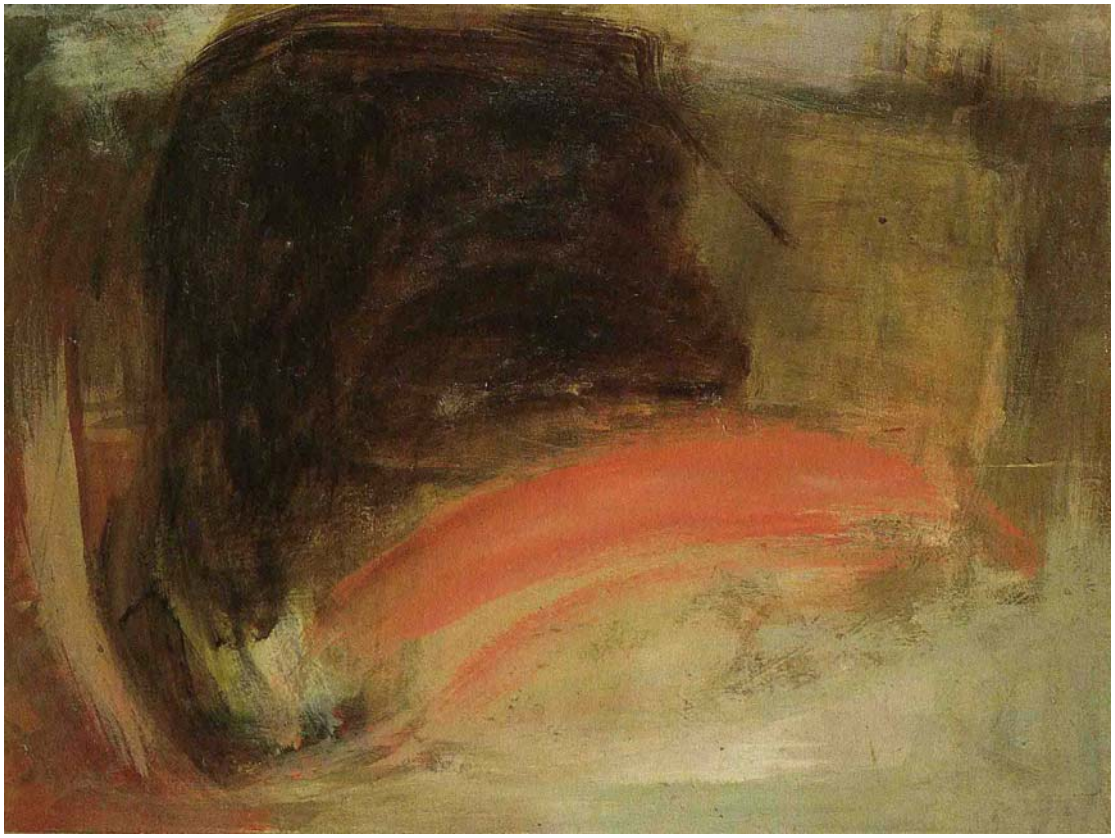
Poetry Supplement to the *Welsh* double issue

of *Agenda* Vol. 44, Nos 2-3

Welcome to another valuable online poetry supplement to the above issue of ***Agenda*** which focuses on Welsh poets, or '*Carpenters of Song*', and poets associated with Wales. Agenda has always had a special connection with Wales through **David Jones** who, many years ago, executed by hand the lettering of ***Agenda***'s logo which appears on the front cover of every issue.

This supplement features another mixed media painting by **Mary Lloyd Jones**, whose 'Codiad Haul' (Sunrise) appears on the front cover of the Welsh issue. Mary was born in Devil's Bridge in 1934. Her work has been exhibited internationally and she was recently awarded an Honorary Doctorate by the University of Wales.

Also featured is the artist and composer, **Nancy Wynne-Jones**, who was born in Dolgellau, North Wales in 1922 and died in Ireland in 2006. An excerpt which accompanied one of her orchestral pieces appeared on the front cover of the *Sheet Music* issue of ***Agenda***, Vol. 42, No 2.



Nancy Wynne-Jones: **Levant**, circa 1959-60 (cata. No. 8)
Levant was an old copper mine, from which the copper leached out so that the sea around was coral pink in colour. The artist has conveyed Levant as a place marked by

human experience. Many people had been killed in the mine and the vortex shape of the conjunction between mine and sea suggests the great maw of the mine. The eye is pulled from the black abyss towards the sea where there is a sense of release.

Christine Evans is a well-known, prize-winning Anglo-Welsh poet. Her collection, *Growth Rings*, was shortlisted for the Welsh Book of the Year in 2007. Her latest work is *Bardsey* (Gomer, 2008), a collection of essays, poems and photographs. Her work appears in the Welsh issue of ***Agenda***.

Tide Cure

White-cuffs lifting, busy in the swell
make me think of nurses shaking bedsheets
in those seaside fever hospitals
where it was once the practice
to take patients from their beds and leave them
lying on the sand as the tide came in
in the hope that it would wash away disease
and leave them well. Those it didn't
drown or chill to death, of course.

Tonight I am the cliché, a woman solitary
on the shore, standing in that place between
land and water, being slowly undermined
but looking , always, out and hardly hearing
constant slow rip and swash, the shrill fuss
of disturbed oystercatchers, nor noticing
the single old bull seal that snores and rolls
and wallows in the lee, waiting for the wave
that will pick him up and take him out.

