

An elephant is perched on a thick, horizontal tree branch that extends from a tall, weathered tree trunk on the left. The elephant is seen from behind, with its large ears spread out. The background is a vast, sandy desert landscape under a clear blue sky with some light clouds. The scene is lit with warm, golden light, suggesting late afternoon or early morning.

*I Have
Promises
to Keep*

OPTIONAL THEME

2018

DOROTHEA MACKELLAR
POETRY AWARDS

PRESENTATION CEREMONY

From the President

For 34 years, the Dorothea Mackellar Poetry Awards has been the largest poetry competition for school children in Australia, created in honour of one of our greatest and most famed poets. The Dorothea Mackellar Memorial Society was created to preserve the works, the memory and the legacy of Dorothea who, as a teenager homesick for her sunburnt country while travelling in Britain, penned *Core of My Heart* (later retitled *My Country*), a poem that resonates as an everlasting icon of Australia.

To this end, the society runs both a centre dedicated to the life and works of Dorothea in Gunnedah, the town in which she spent a good deal of her youth. Her family owned several properties in the area, and she drew inspiration from the landscape and the weather that stretched out around her, pouring it into her poetry.

The poetry awards seek to honour Dorothea by encouraging and nurturing the art of poetry amongst Australia's school children. There is no better legacy for an artist than to inspire others, and, every year, Dorothea continues to do so. The poetry competition represents a unique literary event in Australia, being one of the few centred so far outside an urban centre.

The society has sought to preserve both Australian cultural history, and foster its growth by nurturing and encouraging the creativity of new generations of poets, writers and artists. Dorothea herself holds, and will continue to hold, a special place in the cultural mindspace of not just Australians, but the world. Few other writers can claim to have distilled and encapsulated so much of Australia in verse.

Through the hard work and dedication of our project officer and volunteer committee, and the gracious assistance of sponsors, patrons and professionals who offer their time, the competition reaches every single school, and tens of thousands of children, teachers and parents. The Mackellar Centre is an important cultural landmark for Gunnedah and the surrounding area, and Australia itself. Dorothea, a Sydneysider and world traveller, drew her gaze to the whole of our continent, and in doing so, underscored a link between us all: the landscape and environment that holds us and shapes us. Dorothea saw the beauty in the land, and the value we hold in it, and expressed it in a way that resonates still, over a century later.

Tom Plevy, President, Dorothea Mackellar Memorial Society

Our Patrons



The Honourable Mark Vaile AO

The former Deputy Prime Minister and leader of the National Party (2005-2007), Mark is a frequent visitor to Gunnedah. Whitehaven Coal, which he chairs, has extensive mining interests in the region and is a longstanding sponsor of the awards. He served as minister for both Trade and Transport during his parliamentary career and lives on the NSW mid-north coast, giving him an unparalleled insight into regional Australia.



Susan Duncan

Susan has enjoyed a highly successful career, firstly as a journalist - editing the Australian Women's Weekly - then as an acclaimed author with her well known works *Salvation Creek* and *House at Salvation Creek*. A strong supporter of the awards, she has helped launch the competition and spoke at a literary lunch to raise the profile of the awards. With her husband Bob, she lives at Tarrangaua, the house built by Dorothea Mackellar at Lovett's Bay, on Pittwater north of Sydney, when she isn't chasing cows on their farm near Wingham.



James Knight with his mother Anne, wife Claire and son Iggy

Our Guest Speaker

James Knight enjoys a multi-faceted career as a film producer, author, journalist, public speaker and educator. His first media job was on a radio station in Dubbo NSW, and he then went onto to become a popular television reporter, notably commentating cricket including accompanying the Australian team on a number of their tours.

In addition to producing documentaries, he has written 12 non fiction books on a diverse range of subjects including cricket personalities Brett and Shane Lee, Vietnamese refugee Duy Long Nguyen and the literary legends of early last century Henry Lawson and Banjo Patterson. He also is a motivational speaker to both corporate and school audiences. What's more, he grew up in Gunnedah where his father was a bagpipe playing veterinarian and his mother a poet and printmaker.

