

Red
Room
Poetry

Poetry in
Meaningful Ways



POETRY 2018 OBJECT

PRIZE-WINNING
POEMS &
JUDGING NOTES

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Judge's REPORT

'There is that particular and peculiar magic within a poem's core that escapes simple definition.'



It was a real privilege and a pleasure to read through the longlisted submissions for this year's **Red Room Poetry Object** competition. The range of subject matters and styles was wonderful to see, and finalising the list of winning and shortlisted works was a difficult task.

While there were many well-written poems, I was most struck by those that sought to use language in interesting and unexpected ways—for instance, through unusual phrasing, startling juxtapositions of images, or the cultivation of ambiguity—and, in doing so, made not only the most ordinary of objects strange and new, but also language itself.


Like other art forms, poetry is primarily about composition: I was drawn to poems that showed a close attention to the visual and aural arrangement of words, phrases, sentences, lines or stanzas. In the shortlisted and winning works, each

word, punctuation mark and line break did its part, contributing to the effect of the whole.

Finally, of course, there is that particular and peculiar magic within a poem's core that escapes simple definition—a force, unique to each piece and poet, that works itself out through the grain.

~ Bella Li, Judge, Poetry Object 2018





a picture of my brother

It is sad. Like flower in winter it is white
it is blue. Like a cloudy
sky in my heart. It breaks when I see it.
It reminds me of Egypt, friends, hot
weather, prayer mats. He is so cute like
a red rose.

First Place
PRIMARY

Jana
Year 3
Wollongong West
Primary School



Judging Notes

a picture of my brother

'a picture of my brother' is an understated and gorgeous piece of writing. This poem stood out for its unusual and unexpected similes—the picture is likened to a 'flower in winter' and 'a cloudy / sky in my heart'—and wonderful use of enjambment, which gives the sense that the poem itself is a picture constantly unfolding before the reader.

Most compelling is the way in which the chosen object becomes a way to evoke, with remarkable economy and emotional complexity, all that it stands in for: memories, a missing loved one, a missed home ('Egypt, friends, hot / weather, prayer mats'); feelings of loss and distance and sorrow.

~ Bella Li, Judge, Poetry Object 2018





My Inheritance

This bird statue has flown down the generations
and has landed at my doorstep.

I open the door and pick it up and it is hard
with rock eyes darker than the night sky.

I slowly walk to my bedroom,
holding this fragile object and sit it down on my windowsill,
waiting for it to fly to freedom.

“Go,” I whisper to it.

“Fly.”

It looks back at me and eventually
it flies to the next generation.

“I shall see you again,”
I whisper under my breath
and then I leave the room.
From this day on I shall remember that
this
is my inheritance.

REX Prize
PRIMARY

Shyam
Year 4
St Mary's Primary
School, Grafton



Judging Notes

My Inheritance

'My Inheritance' looks to the past in order to imagine the present. The poet's wise and gracious voice speaks of an understanding of intergenerational flow and the complexities and sometimes-difficulties of legacy. This wide lens, of witnessing something that has 'flown down the generations', brings a remarkable groundedness.

Language is clean, direct and sharp. Imagery (for example, the unusual 'rock eyes') is spaced around the page with an impressive understanding of rhythm – line breaks and enjambment are used to give pause and encourage flow in a way that is synergistic with meaning.

~ Red Room Poetry Team



Amphibian

As it swishes in the wind,
The forest leaves may begin
The eye of a tiger may have a glimpse.
The feet many have been once in a shelf.
The outing fits with the simmering above,
The swishing river below has a dark glow.
Heavy shard of crystals just shine.
The magic that is revealed has to be real
So what you're seeing has been
The time has come for the very last sum
The crystals may have amethyst gum
The force awakens from the dark hollow cave.

Highly
Commended
PRIMARY

Emily
Year 3
Queenstown
Primary School



Judging Notes

Amphibian

'Amphibian' builds up a strange and enigmatic overall picture through fleeting glimpses of smaller, individual parts: 'feet' and 'forest leaves', 'The eye of a tiger' and 'The swishing river'. Each detail is presented and then whisked away, emerging and receding into darkness, so that we are never sure where (or when) we are.

