

HEBE

A young woman with dark hair is sitting inside a blue inflatable boat. She is wearing a grey t-shirt and dark shorts. She is looking off to the side with a thoughtful expression. The boat's interior is dark, and the blue rim of the boat is visible on the left and right sides. The background shows a glimpse of green grass and a blue sky.

REFLECTION

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Front cover photographer

Sarah Wang, 16

I am a teen activist, journalist, and creative writer from San Gabriel, California. I focus on covering things I am extremely impassioned to reform. If you want to continue following my pieces, my Twitter is [@sarahcwang](#)

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Editor's Note

Welcome to HEBE. We are a quarterly magazine that publishes the work of poets, photographers and illustrators aged 18 and under, and the theme for our sixth issue is 'Reflection'.

Young creatives were advised to be imaginative in their interpretation of this theme, and there were no limits as to how it could be developed. The initial ideas of inspiration that I provided were: reflection as a mirroring image, the power of reflection for instigating change, and the effects of both reflecting, and not reflecting. The inspiration for this issue's theme came from the poem 'Reflection, July 1938' by Sue Butler:

All day and night you tread water
in a well, hear soldiers shooting,
burying groaning bodies
on the mountain. When the bucket rattles
down, you dive. Near dawn
an exhausted conscript shines a torch.

He's drunk. *Hello*, he calls
in posh Moscow Russian. *Hello*, you mouth.
Disappointed there's no echo, he frowns,
shakes his head. You frown, shake yours.
He smiles. You smile,
wave back until he gets bored.

Be sure to keep an eye out for our seventh issue, the theme for which is 'Freedom'. Submissions for this sixth issue will close on the 30th of November, and the magazine will be released in January 2019. More details can be found on our website: www.hebepoetry.co.uk.

Becca Stacey, Managing Editor

Poets and their poetry

Megan Leung	
<i>twenty-first century mulan</i>	P.5
James Cole	
<i>Disorientation</i>	P.9
Amelie MJ	
<i>a deer- chased- meets her reflection</i>	P.11
Oisín Keating	
<i>The Astronaut</i>	P.13
Stella Hiamey	
<i>There Are a Million Frames Behind the TV on the Wall</i>	P.15
Thomas Frost	
<i>Reading My Old English Jotters</i>	P.18
Phoebe Bowers	
<i>Half Hours</i>	P.20
<i>Jeremy</i>	P.22
Sarah Wang	
<i>America.</i>	P.24
Chloe MacDonald	
<i>Thalassophobia</i>	P.29
Alex Bain	
<i>{Confessions Of The World's Strongest Man}</i>	P.31
Mary Kate Geraghty	

<i>Faoi Sholas na Gealaí</i>	P.32
Penelope (Penny) Duran	
<i>Lifeline</i>	P.34
<i>Optimist in a Tea Cup</i>	P.36
Aili Channer	
<i>Moth: To be a Mirror</i>	P.38
Photographers and their photography	
Sarah Wang	P.28

twenty-first century mulan

viii

look at me / you may think you see who I really am but /

it's clear that the kids in her class couldn't be further from the truth.

a boy in her class says her skin is yellow and her mind scrambles with

images of the loquats her father always buys from the Chinese supermarket on
his way

home from work, their ripe centres oozing sweetness and summer and feathered
nights

in the other country. but the boy uses the word like it's a noun, like it's
something he's already

decided she is and not what he's describing in real life and she goes home to tell
her mother,

enveloped by an ether of garlic paste and black bean sauce and five
spice powder, who holds her close and tells her that her skin, their skin,

reflected in the metal spoons set for dinner that night is beautiful. and

when the boy teases her for her "slanted" eyes the next day, she thinks

you'll never know me /

xv

Every day / it's as if I play a part /

in the age of rebellion - she hates that she can't ever win with
people, sick of being told that she isn't that intelligent anyway, it's all down to her
~~pushy~~ ambitious parents anyway, it's their fault that she's a stereotype
anyway, and she'd rather have it any way than being that violinist girl
who sits at the front of maths class, not because she can't get enough, but
because she's short

sighted. stereotypical. again. so she slathers lipstick crimson across her mouth,
gives

herself eyelashes like all those girls in the commercials, distresses her own jeans in
all the right places and goes to those parties to meet people she's only ever seen
through hers. and in the midst of her five minutes past midnight fun, when she
looks

in the bathroom mirror into her half-intoxicated, falling-into-the-swimming pool
haze, it's as if

