

# POETRY OBJECT 2020

WINNING & HIGHLY COMMENDED POEMS

# JUDGE'S

### REPORT (Aus)

Let my shoes walk me back.

Blue socks white 
Rain the in,

umbrella the under.

Let it unravel, shatter and

crumble. There is a beating.

\*Untie the Shoes' Scout, Year II Glenaeon Rudolf Steiner



"It goes without saying that these are strange times: 2020 has presented new challenges for all of us, but particularly for students, teachers and families trying to make sense of the new not-very-normal.

In that context, it has been an absolute delight to inhabit the worlds of so many incredible young and not-so-young poets. From two- to three-dimensional objects, from the abstract to concrete, whether personified, disembodied or human, the range of subjects explored by the Poetry Object participants was a refreshing insight into the role of material culture beyond the financial value of goods to a deeper understanding of how people and objects are linked through memory, social connection and feeling.

I looked for works that explored the object with vivid descriptors and creative literary devices.

I was engaged by those works that brought the reader into the environment and the social context that gave rise to meaning, and was pleased to see writers trying different structures to convey the emotional and symbolic connections between people and things.



I was reminded of Gertrude Stein's Tender
Buttons, and the way that an object is
reshaped completely by the specific kind of
attention that comes from poetry. All of the
winning and highly commended poems selected
here, with their diverse qualities and varying
technical merits, presented a particular
kind of "new attention", which I found deeply
satisfying.

Selecting a winner and highly commended list was a formidable task, but the maturity of voices, the sensitivity of feeling and the power of writing made it a delight to be a part of this years' Poetry Object. Within this group of poets are talented new voices ready to share the heart of their experiences."

~ Eleanor Jackson, Head Australian Judge, Poetry Object 2020



#### THE GRAVESTONE OUTBACK

FIRST PLACE (AUS)

Ruby, Year 6
Woollahra Public School, NSW

A hole is dug out and a coffin laid inside. I sit above, cemented in the soil, guarding the beloved soul. They think I can not see, cannot feel. Every day she comes to visit. Kneeling in front of me. she whispers. "If you can hear me mum, I love you" and she leaves a single daisy, I watch her walk away, a child of about 6. I feel it when she cries, and when she's angry. I see her into her soul, she's disappearing, fading away, Slowly the years pass and I watch her grow older, taller, more distant, I grow old too. Moss creeps up my sides and ivy tangles itself around my body, Suddenly I'm ripped out of the ground and taken to a shop. It burns when they engrave a second epitaph into my skin. When I'm placed back I'm sitting on top of two souls instead of one. I see her once more but this time it's different, I'm dreaming, I watch her become reunited with her mum, shes a little girl again, She's in the second coffin. I know she is. I trace the words engraved into me. Loved by many, our dear daughter Madison was taken too soon. She is laid to rest.

#### JUDGE'S NºTES

This beautifully emotive work was a worthy winner of the Primary category. Both in subject matter and you' is a tool that has a wider impact in communicatwith in such a mature and poignant way gives due rec-

### FIRST PLACE (AUS) PRIMARY

## POETRY **QBJECT**



















#### HIGHLY COMMENDED (AUS) PRIMARY

Alex, Year 5 Annandale North Public School, NSW

#### JUDGE'S NºTES

Beautifully spare, 'Old Shoes', demonstrates a clear poetic style, where meaning and significance were powerfully conveyed through word choice and description. The persistence of the shoes is a testament to the persistence of the narrator, evoking a strength and resilience in the face (or is that foot?) of adversity. These old shoes may have not had a choice, but they certainly have agency and personality. Their survival and use despite being 'Frayed, worn, battered' serve as a powerful symbol and reminder into the past and how shoes are key elements that hold individuals up. The objectified nature of the shoes is reflective of their use and purpose, both of which are emphasised in the consistent two line stanza poem.

