kind of portrait in which the poet is the artist. It paints with words. I think poetry should enable other people, for just a brief moment, to see things through another's eyes - and if it takes a thousand words to tell a picture, well what's wrong with that?

MARIE FROST

Being loved unconditionally - knowing the reality of the physical and spiritual worlds has created in me a desire to express myself spirit, soul and body.
NEVER SHALL WE DIE.

JEFF BAKER

My inspiration for poems comes from the way I see the world and the shit that goes down in it. Sometimes thoughts just fall out of my head or I push them out. An altered state of mind helps. It's healthy to express your feelings. More support for free thought!

DEAN CHARLES BROWN

I was born on the 6.6.67 in the Waikato. I've resided in New Plymouth since 1987 and have written most of my works there. I am presently working on my 3rd and 4th books which should be available in 1990. Poetry's my life and love - I hope you enjoy it.

KEVIN ROCK

Poet, entertainer, musician extraordinaire. Often brings a harmonica to the poetry evenings which adds to his readings and enlivens the atmosphere.. A prolific poet, Kevin adds sparks of spontaneity, liveliness and laughter to the group.

DIVYA

This author lives in New Plymouth with the trees and her dog "Katie". She likes to think there are only two things without limit, the mercy of God and the stupidity of man, and this sometimes keeps her somewhere within the bounds of sanity.

ANITA STURT

A budding artiste, with a passion for art, who says, "Poetry is merely part of a release of the stresses of the daily routine".

THE HISTORY OF THE
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FROM THE FIRST SETTLEMENT
TO THE PRESENT TIME
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