The use of occasional end rhyme—'wind' and 'begin', 'sum' and 'gum'—as well as the seemingly primeval setting, gives us the sense that we have entered the space of a fairytale or myth. I loved the ominous tone throughout, and the idea of something portentous stirring in the final line.

~ Bella Li, Judge, Poetry Object 2018





A Twisted Count

One tree pulled through folds in time
Two friends running, chatting, laughing, crafting
Three unique mundane birds twittering away
Four hiding holes hidden between the smooth, warm rocks
Five giant boulders to climb on
A thousand blades of grass rustling in the breeze
A million memories infused in a single, twisted, tortuous twig
A thousand drenched orange leaves fluttering off trees
Five trees with wet bark after a rainstorm
Four long, makeshift twigs to choose from
Three cars roaring by
Two not-so-carefree minds on a boiling hot winter's day
One memory-filled, hand-crafted, ancient bow.

Highly
Commended
PRIMARY

Grace
Year 5
Abbotsleigh
Junior School



Judging Notes

A Twisted Count

The use of numbers gives 'A Twisted Count' a strong structure and dynamic range: we begin with 'One', progress to 'A million', and then count back down to 'One'. Images often contain startling juxtapositions—birds are both 'unique' and 'mundane', the 'winter's day' is 'boiling hot'—and time and space are playfully stretched and condensed, so that a tree can be 'pulled through folds in time' and 'a single, twisted tortuous twig' can be 'infused' with 'A million memories'. There is a heady sense that we are moving in and between worlds that are both familiar and strange, ancient and contemporary.

~ Bella Li, Judge, Poetry Object 2018



Highly
Commended
PRIMARY



My Lucky Amulet

From a book, I made one with a friend
Not leather, a bug and basil,
But fabric, an ant and mint
An eyelash, not fallen out but pulled out
Black spots, like little drops of paint on the sun-streaked cloth
The scent of mint, strong at first, weakening each day
Like the ant's graveyard, surrounded by signs of luck.
It may not be the amulet I was hoping for,
But it's still lucky to me

Highly
Commended
PRIMARY

Betty
Year 6
Oatley West
Public School



Judging Notes

My Lucky Amulet

'My Lucky Amulet' is a subtle and sophisticated poem that describes the object in question as much by what it is not as what it is: 'Not leather, a bug and basil, / But fabric, an ant and mint'. In this way, the poet sets up expectations and then changes her course, ensuring that there is always an element of surprise in each successive line and image.

An undercurrent of darkness—an eyelash is 'not fallen out but pulled out', a 'sun-streaked cloth' is speckled with 'Black spots'—unsettles what we usually associate with 'luck', and gives the poem a delightful feeling of unease.

~ Bella Li, Judge, Poetry Object 2018



Highly
Commended
PRIMARY



Highly
Commended
PRIMARY

The Wave

I flew towards the boy, his hand outstretched,
The roaring wind urged me on,
The sand felt hard under my flowing soul,
The boy's eyes widened,
His hand floated forward and touched
My wave.

Charlie
Year 5
Balmoral School



Judging Notes

The Wave

'The Wave' speaks to us from the perspective of an ocean wave, and in brief, charged lines, captures beautifully the momentum and energy of its subject. As readers we, too, are carried along by 'The roaring wind', and experience the complex sensations of this natural entity, translated by the poet into human terms: the wave has a voice and its liquid body is also its 'flowing soul'.

The selection of particular details—such as the boy's 'hand outstretched'—upon which to focus, allows us to hone in on the dramatic, but also surprisingly gentle, climax: the moment of contact between boy and wave.

~ Bella Li, Judge, Poetry Object 2018





First Place
SECONDARY

Mapping Love

Blue rivers flowing across the parchment,
As the tributary lacing of veins crawling up your arms.
A maze of tar splitting the page,
Like the imperfections of wrinkles under your eyes.
The clutter of urbanisation scattered on the paper,
With the unpredictable appearances of freckles on your body.