Eleanor Jackson, Head Judge, Poetry Object 2020

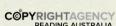
LAUS)
PRIMARY

## Poetry 2BJECT

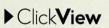


















#### THINGS IN MY GARDEN

Look closely and you will see a garden is a mystery A blue trampoline, bouncing bouncing A swing that makes me feel like I am flying like a bird A squeaky slide, Waving trees Fruit to eat whenever I please Dribbling balls, Posts and poles Step drop kick. Shots and goals The chooks walk around all day Then they dig in the hay Eggs to eat, and a puppy to play The door waves in the wind A banging clanging shed Sometimes we build cubbies With a soft and comfy bed From the balcony, we see the ocean wide, and we see the ocean's tide Sometimes it's shiny, sometimes it's grey, Sometimes storms don't go away We climb on the fence and talk to our friends Garden adventures, Never end.

### HIGHLY COMMENDED (AUS) PRIMARY

Harriet, Year I Encounter Lutheran College, SA

#### JUDGE'S NºTES

opening line. It is a wonderful declaration of how the heartbreaking innocence with a light, breezy, unaffected yet at times quite sophisticated technique. There is a and excitement of being a child. One of the most enjoyed the treasure of a line, "Dribbling balls, Posts of assonance and truncated sentences adds a spontaneity

HIGHLY COMMENDED (AUS) PRIMARY

## POETRY **QBIECT**









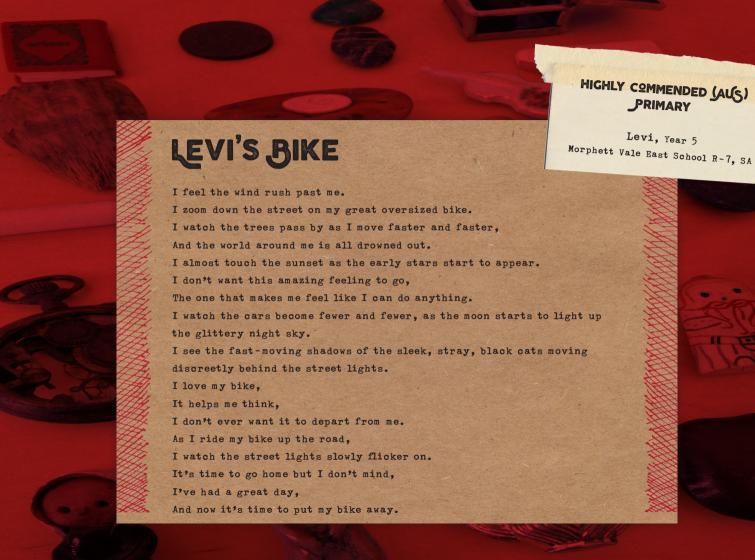












#### JUDGE'S NºTES

a narrative momentum. reminding readers of the sensory experience of riding a bike, the heightened awareness in which the bike is a vehicle to opportunities and time passing is gently conveyed as the ride and poem draw to a serves as a powerful symbol for the way in which

HIGHLY COMMENDED (AUS) PRIMARY

## POETRY **QBIECT**



















# THERE IS A PAINTING IN AN ANTIQUE SHOP THAT REMINDED ME OF YOU

No bigger than a walnut,
Framed in a tiny slice of weathered glass
Cork back pressing it to the screen
I look at you through the pane.

Sugar cube fence stacked
Beside a blotchy mushroom forest,
Cold apples
Cold sheep nose minty grass
Along a thin black fence
In the pale afternoon,
Red roofed castle hides
Its secrets among the
Trees reaching
Across the watery sky.

I see your eyes in the blue bicycle.

Your teeth in the gate cackling laughter and Sweet apple stains from forest adventures. Pale sheep, your soft side Guarded by a thin black fence I hop over it and touch their fur Cold fingertips nervous across you in the pale afternoon Breaking down the castle I lift the red roof and peak at the secrets Hidden in the attic I reach for you Your tears The watery sky.