Not worth the walk tonight for sunset gawpers,
the shore's rolled flat under pressing cloud.
Somnolence rules: shoals of tiny fish,
trapped in rockpools since this morning,
even they are stilled, darts of life suspended
and anemones, shut tight, are dull silver
scattered coins frozen under ice.
Everything is waiting for the tide,
dragging along in the wake of the moon.

My hopes are pinned on moonrise too
if the moon can rise before the thunder.
Tonight it should be full enough,
the hard sand above the tideline beaten flat enough
to give me the surprise and recognition
glimpsed before and let go lightly-
the chance of catching my own shadow,
my shape against the darkening earth
outlined clearly, something at last disclosed.

Nancy Wynne-Jones: Summer Road, 1967 (cata. No. 32)

The road announces the use of linear perspective and moves away from strict abstraction. She brings the deep space created by the road up to the surface, then treats each area abstractly as an area of paint.

Byron Beynon lives in Swansea. His work has appeared in numerous publications the *Independent*, *Cyphers* (Dublin), *Poetry Ireland*, *Planet*, *Wasafiri*, *The French Literary Review* and *Quadrant* (Australia). He has been co-editor of the literary magazine, *Roundyhouse*. His most recent collection, *Cuffs*, was published in 2008 by Rack Press, and is reviewed in W.S. Milne's Omnium Gatherum of recent Welsh poetry collections in the latest Welsh issue of ***Agenda***. Byron also has two poems in this Welsh issue.

SÂM

The white geometry of solid fat
would begin to thaw and slide

in the warm pan,
where in the kitchen

my mother focused herself
preparing an assembly of ingredients,

each graded minute
timed for consistency;

the savoury trail
remembered from a moment lived,

the sharp reminder
for the senses,

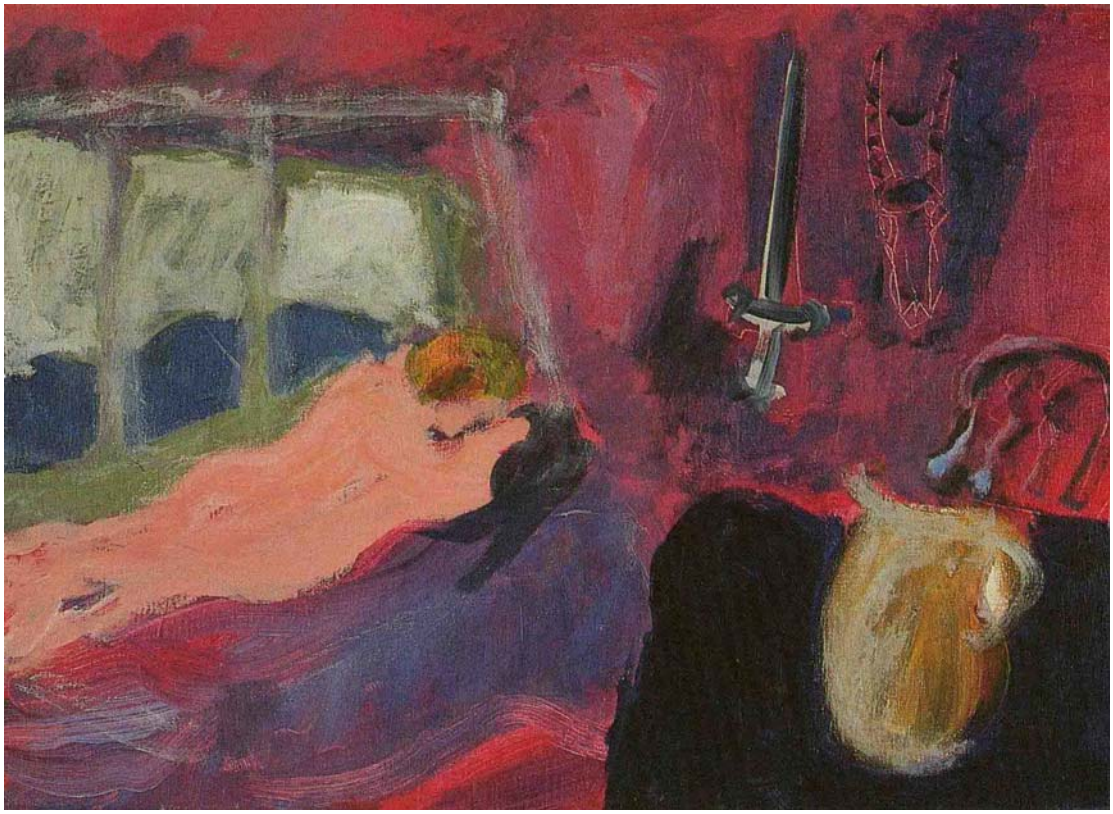
a fragrance served
as bubbles blinked

in a meltdown
above a blue pattern of spears.

Sâm *is the Welsh for liquid fat*.

THE TREES AT IDOLE

They speak the language here,
beyond the west field
near to the place
where they can listen
to the high cry of crows,
echoing the untamed morning air
visible in the percussion
of their dance;
a harbour of trees
watching the sun rise,
vegetable-clouds lifting
the day with images,
a remembered map of understanding
following the keening mind's journey,
such is the sound of branches growing,
inescapable, their leaves of longing.



Nancy Wynne-Jones: **Interior with Lovers**, 1971 (cata. No 37)

Part of a series of Cregennan interiors, this amorous picture is unusual for Nancy. The sword and jug, part of the interior, also function as sexual symbols. The strong shape of the dark table to the right is balanced by the window to the left. The cool colours outside the window relieve the density and richness of the reds of the interior.