An enigmatic aura radiating from the map,
As erratic as the emotions hidden by your façade.
Masked by the imperious assuagement of confidence and command.
Hiding a fractured soul.

Joe
Year 10
ASC St Peter's Campus



Judging Notes

Mapping Love

In 'Mapping Love' we are presented with an object that refuses to resolve into a single, clear image. What we see before us is equally the province of page and skin: both 'Blue rivers flowing across the parchment' and 'the tributary lacing of veins crawling up your arms'; both 'A maze of tar splitting the page' and 'the imperfections of wrinkles under your eyes'.

The poet gracefully and powerfully shows how poetic language—through simile, metaphor and ambiguity—allows two or more different realities to inhabit each other; so that a map can be a body, and a body can be a map, both occupying, simultaneously, the same space and time.

~ Bella Li, Judge, Poetry Object 2018



Mahogany Bones

When the piano-maker crafted my grandfather
Gently bending his mahogany bones
He was not constructing, he was creating
Bringing him to life,
He gave to me a guardian
With a life most complicated
Whose love never outdated
But who now lies in the ground ill-fated.
When I was young, I'd dance upon his golden feet.
Neat, petite, my path to the afterlife.
They sat there, quaint, to prolong the sound
Of the piano, but could not prolong his life.
My grandfather's laugh roars and groans,
Rattling his mahogany bones
Like stones
And the tones of his voice echo as he sings,
The sounds flowing grandly through his strings.
Mother pats my head and smiles and says,
'My dear, Pa's dead, you see.'

But as I close my eyes, hold his ivory hands,
The music shapes his face
And I face the fact that though he's gone, she's wrong
He's still here with me.
The notes he sings, changing in modulation
A complication of detailed intonations and different tongues
For the songs of others whose remain unsung.
My grandfather's laugh roars and groans
Rattling his mahogany bones
Like stones
And the tones that he sings makes the music truly sting
I know now, he soars with new wings.

Maddie
Year 9
Kinross Wolaroi School

REX Prize
SECONDARY

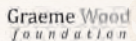


Judging Notes

Mahogany Bones

In 'Mahogany Bones', extended personification sees a piano infused with the soul of a grandfather now gone. This integration of music and being is realised through vivid imagery of wooden bones, and the rhythms and repetitions of the piece (so akin to a piano refrain). The strong consideration for aural qualities is realised through alliteration, assonance and rhyme (both internal and end): 'the tones that he sings makes the music truly sting'. The poet balances sentiments of loss with a sense of timelessness and acceptance of things beyond human control.

~ Red Room Poetry Team



Breathing Object

Delicate,
I sit like a porcelain china doll.
I float around like clouds on a winter's morning.
I awaken my snowflake soul

Airy and refined,
My balletic figure pounces.
I rest in the heat, but the air is bittersweet.

I wear a coat everywhere I go,
It is milky and willowy,
And it glows.

My eyes tell a thousand stories,
They are covered in thin sheets of glass.
Blue like soft skies,
Or deep oceans.

With every touch,
A connection is made.
My eyes gaze at theirs,
As dark as nightshade.

I warm my soul against hers
She falls asleep to my purrs.
I watch the city asleep,
As stars flicker
And the noise becomes neat.

Highly
Commended
SECONDARY

Camille

Year 8

Reddam House
Middle School



Judging Notes

Breathing Object

The true nature of the object in 'Breathing Object' isn't revealed until the final stanza. With great skill, and by way of artful simile, metaphor and suggestion, the poet lays down clues that keep the reader guessing: the object is 'like a porcelain china doll', 'like clouds on a winter's morning'; its eyes are 'covered in thin sheets of glass. / Blue like soft skies, / Or deep oceans'.

Concise stanzas, and the use of internal and end rhyme, add to the impression of a riddle being told; once the mystery is unveiled, the poem sends the reader back to the beginning, to reread with a new appreciation.

~ Bella Li, Judge, Poetry Object 2018



Pounamu Poem

A sea's venomous black specks hissed,
A forest's pine needles plucked from the earth,
A wiry strand of black seaweed roped from the underbelly of the sea.