Now I see / if I wear a mask / I can fool the world /

xviii

but I cannot fool my heart /

is the realisation once again as she us swallowed by the throng of the new,
gaggles of identities
displaced so far from their homes of familial dishes, chopsticks laid
vertically upon circular tables – undecipherable tones and sounds filling the air –
it reminds her of her parents who she’s never felt so far away from, but really
she’s always been
miles away from because their “home” has always been split between two places,
there and here,
and she’s been here all her life whilst they commute in their dreams. that night, a
boy tells her
that she’s “not like the other asians” and she smiles and almost believes him in
her semi-drunken stupor.
but it’s all a distorted dream, and she’s quick to wake up and leave, disappointed
and angry,
the bitter sting of the word “chink” still burning hot across her lips. her fractured
iphone screen betrays
the purple thumbprints that underline her eyes - she looks neither here nor there
and she wonders

Who is that girl I see / staring straight back at me? /

lyrics taken from “Reflection”, Mulan - Disney 1998

Megan Leung, 15

I live in the North East of England. From a young age, I've always loved creative writing to express myself when I don't know how else to get my feelings across. Since then, I have been recognised in competitions including The Write Stuff 2017 (in conjunction with the Sunday Times), the UEA Fly Festival Competition, as well as the Buxton International Festival Poetry Competition. As well as writing, I enjoy debating and learning languages.

Disorientation

The sky is a green sea,
Tree covered and dense.
Branches descend to
Bottomless earth; dark
Void that yearns in terrible hunger
For sustenance hanging from
Skyward roots, tethered tight
To brown clouds.

Lacking roots I
Should be swallowed,
But stand instead,
Or hang perhaps,
Off a great sphere,
Like ants on the underside
Of a beach ball,
Suspended mid serve.

James Cole, 17

I am a secondary school student currently living in Dublin, Ireland.

a deer- chased- meets her reflection

the river tilts her naked torso to
greet the deer who hurtles
forward like a sparrow sinking the
land slams her palms to greet
the deer who fights upwards like
a gasping salmon and

antlers meet and knot and
grasp, then trace with tender
horror the arched snags of
one another. they are like fingers
touching for the first time or
branches blown back by the
same storm.

the pears on the bank and
the pears in the river swell
into damp grins. the mist unfolds
old pearls across the grass
and the river follows, creating
pearls from older stone. the

deer watches
with eyes of splashed ink which
leak in the water where the deer
is weakened and blurred by
hundreds of leaves.

and arrows spin overhead unpacking the
sky are they searching for bone
are they searching for flesh are
they searching for gold?

Amelie MJ, 18

I spend my life touring Brighton cafes seeking new spots to write and read up on obscure and mildly overwhelming areas of philosophy. I was a commenced Foyle's Young Poet (2017), the winner of the Peacock Poetry Prize (2018), and I wish it could be autumn all year round.

The Astronaut

I feel as distant from another person
as an astronaut does from earth.

My own mind is a space station
from which there is no escape.

My thoughts flash by me like comets.

My happiness is the victim of an eclipse.

They live surrounded by greens and blues and reds;
while I only see one colour, white.

They experience the vicissitudes of life;
while all I see is the aftermath.

Even the stars in the sky are surrounded by others.

Yet I am forsaken.

I man this station for no reason
except that it helps others.

Yet those same people leave me up here.