Sheenagh Pugh lives in Cardiff. She has published many collections with Seren, the latest being *Long-Haul Travellers* (2008) which has been shortlisted for the Roland Mathias Prize. She has two poems in the Welsh issue of ***Agenda***.

Later

Passing the park gates, the child
urges his mother through.

She says "later", tries to plod on,
while he wails and hauls sideways.

He wants what is passing,
the park, now, this minute.

He is young; it may be
"later" means nothing yet,

or he doesn't trust it.
There is a duck

strolling on the grass,
its green head glinting;

why should he believe
it will still be there

when they come back with bread?
If they come back.

When they go home,
he knows already,

the duck in the park
may be pushed back

behind meals, hoovering,
phone calls, behind hours

or days, although there is nothing
that matters so much,

right now, as its low chuckle,
the blue flash near its wing.

It’s posing among the last
canna lilies, their edges

beginning to brown. My mother
was fond of lilies. The sun

has broken free of cloud,
for how long; the duck's head

dazzles, metallic blues
and purples in the green,

and I think the child is right
to scream as he diminishes

down the street, believing
there is no later.

Nancy Wynne-Jones: **Cregennan Sunburst**, 1976 (cata. No. 40)

The series of Cregennan pictures are inspired by a large wooden bungalow called Cregennan which had been built below Snowdonia by the artist's grandparents in the early nineteen hundreds. There was no electricity, and candles and lamps illuminated the house. Cregennan held very special memories of an idyllic childhood, and the artist was anxious to execute some paintings of Wales there.

Tiffany Atkinson is a lecturer in English and Creative Writing at Aberystwyth University. She is a prize-winning poet, and her first collection, *Kink and Particle* (Seren 2006) was a Poetry Book Society Recommendation. Her work appears in the Welsh issue of ***Agenda*.**

Philosophy

came down to which end of the knife
you found yourself at. Not much
reading after that. You took work

in a kitchen: chop and slice,
the tendons flickering in your wrist,
grappling for a handle on your old self.

Friends mean well – they mean it
as a compliment, but *hold your head up*
as opposed to? Once a slattern,

now you keep your surfaces so clean
an incident-room could pick a finger-
buffet off them. Infrared, keypad, fish-

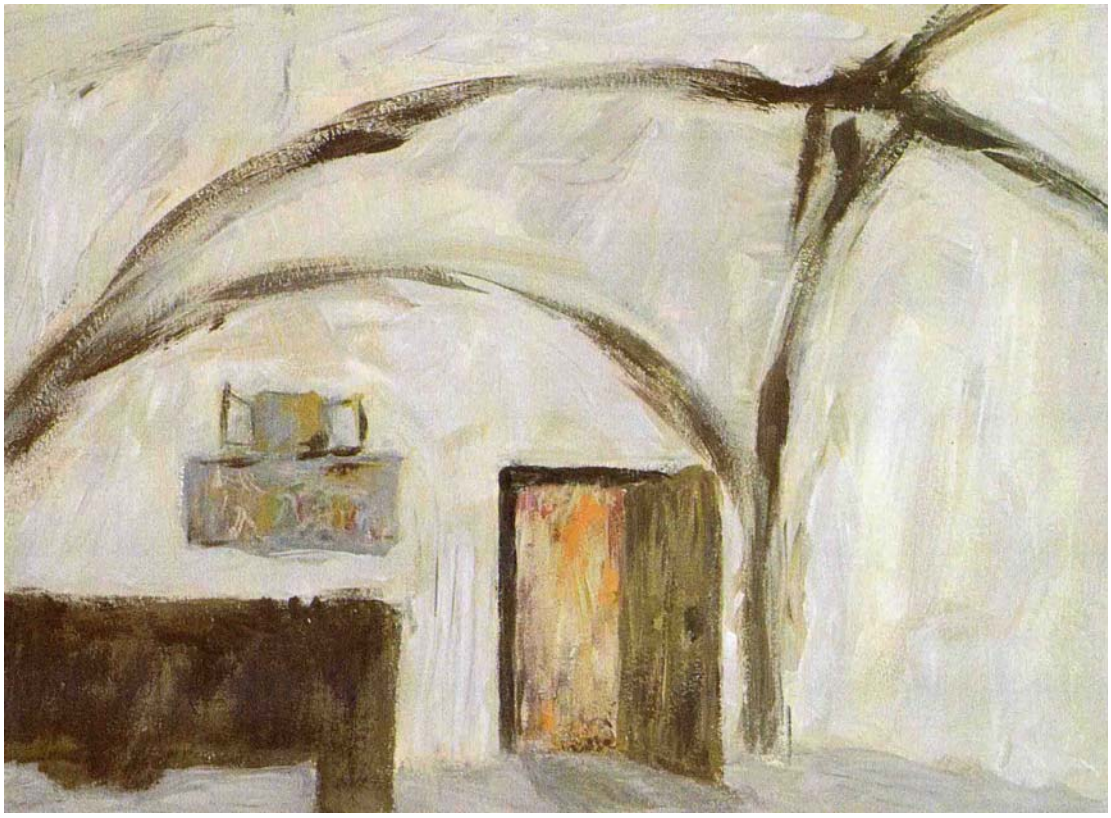
eye, mortise, night-latch, deadbolt,
door-chain, hinge-screws, Chubb &
sliding-double-action-lever-lock

enough? You might as well ask if a kettle
tells the truth. And kitchens are duplicitous.
The news is full of cutlery. Statistically,

expect it from someone you think you know.
Stay in. Stay out. Spend fifteen minutes
on the lintel with your keys spiked in your fist,

and do the home-work. Kitchen tables are
the abstract form of family banter. Steak-
knives only give us the edge on monkeys.