Harmony, they say.
Recklessness, I say.

Fished from the rivers of the west, dug from the chestnut sludge and wrenched from the guts.
Sunk through rough fingers, whisper-kissed to protect and for what?
To be tossed around and lost in the hordes of coats that envelope Narnia?
With disrespect would it lay, battered, tattered in a pyramid of gold and green?
To be spoken about in hushed voices and left out to rot?

Though to me it would not,
A green speckled medal would lie atop a heartbeat.
A moss stone displayed on a pedestal.
And it is worn because I carry not a shred of embarrassment.
There is not one single ounce in my overjoyed body that is ashamed to adorn this pounamu.

New beginnings, they say.
A past to remember, I say.

Highly
Commended
SECONDARY

Charlotte
Year 9
Rangiora High School



Judging Notes

Pounamu Poem

‘Pounamu Poem’ has an incredible energy, and close attention is paid throughout to sound. Phrases like ‘dug from the chestnut sludge’, ‘A sea’s venomous black specks hissed’ and ‘tossed around and lost’—with their marked repetition of vowel and consonant sounds—give the piece an incantatory quality, as of a spell being cast.

The object of the poem—the pounamu—becomes a portal through which to access shifting landscapes of geography and history, which rise seemingly to be reclaimed and reckoned with. Natural forces are summoned and harnessed, and the speaking ‘I’ gives voice to a thrilling sense of defiance and resistance.

~ Bella Li, Judge, Poetry Object 2018



Sicilian Music Box

Five diminutive dancers locked in a liminal moment,
Wild applause forever pending...

What willpower lies coiled, unsprung, behind each mute smile?

Bright void, childless orb, poised in pretty postures

A narrow story to tell.

Or is that so?

Perhaps your stone gaze offers more generous territory:

a hidden desire, some burning salt of the earth, a pristine goddess or venal go-getter?

Or are you just as you appear:

thistle-thin, ceremoniously beautiful, like Snow White in her glass casket

Designed to delight, to disarm,

Yet... I cannot deny you disappoint me

Sad tutus like outmoded flowers – roadside pink and white carnations

Mocked by twisting Baroque columns and gilded lacquered curtains

Strangely, you put me in mind of small hungry birds

Secure together on the dusty side table, sharing your spotlight

with a frayed paperback and bedside lamp,

What can we learn of art, of love, from this?

To resist the illusion that all has to be a certain way?

Highly
Commended
SECONDARY

Lucia

Year 8

SCEGGS Darlinghurst

Highly
Commended
SECONDARY

The banal knob on the side of your world instantly moves you to life,
Spectral stage lights spot your routine
and a thin metallic orchestra launches Tchaikovsky's Sleeping Beauty with a riotous upswing
A certain religious resolve comes to mind
Willing yourself into purpose through eventless movement
Delighting at first, then, once again – an emptiness, a snag, a grief
The innate loneliness of dull perfection
A curious trick of the light distorts your shadows
as they swell, hover, then vanish behind you
Lost in time like lapsed souls
You revolve slowly, hypnotically
Your world winds down and ends with me

Lucia

Year 8

SCEGGS Darlinghurst



Judging Notes

Sicilian Music Box

'*Sicilian Music Box*' is a terrifically atmospheric poem that demonstrates the animating power of the imagination. The poet presents the object in two parts: in the first, we are given an impression of arrested motion, in the music box's 'Five diminutive figures', which are 'locked' and 'poised' in place. The speaker speculates: 'What willpower lies coiled, unstrung, behind each mute smile?'

In the second part, this question is answered: the mechanism of the music box is wound and the object springs 'to life', awakening like Sleeping Beauty. The resulting scene is fabulously ghostly, and the final line eerie and assured.

~ Bella Li, Judge, Poetry Object 2018





The Memories in a Jewellery Box

Abuela takes good care of her jewellery box.
It was given to her as a present.
She puts her favourite things in it:
Jewellery, coins, shells.

When Elisa and I were little we loved the box.
We laughed as we tried on earrings,
played with shells, admired coins.
Abuela laughed with us.
but now she is gone,
with only the sent of her perfume to remind me of her warm embrace.