Oisín Keating, 17

I'm a student from Ireland. I've been writing for about 6 months and I use poetry to express how I feel, and as a coping method.

There Are a Million Frames Behind the TV on the Wall

And you are in each one.
I count 60 of you
stood on cliffs and backlit
by the sun,
60 of you on stage floors and backlit
by a chorus,
60 of you in mid-air
with your hands holding another girl's hand,
and I wish I were familiar.

You count steps
in eights
so I do too.
465 times.
And there are 465 smiles and encores
captured in 465 curtain calls
and all I can think about is you.
And I wish you were familiar.

There are 1080 ways for you and I to fall in love.
And as it stands, you are a lost land to be found

and I will not stop until I have discovered and understood
the inner workings of your civilisations.
You see, I have you in HD in the palm of my hand.
And there are still pictures of me
salvaged from the turbulence of each tempest I have battled,
and I could lay us side by side
and resolve which version of us could scream the loudest in a hurricane.
Or maybe I find the version of you that isn't there
and let's say that I realise that I do not have a million frames of you,
and there is no wall big enough in this house to occupy you,
and you are just a still image.
Still backlit by the sun.
Still holding another girl's hand.
Still, just an image.
And maybe I blink to reimagine
that there are a million pictures of me behind the TV on the wall instead,
but there you are again.
And maybe you will always be there,
but it strange then that I still wish you were familiar?

Stella Hiamey, 16

"I cannot change the world, but I do not have to conform." - Marva Collins

I will give two bodies to this Earth: my own, and the one I build when the silence gives itself to the clamour.

Reading My Old English Jotters

Can these books be mirrors?

And who are you

O ghost marked

by broken pencils

to tell me?

We are bound: two heads

one stomach. I fear you

yet know that as I run

you come closer, snapping

at heels never fully mine,

so near and so hidden

I see through your eyes.

I am not what I wish you

had wanted me to be. You

are the leech who drains

my present, trying desperately

to fill the hole I left

in your future. We come

finally together, cleave

whole, and collapse
on each other's broken legs.

Thomas Frost, 16

I live on the north coast of Scotland, and enjoy literature, Zen, and tea. I believe that the proper perspective for writing poetry is awestruck wonder at the universe.

Half Hours

Half hours I spend with you.

Half hours of lucidity, lukewarm tea,
living, re-living forgotten memory.

It doesn't bother me as much that you
won't remember these half hours of me
going into 13, 14, 15, 16, 17 and so on.

It's more the half hours that you spend with your daughter.

She is losing time.

Wanting to reverse half hour sessions
back to when you could remember whole weeks at least.

But she doesn't get it like I do.

I'd much rather you had a long term memory of her,
than the short term one that is fleeting.

Think of her as the babe you dressed in linen
where pink flowers bloomed before you lost your first husband

tending to the tomatoes.

Be occupied in retrospect,
than of care homes, and pills, and of grandchildren
that fail to spend more than half an hour with you.

Think of summertime and after the war
when you tasted your first banana post-rationing;
disappointed it didn't taste like marzipan.

My first birthday and catering to the sandwiches,
after school, yourself and friends smoking behind the shed.
Be wherever you want to be in your head.

Jeremy

I just saw into the inners
of a man who'd taken his life.

Raped him.

Violated him in a way that cannot be described
as I broke into the seal of my mother's old jewellery box.

Opened the bottom drawer,
and there lay the creamy parchment skins of his poems.

Love letters, testaments
to my mother about a time before I was born,
written at a time after I was born -
I saw the 09 marked after the dash.

Slashed and slanted writings
which I had no right to dive my nose into,

split in two was the page
(that part seemed accidental).

I wonder what I was to you?
Was I the easel of my young mother's frame?
A canvas that was not quite the same?
Or just a snapshot reminder that she married him, the other guy.

It saddens me to think of my mother,
And her leftover notes which she may revisit once in a while,
before returning to piles of laundry left by the other man,

as he had gone now too.

