

Best Scottish Poems 2016 announced today

The Scottish Poetry Library has published a list of the Best Scottish Poems and the online anthology is now available.

Catherine Lockerbie, the former director of the Edinburgh International Book Festival, has chosen the poems which feature some old favourites like Liz Lochhead, William Letford, Jenni Fagan and Michel Faber.

The library publishes its list every spring with 20 poems chosen to provide an 'idiosyncratic snapshot of Scotland over one year'.

Ms Lockerbie has read every poems which qualified – a mammoth task! She said : “This was a vast undertaking, and an enthralling one: so much superb poetry pouring out in the course of just one year.

“Resonant themes emerged: moving reflections on illness and mortality, intense encounters with the natural world, science-filled forays of the imagination, fierce political wake-up calls, funny and wonder-filled musings on poetry itself, and so much more.

“I hope this list stands as a sample of the exhilarating vibrancy of contemporary poetry in Scotland – and encourages people to make their own poetic discoveries.”

The list is below – of course you may feel free to disagree and to suggest your own from last year!

- Katie Ailes, 'Outwith', from *Glasgow Women Poets: A collection* (Glasgow: Four-em Press, 2016), ed Mairi Murphy

- James Aitchison, 'Anthem', from *The Gates of Light* (Colchester: Mica Press, 2016)
- Claire Askew, 'Catalogue of my grandmother's sayings', from *This Changes Things* (Hexham: Bloodaxe Books, 2016)
- Angus Peter Campbell, 'Aig Cladh Hallain' / 'At Hallan Cemetery', in *Northwords Now*, Issue 31 (Spring 2016)
- Michel Faber, 'Don't Hesitate To Ask', from *Undying: A love story* (Edinburgh: Canongate, 2016)
- Jenni Fagan, 'The Narcissist and The Light Stasher', from *The Dead Queen of Bohemia: New and collected poems* (Edinburgh: Polygon, 2016)
- Pippa Goldschmidt, 'Physics For The Unwary Student', from *House of Three: Logie Fielding, Pippa Goldschmidt, Nalini Paul* (Edinburgh: House of Three, 2016)
- Andy Jackson, 'Enquiry Desk', from *Umbrellas of Edinburgh: Poetry and prose inspired by Scotland's capital city*, eds Russell Jones and Claire Askew (Glasgow: Freight Books, 2016)
- William Letford, 'This is it', from *Dirt* (Manchester: Carcanet, 2016)
- Pippa Little, 'For Refuge', from *Aiblins: New Scottish Political Poetry*, eds Katie Ailes and Sarah Paterson (Edinburgh: Luath Press, 2016)
- Liz Lochhead, 'In the Mid-Midwinter', from *Fugitive Colours* (Edinburgh: Polygon, 2016)
- Hugh McMillan, 'The Conversion of Sheep', in *The Dark Horse*, Late Spring & Summer 2016, Issue 36
- J.O Morgan, 'We used to think the universe was made...', from *Interference Pattern* (London: Jonathan Cape, 2016)
- Helena Nelson, 'What Not to Write on the Back Jacket of your Debut Collection', from *Down With Poetry!* (Glenrothes: Happenstance, 2016)
- Stuart A. Paterson, 'Breenge', from *Aye* (Tarland: Tapsalteerie Press, 2016)
- Tom Pow, 'Full Stretch' from *At The Well of Love* (Edinburgh: Mariscat Press, 2016)
- Alison Prince, 'Reprieve' from *Waking At Five Happens*

Again (Edinburgh & Glenrothes: Mariscat Press /
Happenstance, 2016)

- Em Strang, 'A Poem Before Breakfast', from *Bird-Woman*
(Bristol: Shearsman Books)
- Samuel Tongue, 'What Is It Like To Be A Herring Gull?'
from *Hauling-Out* (London: Eyewear Publishing, 2016)
- Kate Tough, 'People Made Glasgow' from *tilt-shift*
(Tarland: Tapsalteerie, 2016)