Elisa and I don't play with the shells anymore.
Don't try on the earrings.
Don't examine the coins.
We miss her too much;
she should be here.

But sometimes I go to the jewellery box
and gaze at the smooth carvings on the side.
And the memories come flooding back.

Highly
Commended
SECONDARY

Isabel
Year 7
Kilbreda College



Judging Notes

The Memories in a Jewellery Box

The object of 'The Memories in a Jewellery Box' is a container not only for Abuela's 'favourite things'—'Jewellery, coins, shells'—but also for a wealth of treasured memories of Abuela herself. The division between the past, when 'Abuela laughed with us', and the present, where 'now she is gone', is simply and effectively drawn, as is the figure of Abuela, who leaves only a few belongings and 'the scent of her perfume' behind.

As readers we are left, along with the speaker and Elisa, with a feeling of absence; the jewellery box (and the objects it holds) becoming a bittersweet reminder of what can be invoked but not regained.

~ Bella Li, Judge, Poetry Object 2018



Distilled by Light

Those grapes come back to me—
arbour'd over the red brick path
channelling green-glow.

Each lozenge
long and thick as my thumb
was tight with juice, molten with light.

Who?

Who would not stretch up?

Who would not

ache

for a burst of sun-gold on tongue?

Those grapes from a time when vines
had not yet hardened into arthritic knobs
but soft-loin-clothed in sinuousness,
tendrils coiled in Farsi mimicry
and leaves had not yet leathered,
but curved, protective, enwombing jade pearls.

What wonderment, then,
following endless years of agonising
drought to uncover five capsules stealing light
late in the afternoon,
late in the season—

five cartouches swollen though scored... scarred...
for wind had beaten fruit against lattice
till skin had hardened into glint.

How they glowed

heavy amber globes, honey ant-engorged,
living larders, plum-tight with promise,
sky lanterns ascending yellow-wards.

Who?

Who would not stretch up?

Who would not ache for a caress
of sun's largesse at autumn's end?

First Place
TEACHER

Joy Reid

Teacher
Gippsland Grammar

Judging Notes


Distilled by Light

'Distilled by Light' is a poem that revels in the sensual qualities of language. The poet elegantly employs prosodic elements such as alliteration and assonance ('Each lozenge / long'; 'heavy amber globes, honey ant-engorged'), and anaphora (see, for instance, the repeated refrain 'Who? / Who would not stretch up? / Who would not...') to draw the reader into a landscape where light, distilled into grapes, takes on a physical dimension and becomes a thing to be tasted, 'a burst of sun-gold on the tongue'. There is a pleasing attention to form, with the varied ranging of lines showing an appreciation for space, breath and pacing.

~ Bella Li, Judge, Poetry Object 2018



First Place
TEACHER



The Locket

You hang from my neck,
like my mother's before me,
swinging freely,
like a pendulum
attracted
to
gravity.

Your outer shell is smooth and shiny.
Reflecting.
Protecting.
A tangle of forest flowers
encrust your face.

When opened,
time stands still.
I am pulled, then entranced
by the magical memories and moments
you so carefully preserve.

REX Prize
TEACHER

Emma Ingram
Teacher
St Mary's Primary
School, Grafton

Judging Notes

The Locket

In 'The Locket', an everyday piece of jewellery becomes a dense capsule of 'memories and moments'. The poet's use of clear, resonant language unfolds the object's story, line-by-line. There is a sense of continuity across generations; of reaching across times and places to bend and stretch specific moments ('time stands still'). This is evoked by the poet's use of pausing and spacing ('attracted / to / gravity') to bend the poem's linearity – line lengths ebb and flow like the pendulum itself. The narrative voice, speaking directly to the object, draws the reader in with its intimacy.