Chairs, in general, share a get-up-when-you-
want-to-get-up outlook. Twine's for make and
mend. Hot buttered toast is unequivocally kind.



Nancy Wynne-Jones: **Vaulted Room**, 1989 (cata. No. 59)

Damian Walford-Davies teaches in the Department of English and Creative Writing at Aberystwyth University. He is the author of *Suit of Lights* (Seren 2009) and, with Richard Marggraf Turley, of *Whiteout* (Parthian 2006). He has a poem in the Welsh issue of ***Agenda***. Two of his poems appear later in this supplement.

Aerial

for Toby Driver

1.

[SM9519] Taking off was ceding
our shadow, seeing it

[SM9727] scissor north to ruffle
over tilth and buckle

[SN0431]

[SN0730–0729] at field borders, only
to find it waving

towards us up hill-
[SN1533] fort ramparts, returning

through the repressed
[SN1137] estrangement of air.

2.

Shifts / to raking light //
ground dimpling /

to tump and motte //
we bank / over the dead

giveaway of parch-
mark / ditchwork /

dyke // green tumours /
shadow brings to light.

3.
At the mountain’s skirt,
the Norman order
of stripfields breaks

into limber lines
of Iron-
age vernacular, tracks
and rosaries
of rock
pending
on glacial
angles. Free verse
above blank burgage.

4.
This map’s rude as flesh
laid bare under the knife –

pathology of peninsular
ground in scar-

lets, lilacs, creams; a quarry
cirrhotic near an airfield’s

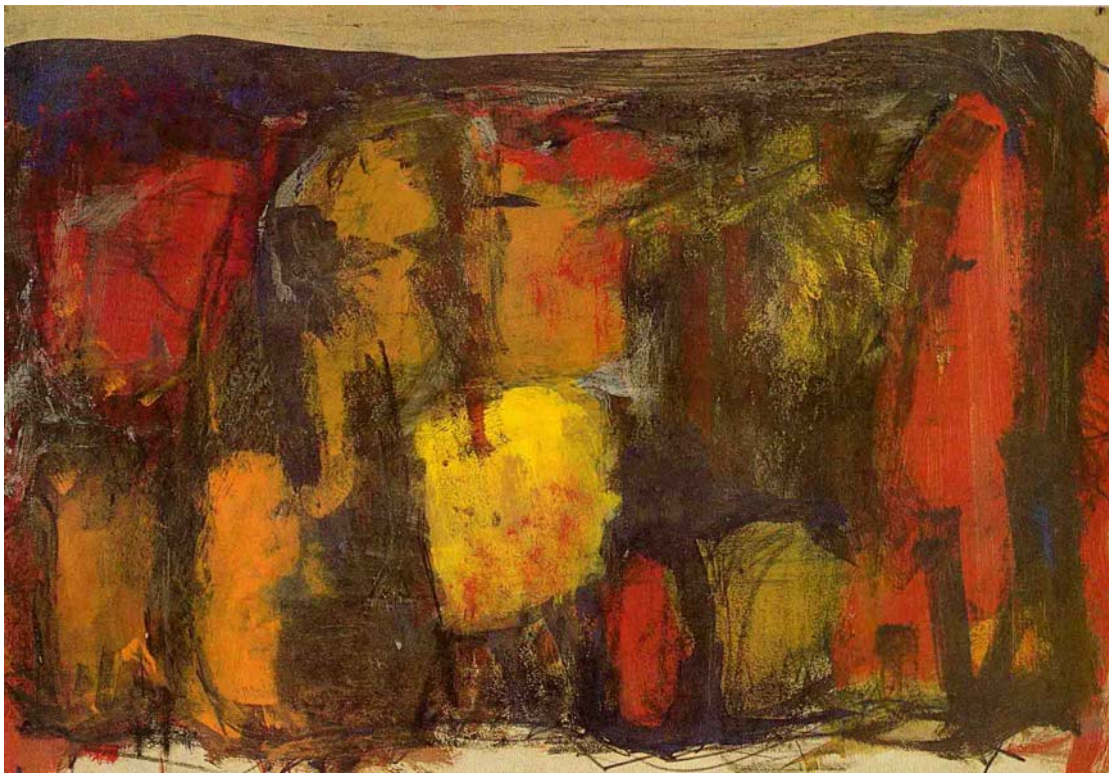
sutured runway, burst
capillaries of single-track

roads, contours fanning
down from suspect nodes.

5.
Smoke from gorse fires –
the year detonates
                in seed-pods and spikes.

Burnt ground forgets itself
in air, re-
        calls itself as cloud.

The 'Aerial' sequence is the result of a collaborative venture with the Royal Commission on the Ancient and Historical Monuments of Wales/Comisiwn Brenhinol Henebion Cymru – a reconnaissance flight in a Cessna 172 over Pembrokeshire in bright light on 23 October 2007.



Nancy Wynne-Jones: **Red Chûn**, September 1965 (cata. No. 16)

Chûn is an Iron Age fort high up on a plateau in Cornwall near the artist's home, Trevaylor. Some early standing stones near the fort form part of a circle.