Anne Knight (Bell) is a founding member of the awards and it is fitting that James has "come home" to speak at the 34th Dorothea Mackellar Poetry Awards.

From the Artist

I studied contemporary art and design at TAFE and that's where I first tried printmaking. Drawing, etching and carving are all parts of printmaking to which I was attracted. Straight away I loved it. It's messy but so rewarding. The printmakers I've met along the way, Bernhardine Mueller and Seraphina Martin from Sydney and locals Anne Knight and Pat Rowley have shared their knowledge, skills and enthusiasm and I feel I truly belong to a very fulfilling form of artistic expression.

The robot and the wagtail are the prints I have chosen for the awards. I popped a heart into the robot because I believe poetry comes from the heart and the robot image is appealing to children of all ages. The wagtail for the senior poets I chose for its aesthetic appeal and is a joy to watch as it goes about catching its food in mid air and generally enjoying life. It's like watching 'poetry in motion'.

I am very fortunate to have my own etching press and thank my husband Ian for having faith enough in my art obsession to buy it for me.

I wish to thank the committee and patrons of the Dorothea Mackellar Memorial Society for the opportunity to create these prints for the poetry awards and hope the recipients are inspired by the meaning behind the artworks.

Eileen Mair



Gunnedah artist, Eileen Mair, with her two specially chosen prints for this year's trophies

Primary Judges' Report

As with last year, our judging criteria were simple – we looked for poems which displayed original voices, and a deft use of poetic devices. The winners of both the Upper and the Lower Primary School sections displayed originality, respect for craft and a deft use of language and were engaging on both a sensory and emotional level.

Our runners-up, highly commended and commended poems also used poetic techniques competently and explored the diverse range of subjects they tackled with imaginative assurance.

Overall the quality of the primary sections was down this year. A considerable number of entries displayed a marked disrespect for the onerous process of judging and had been bundled together and submitted with no quality control.

It would be useful for teachers to embrace free verse – the dominant form of poetry since Modernism. Rhyming poetry traps young poets into predictable language which, in turn, takes away the delight of original imagery and word play. There were hundreds of poems submitted which were marred by inappropriate words inserted just for the sake of a rhyming end word. There was little attention to the importance of the endings of many poems and there were some otherwise fine poems let down by poor throw-away end lines.

Congratulations to all the winners and the commended entrants. Again, while we applaud schools encouraging, supporting and nurturing poetry, we also urge educators to select poems of sufficient quality for entry into this national award.

Our thanks to the Dorothea Mackellar Poetry Awards committee and staff for all their work – it's a challenging annual task!

Catherine Bateson and Leonie Tyle



Catherine Bateson

An award winning author for children and young adults, Catherine began her writing career as a poet, with collections for both adults and children. Her latest novel *Lisette's Paris Notebook*, was written after a three month residency in Paris from the Australia Council.



James Roy

An author of more than 30 books for young people, James has been awarded a slew of literary prizes in NSW and WA and nominated for the German Youth Literature Prize. A former member of the Literature Board for the Australia Council for the Arts, he is currently in the final stages of his Master of Creative Writing at the University of Sydney.



Leonie Tyle

A lifelong dedication to children's literature has seen her work as a librarian, reviewer, speaker, editor and publisher. Leonie is a partner in Tyle & Bateson Publishing, a multi faceted publishing services enterprise based in Melbourne.

'We looked for poems which displayed original voices, and a deft use of poetic devices.'

Secondary Judge's Report

If 2,266 secondary students' poems seems like a lot to read, you're right. Some were very short, some could have been shorter. Many were rhyming, many were not - I didn't keep an exact record of those, but if I had to guess, I'd say half and half. Some were haikus, some were villanelles, some were sonnets, some were in rhyming couplets and in the style of bush poetry, and many more were blank verse.

The themes were both predictable and sometimes surprising. Of course there were plenty of poems about identity, about loss and pain, about fractured families and the struggles of adolescence.

Like most years, there were a large number of poems about war, particularly the First World War. There were, of course, plenty of poems about love, and many others about place and belonging. What was most interesting was the number of pieces that dealt with social issues that are increasingly prominent: racism and multiculturalism; asylum seekers; bullying; the empowerment of women; homelessness and disadvantage; drought and, of course, a planet in environmental crisis. I believe strongly in the power held within the voices of young people.