FIRST PLACE (AUS)
SECONDARY

Grace, Year II
Ormiston College, QLD

#### JUDGE'S NºTES

This precise portrait of a portrait draws the the painted scene, is an entire recreation of a life, a references were outstanding and supported by a sense and instantly forms a connection with the reader. It is

### FIRST PLACE (AUS) SECONDARY

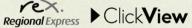
## POETRY **QBIECT**



















#### PS4

Geometric white rhombus
Fresh new plastic skin
A jet engine roaring to life
Hot and rough
Under my feverish fingertips

Time disappears

Flying away

Grinding a thousand different worlds

Silver portal disks to unknown worlds

A perfect escape

### HIGHLY COMMENDED (AUS) SECONDARY

Byron, Year 9 Lake Illawarra High School, NSW

#### JUDGE'S NºTES

Another seemingly simple poem but one that, in its minimalist choices and stripped back language, gave a strong description of the object and its emotional impact. This is a concentrated engagement with an inert, electronic virtual landscape. Fresh new plastic skin' produces 'feverish fingertips'. It's light years from Wordsworth's 'Wandering lonely as a Cloud'. Blissful escape into nature is overtaken by 'A perfect escape' into 'Grinding a thousand different worlds/ Silver portal disks of unknown worlds'. The minimalist language reinforces the power of the 'white rhombus' and the diction transcends the object itself. The mature language and imagery juxtaposes the the traditional connotations of a gaming console, to be one that has a rather profound impact, with the relatable 'time disappears' lingering on the lips.

- Eleanor Jackson, Head Judge, Poetry Object 2020

LAUS)
SECONDARY

## Poetry 2BJECT









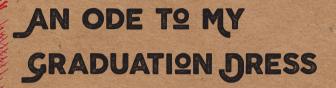












This is an ode to my graduation dress
Pretty and pristine
Locked inside my closet
Since two thousand and sixteen
Folded up so neatly
And put away brand new
I'm sorry I didn't love you
Like everyone wanted me to
I'm sure you'd look quite pretty
That I cannot dispute
There's really only one problem

I wanted a suit.

### HIGHLY COMMENDED (AUS) SECONDARY

Lani, Year II Seaton High School, SA

#### JUDGE'S NºTES

burden to understand how we all find a place to of the writing envelopes the reader to be on a journey of attention toward the dress, and the desire of the persona

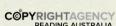
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## POETRY **QBIECT**

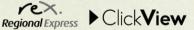




















There is a beating against what was Sit still in silence. In silence!

It shatters, falls apart, crumbles at your touch.

My sneakers the blue ones. Yes. You know the pair

Under the umbrella in the rain - white socks blue

I remember each moment each day. Mind a memory, memory a map. There is a beat, in time with shoes against the concrete

And the mess of flesh in this hollow body

Like waves tearing at the shore shoes tearing at the gravel words tearing at the heart.

Against the concrete against it all. Pushing and pulling and pushing away.

I'll retreat raise my flag, white. Taunt with the wind.

So many lost so many drowned, we walk on, beaten back by time. TIME! Undo it please.

Untie the flimsy laces of the clock. Let it unravel,

Let my shoes walk me back. Blue socks white -

Rain the in, umbrella the under.

Let it unravel, shatter and crumble. There is a beating.

### HIGHLY COMMENDED (AUS) SECONDARY

Scout, Year II
Glenaeon Rudolf Steiner School, NSW

#### JUDGE'S NºTES

While ostensibly about shoes, this poem — with its dislocated, rhythmic beat and explosive phrasing — communicated effectively to us the emotional urgency of time passing, its ineluctable intensity and sensation. Memory, while somewhat map-like, is also a map that has been torn, used and worn; we push and pull against fixed recollections, and we are all still trying to navigate where we have been and where we are going. The assonance used throughout the poem draws out some key sounds to really emphasise the past, as well as the alliterative m 'Mind a memory, memory a map' to reinforce the rhythmic flow of the object in time.

Eleanor Jackson, Head Judge, Poetry Object 2020

LAUS)
SECONDARY

## Poetry 2BJECT



















#### STICKER DOT DOXOLOGY

I have this reel of golden stickers
And I place them like God, the galaxies.

When I was a boy
Making delicate, deliberate offerings
I had to wait on them. Work for them.
As my teacher
Like summer skin from the shoulder,
Would peel with approval,
The shimmering circle of my becoming,
And press it upon the page, to say,
"I see you."

\*\*\*

In my lunch break,
Avoiding eye contact with the cashier,
I tap \$3.50 for a roll of IOO.