Phoebe Bowers, 18

Working out how to write, writing to work myself out.

America.

My tongue sinks
with the weight of your name.
The syllables no longer bear the honor they used to.
The Declaration of Independence never warned me
that to be included in the *we*,
You must first bear a costume.
We are one nation, under intolerance,
for which it stands.
No justice or peace with xenophobia
and racial hate crimes,
They will handcuff the victim,
but not the assailant.
No liberty, when I have to wear a disguise.

America,
I remember the day when you branded me illegal
Called me poverty
Allowed girls in the schoolyard to scrunch up
Their noses and sneer
Do you even speak English?
The only Asian girl whose parents didn't attend PTA meetings

they were struggling enough not to
drown under the crashing waves of unemployment.

When you don't know English
Your tongue becomes burden instead of blessing
We knew *no* instead of sympathy
My parents learned how to plea
Before *thank you for your help*.

America,
You taught me never mix white paint with any other color
It'll be tainted — ruined forever.
You were wrong.
Far great tones of mahogany, olive, yellow, brown are created
The Mona Lisa of mankind you deprived me to never see.
You made me wish I could abandon handmade dumplings
And kimchi
The culture that raised me with open acceptance
When you told me,
You do not belong.

America,
Take our hands.

We the people, of this land venting prejudice into the air we breathe,
polluting our minds with fear of intolerance

Relief in close distance.

Take our hands

And we will reach and grab it together

It was so close, yet we have strayed away so far.

Take our hands,

they are dirty with dried blood

bullet holes in them.

We tried to reach for life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness when shots were
fired.

You don't belong here.

We the people, built *here*.

America,

Do not forget you sit on the bones of immigrants

Know the red in the flag is their blood,

The blue is the cold in your voice when you told us

You don't belong here

And the white,

It is our hope for a better day untainted by what you have become.

America,

Do not forget who you are because once,
You made me forget who I was.

Sarah Wang, 16

I am a teen activist, journalist, and creative writer from San Gabriel, California. I focus on covering things I am extremely impassioned to reform. If you want to continue following my pieces, my Twitter is @sarahcwang



Photograph by Sarah Wang, 16

Thalassophobia

Pressure squeezes my skull from above,
vision shimmering as if I've been impaired with tears.
The school of fishes' scales glint in the distance
like catches of light in a midday summer sky
caught tight in a fist.

The ocean is freeing,
exposing.
I stay static—
a blemish on a sheet of blue.

I am no more valuable than the plankton.

Images of loved ones.
A crawl to the surface,
gasping for breath.
I meet my own reflection in the bathroom mirror and howl.

Chloe MacDonald, 17

I'm a student living in the Scottish Highlands, currently working towards pursuing an English Literature degree. I enjoy playing guitar, writing and video games.

{Confessions Of The World's Strongest Man}

Yesterday I started shedding skin
Staring deep into a silvery lake
Ghostly flakes fell to a pure white bathroom floor
The fresh raw flesh felt sensitive and fragile
Unfamiliar air touching it like salt in a wound
The silver lake became a cinema screen
And whoever was staring back
Became an extra from a crowded scene
Yesterday I started shedding skin

Alex Bain, 17

I'm a London born, Dublin raised musician, artist and poet. My only interests are fashion, the history of North Sentinel Island and DIY furniture. I once fell down a concrete flight of stairs because I was modelling for my mate and they said a shot of me balancing on the steel banister would look great.

Faoi Sholas na Gealaí

The moon's rays cast an ethereal glow on the choppy waves below,
each one cementing like stone wall, hard and unforgiving-permanent,
seemingly before melting into itself and morphing again,
continuously moving.

The water stills, extending like a silken cloth,
adorned in glimmering rhinestones,
folding and tumbling and scrunching up in places
as she readjusts her watery gown.