Those of us who are no longer eligible to enter a competition such as this would do well to pay attention to these young voices, and the kind of world they hope to inherit.

James Roy

*'I believe strongly in
the power held within
the voices of young
people.'*

Schools' Award

Winner - Primary

Cherrybrook Public School, Cherrybrook NSW
for their excellent support of poetry

Commendations

Melton Christian College, Brookfield VIC
Nambour Christian College, Nambour QLD
St Pius X College, Chatswood NSW
Tamworth Public School, Tamworth NSW
Wyvern House – Newington College, Stanmore NSW

Winner - Secondary

St Michael's Collegiate, Hobart TAS
for the quality of submitted poetry

Commendations

Hobart College, Mount Nelson TAS
SCEGGS Darlinghurst, Darlinghurst NSW
Baulkham Hills High, Baulkham Hills NSW

WINNER - SENIOR SECONDARY

Tessa Harkin

ST. MICHAEL'S COLLEGIATE, HOBART TAS

Borders

there is always a moment when the border blurs
and the things on either side merge into something completely different.

a moment when anything could happen next.

the sea
in that breath of a pause at the crest of a wave
stops
and briefly, for only a single moment,
the distinction between water and above disappears
and the sea is the sky is the sea
and for a beat it all hangs there exposed,
the blues melting into each other and swirling faster and faster
until there's no telling what could happen in the next wild instant and for a moment

they could be anything.

the beach,
that faraway land of memories and half-recalled adventures,
and whatever more real place you returned to,
no matter how separate,
how distinct the lines and fences and borders between them were,
would always merge-

with every grain of sand tracked in between toes
or bundled up in the tangle of towels,
then ground against hard floors and scrunched between sheets
tousled at the foot of the bed in the depths of a hot night-

the border grew less certain
more ambiguous.

and although in the daylight the change might go unnoticed,
with the descent of night:
darkness fresh and stretching
mosquitoes and stars buzzing together above heads,
the waves only a hum behind the late-night chatter outside,

with the descent of night,
the murmurs of voices became the distant crash of water against waiting rocks,

the whispers of curtains falling and lifting and settling against open windows in the breeze
swirling languidly through the night,
were, in an half-asleep moment
of heavy eyes and melted limbs,
the waves, creeping from their usual place, up the beach and through the scrub,
over the dunes and the road and up the steps to meet the window where it, ever so gently,
pinged stones against the glass, requesting politely, insistently,
to be let in.

and with sand grating against bare legs between cool sheets
and salt crusted in hair
and the smell of sunscreen just detectable, tingling nostrils and bringing with it
images of skinny squirming squealing bodies writhing and white,
under firm hands rubbing and spreading smooth cream against the backdrop of blinding sand and
eager waves,

with all this building up and determined, impossible to be ignored,
through squinted, sleepy eyes,
the bedroom became something else-
perhaps not quite that beach but not the room you thought it was either.

and with the border almost dissolved,
hanging on by only a single tightly stretched thread,
a thrill of energy sparks through the world
and this touch of the unpredictable, the impossible,
excites for far longer

than it takes to fall asleep
in that half-half
nowhere and
everything
moment.

Judge's Comments

This is a stunning piece of writing. It takes us on a journey, not just within a day, but through an entire summer, and even back in time to the simpler life of past generations. The image of sand between the sheets is almost my favourite part of this poem, only topped by the idea of the waves creeping up and asking to be let in. This deserves to be submitted to a literary journal. Please do.