As offerings come to me,
Full of hope and expectation,
I mark them as I see things.

Crowned Elizabeth, her wax and signet, My power, a planet.

### FIRST PLACE TEACHER

Blake Nuto St. Michael's Collegiate, TAS

#### JUDGE'S NºTES

symbolism of a 'golden sticker' and its divine captured tenderly and thoughtfully with the wider

#### FIRST PLACE TEACHER

## POETRY **QBIECT**





















Black and gold, wooden and bold Four steel legs pressed up against the window sill Sepia sunlight streams onto the lacquered surfaces Of my grandmother's sewing machine Silvery slices made by thick metal scissors Fabric falls onto the red polished floors There was once a queen who lived far away ... A 70 year old eye threads the needle She spins the rhythmic wheel Her small, smooth, bare feet peddle the beast As she coaxes the cloth through the gates of formation The drawer of buttons raucously rattles Her mind is peaceful and wonderous Faithful fingers affix each round in place Tiny snips to tidy the frays That bit in the story The one between the cut of the cloth and the tugging of sewn thread How the queen sits on her throne Weaves in and weaves out Of my memories

### HIGHLY COMMENDED TEACHER

Kumudu Stewart Clarence High School, TAS

#### JUDGE'S NºTES

The detailed observation and rendering of a sewing machine in The Usha gives the reader a strong sense of intimacy, familial closeness and tender remembrance. know how to sew any more - portray a sense of imagery of culture and life, preserved in a wider

### HIGHLY COMMENDED TEACHER

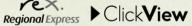
## POETRY **QBIECT**



















They don't know it yet. they think they're only building spaceships and castles. They don't realise this is the way memories are made. They tell themselves stories as they connect plastic brick to plastic brick. much like I did when I was their age: the entire family knelt over a box, sifting through a jumbled mess of bric-à-brac trying to find that one piece to complete a model that would be destroyed soon after, the frustrations when my father would use wheels instead of legs, the anticipation of opening a new set. I add my stories to theirs. connect them like plastic bricks.

### HIGHLY COMMENDED TEACHER

Ron Barton
Comet Bay College, SA

#### JUDGE'S NºTES

connecting the reader to the poet's experiences as a child and as a parent. We are all formed by memory there is a beautiful, jumbled mess of stories past, of the poem reinforce the brick-like connotations of a the power of words and memory to have a long-lasting

### HIGHLY COMMENDED TEACHER

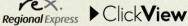
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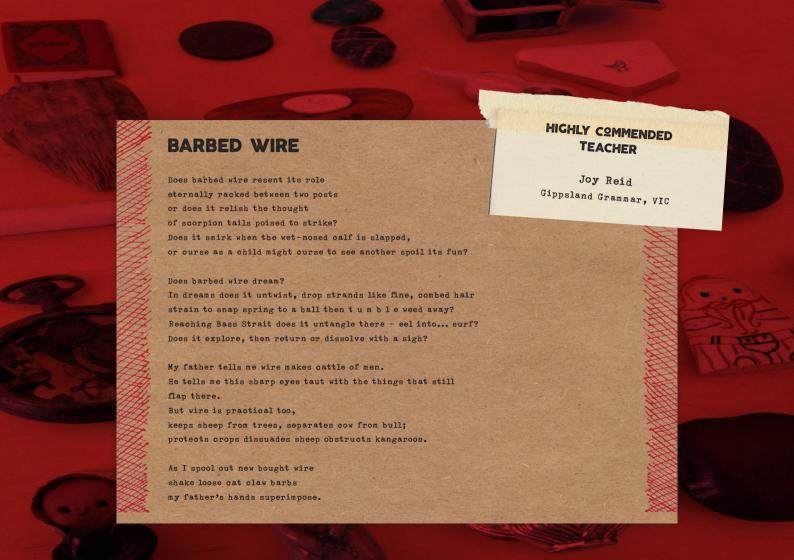












#### JUDGE'S NºTES

jarring and sharp cutting, just as the wire is. The

### HIGHLY COMMENDED TEACHER

## POETRY **QBIECT**