~ Red Room Poetry Team



REX Prize
TEACHER

Newer Voices

This is not a poem
this is not abject emotion burnt by thumb to screen or
fashioned like wrought iron above storefronts

This is about those children that come in yelling
and we're inside selling poetry to 9-year-olds
hawking colonialised haiku
cinquains for the Fortnite generation
acrostics for a language now too elastic for new names and newer voices

This is about those children that come in yelling
this is about those children with everything to say
without knowing what to say
about what to write, or how to write, or what is wrong
because everything is wrong and it still is wrong
and we're not fixing it

I've been teaching for a decade and I'm still not selling it, we're not selling it
our spreadsheets aren't selling it either, our data,
and our money
and our funding is not selling it

We've been running at a loss and I'm sorry
one year is not long enough anymore

Highly
Commended
TEACHER

Tom Kristof

Teacher

Willmott Park
Primary School

Judging Notes

Newer Voices

The most striking aspect of 'Newer Voices' is its impassioned vision. Repetition and rhyme are used judiciously throughout, drawing attention to the centres of the poem: 'the children that come in yelling', who have 'everything to say / without knowing what to say', and the futile and tired old act of 'selling'—whether of 'colonialised haiku' or insularity and ignorance.

This is an urgent and convincing call for action and change—'because everything is wrong and it is still wrong / and we're not fixing it'—and a petition to the reader to listen to, and make room for, 'new names and newer voices'.

~ Bella Li, Judge, Poetry Object 2018



Highly
Commended
TEACHER



Our footy coats

We would roll down to the ground
Through wintry streets
Smell the liniment
Feel the cold
And our footy coats keep us warm
That was long ago when he was a boy
Now he's on sunny shores
Drilling the oil
Feeling the pressure
And we don't go down to the ground anymore.
No more pies together
No autographs, no cheers
30,000 voices and it's empty without his
We both work and our homes are away
But he calls me every game
At half time
He calls every time
But there's never enough time.

Highly
Commended
TEACHER

John Cole
Teacher
Burgmann Anglican School

Judging Notes

Our footy coats

'Our footy coats' employs subtle internal and end rhyme ('down' and 'ground', 'away' and 'game') and the juxtaposition of contrasting states (the 'wintry streets' of the past and the 'sunny shores' of the present) to convey the manner in which distance grows between a parent and child over the passage of time.

The line '30,000 voices and it's empty without his' is particularly affecting; the repetition of 'time' at the end of each of the final three lines, each with a different inflection ('half time', 'every time', 'never enough time'), is a nuanced way to reinforce the theme of irrevocable change.

~ Bella Li, Judge, Poetry Object 2018



REX Prize
TEACHER

Night Sky

Year 6 was inquiring into space. The night sky became our 'object' to inspire our poetry. We had plywood boards, which we covered in blackboard paint to create our 'sky' and the students' favourite lines from their poems became the 'stars' that formed the constellations. It was an easy connection to make between poetry and space, the solar system and the universe. The students were inspired by its infinity, its beauty and its wonder.

Year 6 Class

MLC School, Burwood

First Place
INSTALLATION





Judging Notes

Night Sky

Inspired by 'infinity, beauty and wonder' – what a brilliant way to showcase poetry! This class' conceptual framework was strong. The idea of linking the mystery of the cosmos to past artistic stories (like that of Van Gogh), plus the postmodern link between space travel and popular culture, connects the mystery surrounding the creative process to the mystery of the universe. We loved the overlay of magic, science, art and language.

We also loved the technique of using blackboard paint as a metaphor for the passing of time. The fairy lights and square panels create a mathematical, ordered kind of beauty. Painterly elements are well achieved and expressive, with vivid colours creating a beautiful contrast to the black sky. This is a wonderful collaborative piece with individual styles in synergy through the use of shared mediums, colours and brushwork styles.

~ Red Room Poetry Team



One Tear Drop

We are her children
Of more than seven billion.
Some are villains,
Others have brilliance.

She is our mother and yet we hurt her,
Gun shots, global warming, bombs but all,
The pain only causes one tear drop,
For how cruel her children have been.

She is the sky and the sea,
She is the animals and the plants,
She is the mother of Earth,
She is Mother Earth!

Mother Earth, so beautiful is she,
Growing green grass,
Surrounded by sapphire seas.
All the colours to make us happy,
Yet we hurt her.