RUNNER UP - SENIOR SECONDARY

Willow Culbert

HOBART COLLEGE, MOUNT NELSON TAS

Night Wanderers

We spill from the car
like a handful of change
race to the path past the
moths yellow depot, aglow in the dark street
a lamp post of Narnia, stands singular

Rush through pandanus, past she-oak trees that
line the silver crested track leaving
behind the rabbit warren
of houses and sleeping streets
towards the rumbling growl of ocean

down to the water
across hard polished sand
a clean slate, for dancing
footsteps trailing luminosity
phosphorescence, electric blue, soft green, like the Aurora

From the shoreline, where the outgoing inky tide
swirls, to kiss the sand and starlight glistens off
mirror surface we wander, shoulder to
shoulder. Talk of everything, nothing,
amongst the powdered silver

dunes. Here, spinifex
clusters cradle conscious
contemplation, as from the summer
sky we pull celestial beasts of distant
worlds, pick their shapes out of diamonds



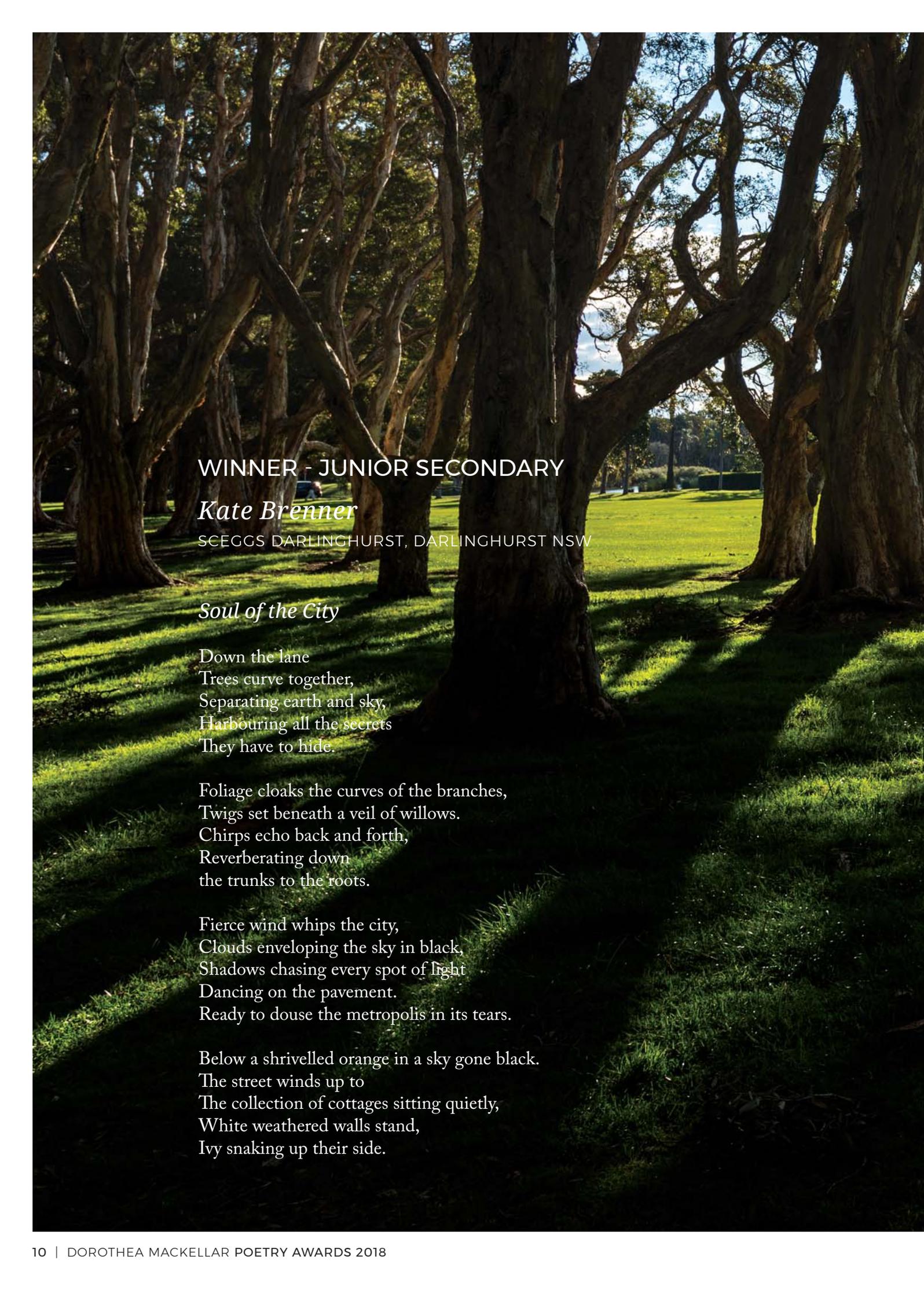
upon the stygian velvet. They whisper down to
us, a secret astral language which we can
only watch, and wonder, and listen
instead to the crash, gentle swish,
swell, of the boundless sea

nestled on silken sands under
the lustre of the Milky Way, we lie
submerged in the moment, ebb and flow
tidal, and time – trickles by like breeze playing on pearly granules
Breathe in synchronicity, as night and sea and sky, stretch on

