

Twelve River RIPPLES

Members' Poems



A Disrupted Sonnet for Strange Times

Today takes shape – but it will shift
as hours pass, numbers will change
on the clock face to read back
to front/upside down – time loses
its own truth. We'll retreat, signing
on a cave wall - our hands, a stick figure
we can touch, re-touch, add, subtract
another limb, wonder if it looks like us.

Is the truth still found inside our breath?
We begin to wonder - or shall we lie down
and let ourselves be counted by others
(because the truth of it is we don't count).
We'll watch the hours eat themselves
and then see how the day turns itself inside out.

Pam Job

Members' Poems

Pleura

The diaphanous material swells,
sags,
collapsing like a punctured rascalion balloon.

The wave returns to shore before
bellows deflate as the breeze moves on
over the bronchial branches.

No clamour accompanies the depression.

Leslie Cuthbert

Topical Tankas

Frost. A crisp, clean world;
a brilliant crescent moon
brightens the dark sky:
that happy, healthy new year
we all wished one another.

Cold comfort. In truth
our world is crumbling, poised on
the brink of ruin,
crushed by a creeping virus,
ravaged by global warming.

Should we rage against
Covid, rage against earthquakes,
shore up defences,
put our trust in new vaccines,
and applaud all our heroes?

Should we rage against
governments, lobby MPs,
write scathing letters,
give way to hopeless despair –
or should we embrace changes?

Time for reflection
mocks us if there is no change,
if there is no spark
that ignites the groundswell of
voices that clamour for change.

Julia Duke

For a Ripple of Laughter

Learning on the job



After months of continual and heavy use
the pulp drier needed major repair.
Deep in the bowels of the massive cylinder
the apprentice was in his element,
liquid metal and sparks flying everywhere
as his oxy-acetylene cutter melted the holding bolts.
Sudden darkness — the flame had failed.
Turning to the distant hatch he shouted
“I haven’t got a light, Tom” — a pause
then the old fitter languidly suggested
“Get one off your trousers boy”
as flames started to creep up his leg.

Ivor Murrell