Wendy Holborow is Welsh, lives in Corfu, and spends several months a year in Swansea. She has won several prizes for her short stories and poetry, and she is now working on a first collection as well as a time-slip novel set in the present time and in 19th century Greece.She has a poem in the Welsh issue of ***Agenda***.

Crows Caw in Cwmdonkin Park

I hear crows caw in Cwmdonkin Park,
where the damp has settled on broad leaf grass
like a million tiny pearls.
I arrive when the day is young.
A lingering hint of early coolness keeps me in that state
of languor only a delicious influence of warmth
from an unseasonable sun can vanquish.

I see a boy cycling with his silly spaniel
that races crazily from tree to tree on a grey
day in December.
Three times round and he's done the boy tells me
but thirty times round and he still wouldn't be *done*.
I imagine you cycling or running here with
your dog when you were *young and easy*.

A solitary sorrow-inducing magpie beads an eye on me,
a writer desperate for your muse, and the second magpie,
but scrunched paper balls of barbarously bad words
fall near my feet. A willow grieves into a rivulet where a stone is lodged,
scratched with your immortal words. I speak them aloud
the words wormwood to my tongue
my cheeks pearl with damp.

A blackbird pecks at a worm. The worms have
finished with you now, turned your ample flesh to bones and dust.
But they are waiting for me and I see a rush of close-ups.
Close my eyes.
The screech of a raven in needle-chill pine ornaments my despair.
The breeze bristles your spirit as
I listen to crows caw in Cwmdonkin trees.

Cwmdonkin Park was where Dylan Thomas played as a child.

Nancy Wynne-Jones: **Kinsale Harbour**, 1988 (cata. No. 51)

Nancy painted many Kinsale pictures, based on many years. of observation. This painting is large and panoramic,unlike many of her other views of the Cork area in Southern Ireland.

Dylan Jones'work has been widely anthologised and a full-length collection of poetry, *Dreaming Nightly of Dragons*, was published by the University of Salzburg Press in 1996.He has a poem in the Welsh issue of ***Agenda***.

Dipper

Dipping bobtail mousing
under water-rush & roots
of the bank-side alder -

smart in matching brown
suit, waistcoat, & starched
collar with no tie -

you are elusive, midsummer
charmer, tentative at distances
a sharp eye struggles to perceive.

Through rhododendron over-growth,
by goosander-startled pools,
quick-footed over stone-slime

you pass, nodding on the far bank,
a white curtsey in darkness,
mocking, then gone.

Marc Harris was born in Cardiff in 1962. His poems have been published widely and he has a poem in the Welsh issue of ***Agenda***. He works with homeless people in Cardiff and is a volunteer for the RSPB.

A River Senses a Jogger at Night

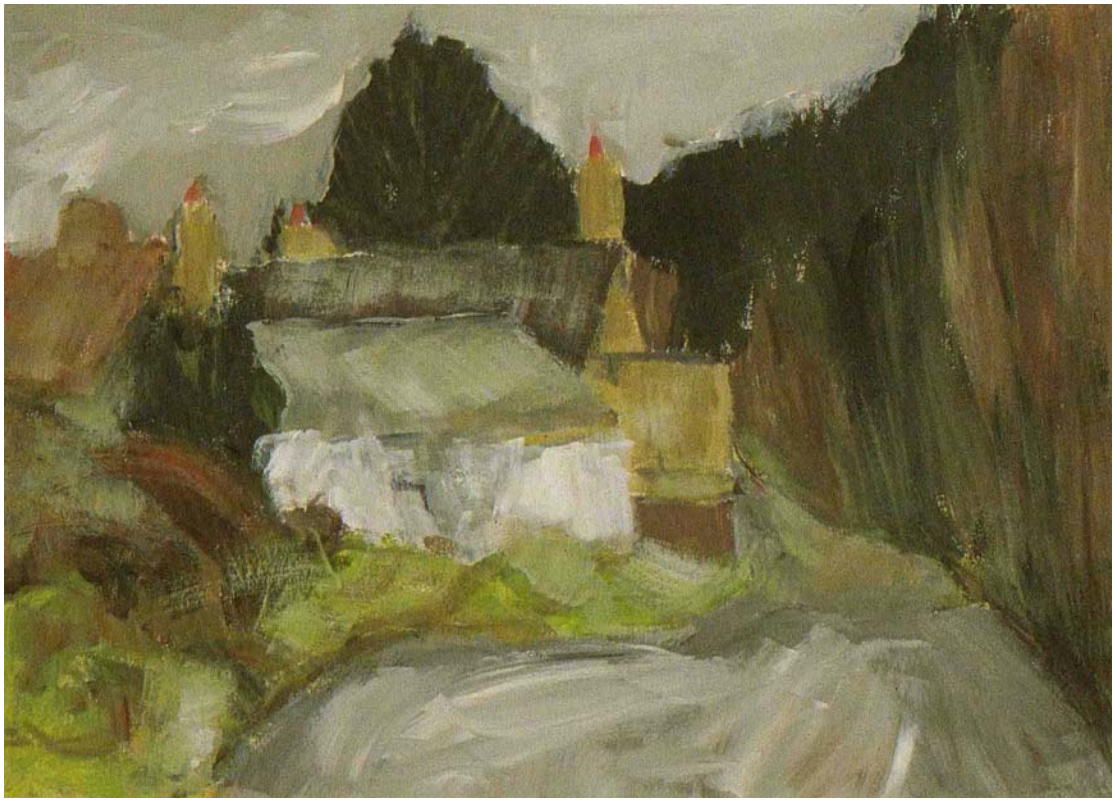
In secret,
I admire your smoothness –
lycra-clad limbs.