O Mother Earth, what have we done?

Staff Pick
NSW

Dharika
Year 7
Penrith High School



Time Stands Still

Waves brush up against the rocks
currents dance through the blue,
hands stop on the old grandfather clock
time stands still,

the grasses flow with the breeze,
salty air stings your eyes,
fish glide through the water with ease
time stands still

at low tide it's time to explore
picking up sea snails,
but they just simply ignore
time stands still

sunset is always a nice surprise
the cold night air washes over,
dew forms at sunrise
time stands still

Staff Pick
NT

Emma
Year 7
Alice Springs
School of the Air



Puppy Teeth

Blunt white jewels, cast away for years
Chewers and tearers that formed crowns within mouths
Tokens toppled upon stone-spilt footpaths
Left to be weathered and worn by the wild, raw winds

Picked up and slipped down
Into the depths of a plastic pillow bag
Dormant and dead in a land of memories
To be lost and never, ever found

The mark of a dog long gone
Yet its concealed, captured youth remains pure
So I can remember what you used to be
With your young puppy teeth

Staff Pick
NZ

Tatiana
Year 9
Rangiora High School

Dee Dee

A gift

For a precious newborn

Tucked in a cot

Dee Dee welcome; our girl's
home

A cry

Squawking in the dark

Thrown in the cot

Dee Dee comfort; it's your job

Day Care

Packed in the bag

Mummy's gone to work

Dee Dee be there; help her stay

First day

No toys allowed

Mum's watching the clock

Dee Dee comfort; it's your job

Tick, tock

Time marches on

Baby's all grown up

Dee Dee stay; don't move on

Staff Pick
QLD

Helen Ebert

Teacher

Fitzgerald State School

Golden Times

Animals played on
feather clogged tubas
rambunctiously
holding out their paws
inviting laughter to dance

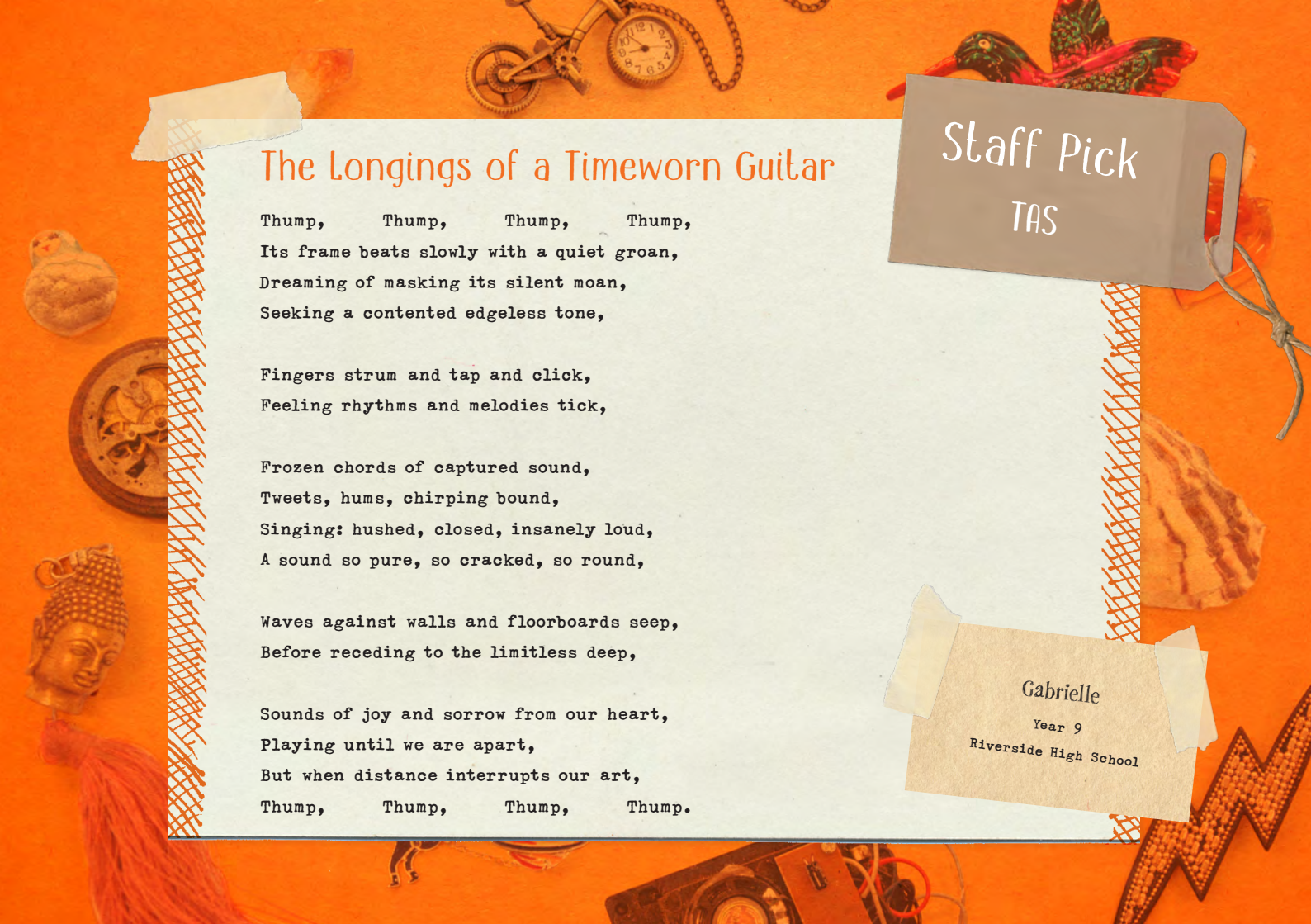
Sun kissed the postmen
bald-headed and chuffed
delivering letters
trickling ink
to those who were patient