And on and on
We are, adventurers, wandering,
Not lost, but alive

Judge's Comments

This is such an evocative depiction of youth, from the first simile through to the lovely image of friends (or perhaps lovers?) with no curfew to worry about, just each other. This is stunning writing.



WINNER - JUNIOR SECONDARY

Kate Brenner

SCEGGS DARLINGHURST, DARLINGHURST NSW

Soul of the City

Down the lane
Trees curve together,
Separating earth and sky,
Harbouring all the secrets
They have to hide.

Foliage cloaks the curves of the branches,
Twigs set beneath a veil of willows.
Chirps echo back and forth,
Reverberating down
the trunks to the roots.

Fierce wind whips the city,
Clouds enveloping the sky in black,
Shadows chasing every spot of light
Dancing on the pavement.
Ready to douse the metropolis in its tears.

Below a shrivelled orange in a sky gone black.
The street winds up to
The collection of cottages sitting quietly,
White weathered walls stand,
Ivy snaking up their side.



It slithers into cracks and crevasses,
But the white blossoms cloak its sinister intentions.
Strangling the pipes,
Like a blanket smothering out all air,
Green swallowing those pristine walls.
Nevertheless the street meanders on
To the rusty old fence,
Copper and chestnut.
A scarf warming the sea of daisies.
Protecting the unknown.

But inside, trapped inside
Those ironclad gates,
Underneath those secret hiding trees
Bursting with mystery,
Lies the soul of Centennial Park.

Judge's Comments

This poem contains so many lovely and careful pieces of imagery that I don't know where to begin. It takes the reader on a journey, not just along streets, but into the very anatomy of the buildings that make up the city. It conveys place, time, emotion all at once, which is something good poetry should do. This is terrific writing, and a worthy winner.