I wink at you
through splinters of starlight.

On the bridge,
sense your soft shoe shuffle,
bounce of your breasts.

Weeds trail like green limbs,
I long to caress,
pull you in,
lay your head on my pillow pebbles –
kiss you
with my liquid lips.

Lie on my water bed.



Nancy Wynne-Jones: **Road from Rathdrum**, 1989 (cata. No. 52)

Although the white wall of the building is spectacularly painted, and the cluster of houses has solidity, our response to the painting is guided towards having a sense of journeying past them. The experiential structure in this artist's work is of prime importance, always preceding the intellectual.

Philip Williams was born in South Wales in 1961. He had inspirational poetry teachers at Llantarnam Comprehensive School, and was further inspired by such notable Welsh poets as Dannie Abse, Idris Jones and Gillian Clarke. He is Head of Marketing at Keele University. He has 2 poems in the Welsh issue of ***Agenda***.

Friends of Gledhow Valley Woods

This green lung has friends to help it breathe.

Last night, a bat walk and tomorrow they will dig

turfs into the wildflower meadow, leave

a litter-pick as lighter work.

Once they could fill a skip in a single weekend.
One Friend, retired, thins the branches
for a better view of the Balancing Lake,
another keeps the key for the bath-house
at the bottom of the bank. Seventeenth Century,
mentioned in Thoresby, it lay in open fields
then and long after. The Friends share sepia
photographs of cattle grazing where mixed wood
fills the fields between the beech plantations;
of stock driven to Harehills for slaughter
along a grid of ginnels, soot-black streets.

To see the wood for the trees, they fell some
to admit the light, permit the boys to build
their dens, slide on boards across the beech mast.

We pick blackberries, rub the toes of our boots
across the bench plaques to read the names
of donors, dead dog-walkers, the suburban mourned.

The Friends can fund their immediate plans
for clearing and planting, for bridges over the beck.

They deserve more time, more hands, our children’s thanks.

Decimal Five

When our mother hid your wallet -
and her purse - it did not delay you long.
You emptied our tobacco tins
of the coins we kept for Airfix and comics,
spent them in the Rose and Crown.
Silver, newly decimal, bitter copper,
a tang of Golden Virginia.

So whenever now by chance
I catch the blue bite of roll-ups
at the back of my throat,
I recall the nightly jingle of your keys,
your loose change,
the dregs and butt ends breathed
across our bunk beds,
your sing-song low rebuke
as you found us both awake.

Of course, I bear no grudge –
bend across to kiss you,
all smart and faintly comic
in your funeral suit, the spotted tie
and waistcoat we'd never seen you wear.
At your flat after, we discuss your wit,
your misogyny over orphaned pints
of Crow Valley, draw your sisters' disapproval.

Nancy Wynne-Jones: **Creggenan Lake**, 1997-98

Another painting from her idyllic childhood landscape of Wales. Around this lake the family spent much time, linking to the following poem by Keith Jones about the latter's childhood home in Wales.

Keith Jones was born in Gwaensysgor, Wales. He had a career in the British Council. His death was announced in the news section of this website. ***Agenda* Editions** published a collection of his, *Merrimans*.

Gwaenysgor

Place is space entangled in our signs. The cave
in Bishop's Wood, the darkness trickling love

into an old fishpond. The limestone
limbs of the hills, all knees & pelvic bones

obtruding through stiff glacial clays.
Wind in the wires, seas in the skies

a nunnery of land where catastrophe lived in
where history took its stone axe to the skin

But do return. That quartz or limestone spar
or whatever molecular

locking it was received the wild
welsh light & smarmed it to the child

I reinvent, whatever: In the beginning was
this cube of light I lived in. Loss

is a stuccoed bungalow in unlawned
grass. Here was cut the figure from the ground

I can see his with a ghost on his arm,
Atap at the front door. Calm, very calm.

I've got a wife. The ladies exchange uncertain
smiles. Tea is offered. Some mime. The curtain.

Look back. Point is world's at odds with words
recreate it. Complete with audience. Put birds

in your mouth. Announce the dawn
and punctuate the signed space of the sky.

Siân Thomas was born in 1972, lives in Sussex and is currently studying for a M.A. in Creative Writing and Authorship at the University of Sussex. Her poetry has been published in *The Daily Telegraph* and was highly commended in the Arvon Foundation's *Mini-Sagas* competition.

Pietà

On this shaven hill,
suspended between death and something after,
I watched the empty purse that was my body
as they cut it from the cross.

You were there beneath it,
though you couldn't stand and they sat you in the shade
of that unnatural tree. You took my mass of limbs
upon your lap and rocked it

as though I were your child again.
You cried a cradle song: a lullaby to wash away
the blood and dirt, while the wound at my side
kissed a stain into your gown.

The Scrying Bowl

Come closer.
This black water in a silver bowl
is a black and silver lake.
Here reflected trees distort.
The black bird flies
from branch to branch.
Here your face appears,
framed by branches,
rising to you:
black eyes, black mouth.

Deep within this mirror,
the faces of your future, of yourself:
the moon becomes the bull
becomes the child
you will never know.
Her face is your face,
her hands are yours:
the self-same fingers
strain towards you
as you reach down.

