

Twelve River RIPPLES

Bagatelle



Conjoined Poem Challenge

Oak-Pigeon-Water

Oak

I will frame this winter landscape
in fractal latticework
until the Spring, when
I will draw a curtain
leaf by leaf
reveal my full majesty:
I am Oak.

Pigeon

My boudoir cavorting was disclosed
with curtains falling one by one
I am a shadow against the grey
I can leave / f this rooted pedestal
take my freedom
in winged flight:
I am Pigeon.

Water

At last the relentless climbing slows
its escalation through the year
which draws me into the sky
from root, through trunk to leaf
to cloud the windswept arc
that roofs us all:
I am Water.

Colin Whyles

This poem was first printed in *Twelve Rivers*, Autumn 2015, Vol 6 Iss 2. I call the form 'Conjoined Poems'. Each poem sits alongside the others as a contribution to a conversation or discussion. They are similar to Cleave Poems in that they respond to and compliment each other, but these also generate many others. The first line of any of the poems can be followed by the second line of any other, which can be followed by any third line, etc. These three poems produce 2,187 combinations.

Try it!

Then the challenge is to write your own. Most subjects have alternate points of view that lend themselves to this approach.

Or simply try a conjoined limerick; the trick here is that each line serves much the same purpose in each poem and it is wise to use generic terms like 'they' to serve as the relevant pronoun where necessary:

There was a young lady of Bury
Who balanced tip-toe on a cherry
When they were asked why
They said so they could fly
And they could be so much more merry.

There was an old chaplain of Bury
Whose nose was as red as a berry
Though some said they were shy
At least they would try
And somersault when necessary.

There once was a fellow of Bury
Who fasted, except for their sherry:
Only sweet, never dry
(Which they'd always deny)
Sometimes they seemed quite contrary.

Send your responses to ripples@suffolkpoetrysociety.org.

Extra credit awarded for something topical*.

* A warm feeling of satisfaction is the only prize!