RUNNER UP - JUNIOR SECONDARY

Macklin Spicer

THE KILMORE INTERNATIONAL SCHOOL, KILMORE VIC

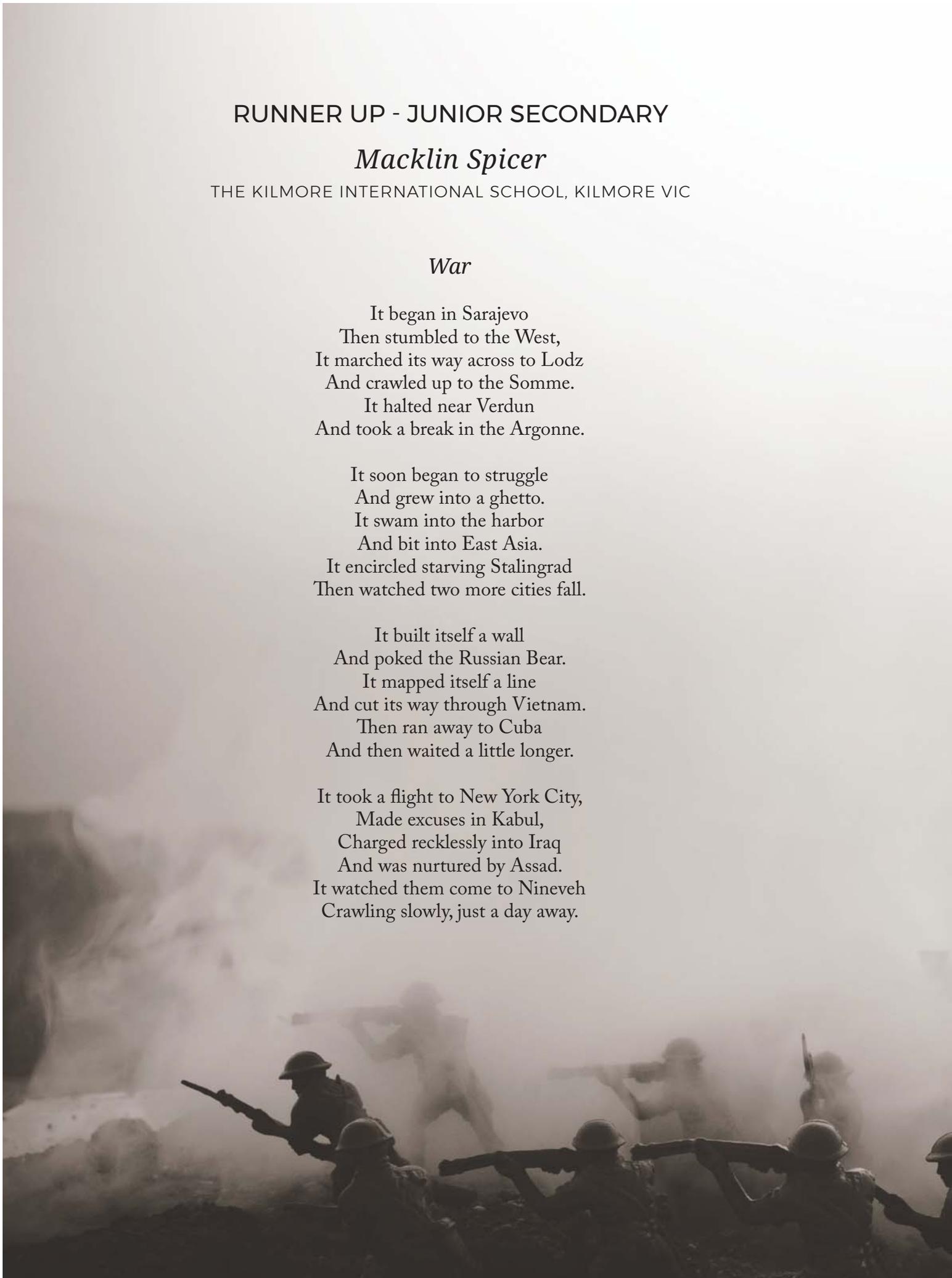
War

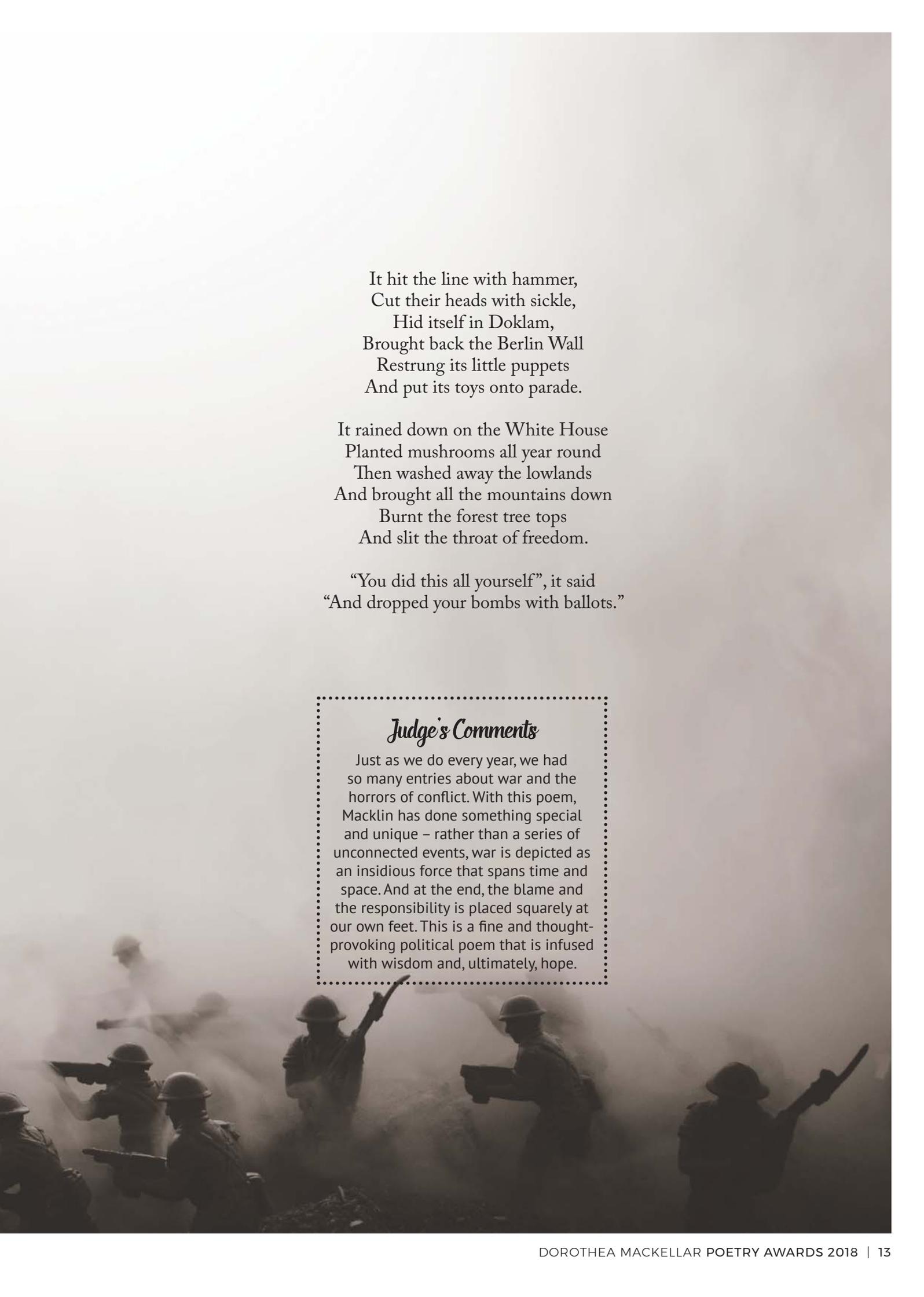
It began in Sarajevo
Then stumbled to the West,
It marched its way across to Lodz
And crawled up to the Somme.
It halted near Verdun
And took a break in the Argonne.

It soon began to struggle
And grew into a ghetto.
It swam into the harbor
And bit into East Asia.
It encircled starving Stalingrad
Then watched two more cities fall.

It built itself a wall
And poked the Russian Bear.
It mapped itself a line
And cut its way through Vietnam.
Then ran away to Cuba
And then waited a little longer.

It took a flight to New York City,
Made excuses in Kabul,
Charged recklessly into Iraq
And was nurtured by Assad.
It watched them come to Nineveh
Crawling slowly, just a day away.





It hit the line with hammer,
Cut their heads with sickle,
Hid itself in Doklam,
Brought back the Berlin Wall
Restrung its little puppets
And put its toys onto parade.

It rained down on the White House
Planted mushrooms all year round
Then washed away the lowlands
And brought all the mountains down
Burnt the forest tree tops
And slit the throat of freedom.

“You did this all yourself”, it said
“And dropped your bombs with ballots.”

Judge's Comments

Just as we do every year, we had so many entries about war and the horrors of conflict. With this poem, Macklin has done something special and unique – rather than a series of unconnected events, war is depicted as an insidious force that spans time and space. And at the end, the blame and the responsibility is placed squarely at our own feet. This is a fine and thought-provoking political poem that is infused with wisdom and, ultimately, hope.

WINNER - ASSISTED LEARNING SECONDARY

Lily Rout

LOURDES HILL COLLEGE, HAWTHORNE QLD

Loneliness

“Is loneliness the feeling when you are alone?”

“Yes”

Then,

Why did I never feel the breaking pain in my chest that people call loneliness when I was *alone*?

Why was I only torn apart, piece by piece, once the person I trusted decided to turn their back on me?

Why did I open-up my heart and soul in the hopes of finding someone, to maybe make me whole?

Why did I open myself up to a world of stormy-grey people, judging actions and opinions every day?