Children squealed
like little rainbows
with sorbet smeared shirts
the ting-a-ling for ice-cream
departing memory lane

Books battered and bruised in their case
golden spines cradled by a shelf
unfazed by their misfortune
their stories forever optimistic
a reminder that sadness doesn't stay

Staff Pick
SA

Leah
Year 8
Brighton Secondary School



The Longings of a Timeworn Guitar

Thump, Thump, Thump, Thump,
Its frame beats slowly with a quiet groan,
Dreaming of masking its silent moan,
Seeking a contented edgeless tone,

Fingers strum and tap and click,
Feeling rhythms and melodies tick,

Frozen chords of captured sound,
Tweets, hums, chirping bound,
Singing: hushed, closed, insanely loud,
A sound so pure, so cracked, so round,

Waves against walls and floorboards seep,
Before receding to the limitless deep,

Sounds of joy and sorrow from our heart,
Playing until we are apart,

But when distance interrupts our art,
Thump, Thump, Thump, Thump.

Staff Pick
TAS

Gabrielle
Year 9
Riverside High School



untitled

Alone on the shelf
A frame lay rusty and old
A sepia picture within
Two precious faces inside
Two people who were loved
Waterfalls trickled down my skin.

Staff Pick
VIC

Lucinda
Year 6
Sacré Cœur

Folded Swan

A pink origami paper square
 Folded into a swan
Wings arched and overlapping
 Concealing a gift.
A chocolate wrapped in foil - green
 With possibility
 With sweetness
 With Christmas
Untasted.

She lies so very still
Arms gently folded, fingers overlapping
A young, new-minted bride—

Who forsook the gift,
Of a life that was foil green
 With possibility
 With sweetness

And left it
Untasted.

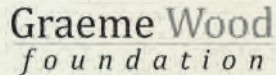
Staff Pick
WA

Susan Cullen

Teacher

School of Isolated and
Distance Education

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CONTACT US

For questions about **Poetry Object** or to book a workshop contact Poetry Object Coordinator Emma Rose Smith on (02) 9319 5090 or poetryobject@redroomcompany.org.

You can also read more about **Poetry Object** and **Red Room Poetry** [here](#).

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Red Room Poetry would like to thank our dedicated volunteers and interns. Their continued support and generosity is instrumental to us.