And below her glistening surface the light is diluted
by creatures and salt and seawater
where it funnels in corridors,
piercing through the pulsating currents like straws through a lid.

Suddenly an urge seizes me and I face the mysterious depths
but I don't see the light
of the moon's scintillating gleam
or the ever changing waves and rocks and seaweed.
I don't see myself
as I soar toward the rising sun,

both of us reflected in the rippling sea far below.

Mary Kate Geraghty, 14

I'm from Co. Mayo in the west of Ireland. I like playing Gaelic music, dancing and going to the beach. I enjoy doing the odd bit of writing too. 'Faoi Sholas na Gealaí' just means 'moonlit' or 'under the light of the moon' in Irish. Hon Mayo!

Lifeline

*A pool of plastic,
Twice the size of Canada,
Needing a lifeline.*

Drifting across the infinite is a swath of plastic,
Threatening with dilemmas damaging and drastic;
A kiddie plastic pool twice the size of Canada,
Not for child's play; a lifeline for *Oceania!*

Gazing within the depths of the ocean blue,
Forego a walk on the water gummed and glued;
Tracking fluid footprints of a different kind,
That centuries of travelers have left behind.

Seeing pirate battles upon sea of heaven's tears,
Images of immigrants full of hope and fear;
Half-drowned sailors, legs longing for dry land,
After some monstrous storm they withstand.

Yet some footprints obscured by sand and dirt,
Not easy to spot, but do bring agonizing hurt;

At the gallows, a plastic hood over fish gills,
Reefs that nefarious, “seafarious” stalkers kill.

Oil leaking from a tourist ship on the cruise,
Sweet poison swallowed with much to lose;
Creatures forever vanishing and to time lost,
Oceania joining *Atlantis* at an enduring cost.

Coral cities concede to palettes of plastic ink,
Blanketed, nestled within heavy metals that sink;
Is there a life boat for mighty, magical maritime?
Do saline seas savor saving? Or wish for a lifeline?

Optimist in a Tea Cup

Sitting on the patio with tea cup in hand,
Swirling within a tempest, not to understand;
And reading the leaves that spin round the tea,
Reflecting on the cup with level half empty.

Dark skies overhead eclipsing out the sun,
Winds freezing cold, hands becoming numb;
Not a single letter has arrived in the mail,
Rocking chair creaks as rocker starts to fail.

Clothes mangled at the mouths of munching moths,
Humble house huddling on haunches as it rocks;
All the friends away, merry making out of town,
And no loved one for comfort: safe and sound.

Wasted and weary from the dreary, thinking way,
Rises, composes, dresses and gets underway;
Cup in hand on Main Street, something catches eye,
In the window of a book store, a job offer's spied,

Slipping slowly inside the small, friendly shop,

Hint of hope hits the heart, arresting to a stop;
Soon met the owner and put to her a request,
Exchanging words for a time, she offered a yes.

Things are looking up, tomorrow starting at the shop,
Still towing along the cup, down to the nary drop;
Ninety-nine percent empty, and so one-percent full,
Less than half empty is more, and optimism rules.

Penelope (Penny) Duran, 15

A first-person biography: I think of myself as a global citizen and have been educated in the German school system. I was born in Texas, currently live in Poland, and have previously called the Philippines, New Zealand, Germany and Egypt home.

Moth: To be a Mirror

I watched those grey wings fluttering
A quivering speck -
Like dust in glowing light.
Moth, moth, I wondered,
Why does this lamp so fixate you?

But then I saw those wings shimmering
With a light that was not their own
And I saw my own heart yearning
For that light so pure and clear
Of souls and stars and moonlight.

But my wings are opaque -
No light shines through them.
My mind is too stubborn
To quench my thirsty soul.
Humble moth, I envy you!

Aili Channer, 16

I look to spirituality and to the past for inspiration; I firmly believe that if we embrace our roots, we can create a better world. I spend my free time reading about Celtic legends and collecting unusual names, as well as reading and writing.