Four hands touch the surface,
breaking it. You pull away,
leaving only ripples.

Mary Lloyd Jones: **Swyn III**

Dannie Abse, Welsh poet and medical doctor, was born in 1923 to Jewish parents. His memoir, *The Presence* (2007), won the Arts Council of Wales Book of the Year award in 2008. His *New Selected Poems* 1949-2009 was published recently by Hutchinson. He has two poems in the Welsh issue of ***Agenda***, and Cary Archard has written an essay in this issue: 'The Influence of Rilke on Alun Lewis and Dannie Abse'.

Yesterday's Tiff

You were ready to boil at 0 degrees
I wasn't sulking. Simply I thought
no more figs and honey for you

No more ginger to match your eyes.
Exit Poussin. ’Bye Kandinsky.
Through the window, wham!

You like rum. Down the drain with it.
Raspberries? I’ve eaten them all.
Go to bed with Ruskin!
That dinner party you plan
I’ll invite Kingsley
and other right-wing boring guests.

A war-monger or two. Do you get
the drift of what I’m saying?
Definitely no more freesias.

Only things that keep you awake
at night: shuffling mice, coffee,
and now, please, me too, silly.

Tony Conran, like Dannie Abse, is one of Wales’ most honoured and established poets. Patricia McCarthy has written an essay on Conran in the Welsh issue of ***Agenda*** where he has a sequence of poems. Below is a portrait photograph.

Catrin

to John Daniel

Sometimes I think Grief is the subtlest craftsman
   Of us all. In our treacherous cave, the valley
Of the Shadow, out of our heartbreak the sudden draftsman
   Will pencil in lightly a hesitation, a sally
Of radiance. As a shaman at Lascaux decorated
   With great beasts the dark, and from his tranced sight
They rustle towards us, gods: so Grief our flighted
   Miseries – crowding in from the past – haloes with light

And for that infinite second we look at a glory
   As never before. Oh it fades, yes. Anger – shame –
Prayers even – the dust of the transitory
   Soon settles again, pain becomes blind and lame.
      But we *have* looked to Time's beginning, God
      Working that brave sixth day, finding it good.

Mary Lloyd Jones: Ogof Trwyn yr Hwch Fawr Enlli IV
Mary is inspired by the Welsh landscape and, in particular, the man-made marks on that landscape.

John Freeman was born in 1946 and grew up in south London where he attended Dulwich College before studying at Clare College, Cambridge and the University of York. He has taught English Literature at Cardiff since 1972, and Creative Writing since its inception there in 1983. His poetry has been widely published. Themost recent of his nine collections is *A Suite for Summer* (Worple Press, Tonbridge, 2007).

Letter to Jack Gilbert

I think of an eighty-year-old who has put his life into poetry.
I mean he writes about his life, and poetry's what he lives by.
Up close to his poems, you get him – tall, sinewy, sunburnt,
working in factories, then in fields on a Greek island.
You get the story of the wife who left him but remained
his friend, of the other wife who died, the way he goes on
loving them both, how he nearly died falling through a tree.
His poetry fills the world, reaches from earth to the sky,
the zenith from which Icarus in one of his poems falls,
not failing, *just coming to the end of his triumph*. Poetry
fills the world when you're close to it, but you step back
and it becomes ghostlier. Where you could smell the man's
or woman's scent, feel the compact muscular presence,
like a leopard ready to spring, there's a whispering echo,
a reduced photograph-sized two-dimensional image, beard,
roll-neck jumper, aging face. The obverse of Rilke's praise
of Orpheus, *all singing is him.* On each reading I think,
what's that rose doing in this poem? *Only let the rose*
every year bloom at its pleasure. It is Orpheus. We should
not trouble about other names. And then the image unfolds
as it fades: *Is it not already much if he overstays*
by a few days sometimes the bowl of roses? Stevens wrote
in his late 'The Planet on the Table': *Ariel was glad*
he had written his poems. It was not important that they
survive. Jack, let's be glad we were given to sing even if,
a few feet away, like shrivelled roses, all there is to see
is a caricature. We'll have kissed the joy as it flew,
soared with Icarus, triumphed till we hit the water.

A Man I Used to Know

I met a man the day before yesterday
who used to know a man I used to know.
We praised him from our different points of view.
But what I think of now is just the way

we used to walk together by the river.
I think of him and hear him talking to me,
and see between the pillared trunks of trees,
the dark trunks of the lime trees, shining water.

The path we walked on, only half made up,
had humps and hollows, stones and puddles, mud.
To get there we had crossed a busy road.
Friends for a while, we talked and walked in step.

There was no falling out between us, just
something that needed our intense exchange
had run its course and we became like strangers.
Everything happened, I think, for the best.

No regrets. Just a sustaining memory
of shining water seen among dark limes,
two friends walking part of the same way home,
that like an unexpected gift comes back to me.

Mary Lloyd Jones: Pen y Twmpath

Kathy Miles moved to Wales in 1972 to study English Literature at the University of Wales, Lampeter. She now works there as an assistant librarian. She has published two collections of poetry and a third, *The Shadow House*, is due shortly from Cinnamon Press.

In the Ice House

Of all the different coldnesses of winter,
you are the deepest, most icy splinter
that gets beneath my skin.
I can feel you there, a slow melt
dripping down the inside of my bones,
turning arteries to cold threads,
muscles to shafts of stone.
You say I've made you this way,
rolled you up from ribs of frozen snow,
fashioned you with careless, slushy hands,
not looked where I crunched my feet
in the early-morning drifts.

In this ice-house, we keep winter well.
You with your December hair,
thinning, as sycamore thins in the wind,
me padded and chunky against the gales.
A silent blanket dusting air, where
the bite of each word bitters rooms.
I shake you like a globe. A sudden flurry
makes the world look different,
warmer, somehow, a blizzard in the glass.
We stand enclosed, disintegrating,
flake by flake, until there's nothing left
but the blood-seep thaw of ice,
beads of snow on the berries.

Snow People

It was an easy mistake. To rush out in the first fall
of snow, to gather, to tumble, to crush the armfuls
of cold until we were wet and frozen.
And then to roll it up like pastry, over and over,
a growing ball that crunched across the grass.
Then we should have known. Or later, when we added
coal-shrewd eyes, a nose, a smirking mouth.

Now the snowman stares at me,
and his glittering looks follow me into the house,
his swollen belly round as moons.
Even at midnight he is there, in the wasteland
of sparkling grass, stalks me through the curtains,
for I see his full white shape from every room.
And when I sleep I dream of snow piling across the bed,
snow inside my wardrobe trying on my clothes,
snow shivering by the fire without melting,
snow eating its way through the contents of the fridge
snow stroking the unsuspecting cat,
snow learning how to roll and stretch the flesh of my life
to make a human from a fall of crystal.

Mary Lloyd Jones: Trefor Llyn

Damian Walford Davies appears earlier in this supplement.
His poem, ‘September Song’ is in the Welsh issue of ***Agenda***.

Iconoclast

for Jem Poster

William Dowsing’s journal, 1644

At Stradbrook in April, angels
in glass. I broke their wings.

At Trembly, ten cherubim and
thirty texts. And superstitious

pictures, which I took down.
Miserere me, Domine, in brass.

At Clare, one of God the Father,
and two of doves, so high I had

to climb a scaffold with the brush
and wash. At Wixo, we broke a saint

and dug the steps down to the dirt.
At Beccles, rails; and Jehovah

hiding in a niche. Seven friars
at Sudbury St James, clinching

a nun. *My Meat is Flesh indeed*,
and *My Blood is Drink*, indeed.

At Snape, eleven popish pictures
and the crown of thorns, and

sponge and nails, which I pulled
off. A trinity, and a triple crown.

At Bramfield, a pelican pecking
its breast, all gilt, and diverse Virgins

with St Peter’s keys. At Linstead
Parva, sun and moon in the east

window, by the King’s arms,
which I broke. At Eye, I was

the only one spied Jesus
in stone above the door.

Duomo

In the thin skin
of the terracotta dome,
red herring-
bone bricks
bamboo-
zling us, you led me

up a thousand steps
to our honeymoon’s
grand stage.

In the cupola’s
gallery, Brunelleschi’s
cantilevers

holding the world
above deep space,

we took a second to regard
each other.

I saw you hang
there, embracing vertigo,

a miracle

above the freight of air.

Mary Lloyd Jones: Trefor Llyn ii

Peter Finch was born in Cardiff where he still lives. For twenty years he ran the Oriel Bookshop and is now Chief Executive of Academi, the Literature Promotion Agency for Wales. His *Selected Poems* are published by Seren. He has a poem in the Welsh issue of ***Agenda*** and is reviewed in W S Milne's Omnium Gatherum of Welsh poetry collections.

Now You Can Again Be Your Father

The cat has a name but
suddenly you can't think of it. In
the wardrobe are 18 pairs of shoes
you do not wear. The poor had none
when you were younger.

Last week couldn't find anyone
who could remember Gary US Bonds.
This week still can't

Time is in the next room
hissing like a cistern
almost spent.

Soon you'll become what you
were always going to,
only culture held you back.
Needed to be something, desperately.
Now you can again be your father.
His jacket when he was sixty fits me now
used to be like a tent.

He couldn't really swim either
said he could.
Breathing ineffectually down
the pool at tai chi speeds
overtaken by toddlers with
floatation devices
and men who had lost limbs.

I sat in the chair he used
still there in the back room
like a megalith
went ahhh.
This only starts when you are
over 50.

Lost:
string driving gloves
jubbly
telegrams
bosoms with points
hard-rind cheese
fishwives
smuts in your eyes

Length of time it takes to open
a shrink wrapped CD:
5 minutes 20 including scissors.
World record is 2 seconds flat.

He stuck to lps. Liked Edmondo Ros.
Told me that if you could get
women to dance then you were half way there
didn't say where that was.

Mambo, samba, things that were in the blood.

Beat

John Tripp 59
B S Johnson 41
Arthur Rimbaud 37
Buddy Holly 29

Kingsley Amis 74
not managed him yet

My father said poems were
things you used when you died
air fresheners for the eternal soul

Basho's was

On a journey, ailing,
my dreams roam about
over a withered moor

He never liked the moors, my father,
but I did

full of space and incessant air

that's me over there
that smudge
big coat no hair
just like my father
slowly mamboing into the future.

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Mary Lloyd Jones' paintings are available from The Martin Tinney Gallery, 18 St. Andrews Crescent, Cardiff CF10 3DD Tel: 029 2064 1411
www.artwales.com

Nancy Wynne-Jones' paintings shown here, and abridged text, are in the catalogue of her Retrospective Exhibition 1992, produced by the Visual Arts Committee, University College, Cork.