Why does it feel like they all push me down?

I'm pushed around,

Face against the ground,

That horrid sound – cause after all I'm the prey they're the hunting hounds,

Please, *please* stop it now,

I'm overwhelmed, I'm overwound,

My anger's out, I just rebound,

But now I'm ironbound,

strength newfound,

they stare dumbfound,

then hate surrounds.

This is all I'll ever be,

the enemy,

they ignore my plea,

they disagree,

but this caged bird yearns to be free.

As I turn there's a tear,

because 'surprise' look who is here,

we were friends once; now where is all that cheer?

You're in the headlights like a deer,

I was so stupid – now it's clear.

People can only hurt you once you truly hold them near.

“Oh, okay then.”

Judge's Comments

The structure of this poem is one of the things that attracted me to it. The bookended question and response is so dismissive of the heartfelt explanation throughout, and adds another layer of meaning to the overall piece.

“I'm overwhelmed, I'm overwound” is one of the many wonderful moments in this poem, as is this line: “People can only hurt you once you truly hold them near”, which evokes the feeling of withdrawing oneself to avoid further pain. We receive a lot of poems that deal with bullying, across all categories. This is one of the most honest and powerful of all.

RUNNER UP - ASSISTED LEARNING SECONDARY

Chris S.

YOUTH EDUCATION CENTRE - AYTC, CAVAN SA

Promises to my Family

I made a promise that I can't keep,
And now I'm sitting looking at four walls saying, "I can't breathe."
Looking into the sky, I know I made plenty of lies.

I can never deny that I had a great life,
Aboriginal pride I was one of a kind,
But when I struggle with life,
I never thought it was fun fighting with brother boys it was never right,

Mum, tell me what's going through your mind,
I know you're having a hard time.
It must be hard not having your husband,
It's life and it happens.
Love you Mum.

Dear Dad why did you have to go so soon,
I got many stories to tell you.
I'm looking after Mum just like you asked me to,
But being locked up again, I can't prove anything to you.

The promises that I made just went down the drain,
But look Dad I'm tryna change,
I remember them times when we would always fight,
I'm sorry about that, I knew it was never right.

I'm looking in the sky thinking why,
Why did god take you so soon,
All us boys are always thinking about you,
Love you Dad.

To my brother that's locked up,
I know it's hard not having family around,
It must hurt deep down,
But just know that I'm here for you now,
Let's all stick together and make our culture stand stronger.
I know your gonna be locked up for much longer,
Time flies by and soon you'll be living the life.

That's the price,
Love yous, all alright.

Judge's Comments

Good poetry should have something to say beyond the sentimental and obvious, and this piece takes a difficult situation and asks hard questions of it. These questions are around issues of expectation, trust, betrayal, and cultural and family responsibility. It is a simple yet powerful piece of writing - thank you for sharing it, Chris.

WINNER - UPPER PRIMARY

Subai Ma

RAVENSWOOD SCHOOL FOR GIRLS, GORDON NSW

Morning

As the sun rises, mist covers the neighbourhood
Making it look like a dream, rather than an everyday life.
I watch as the last few minutes of night disappear into nothing
Waiting for that special moment when the whole town wakes up to start a new day.
The grand clock strikes five, windows are flung open, and women beat the mist out of town,
Children stomp down the stairs waiting for their breakfast, and men go off to work.
I lean over the balcony watching the sun fully emerge like a golden coin glittering,
The pale blue sky, growing stronger and stronger, just like light paint over paper.
A fresh start to a new day.

Judges' Comments

Some good, unusual imagery in
an evocative celebration of a
new day.

RUNNER UP - UPPER PRIMARY

Alexander Feehan

ST. PIUS X COLLEGE, CHATSWOOD NSW

Storm

Shadows rolling in over the tallest buildings,
Darkness overpowering the light,
Fear in the air,
People running inside for cover,
The busy streets now empty of pedestrians
Faces staring from the car windows.

Paddocks covered in darkness,
Animals running to shelter near them,
Fear and relief in the air,
The crop is saved from thirst,
The farmers now have water.

Blue becoming grey,
Soft thumps becoming huge crashes against the hull,
Men preparing for a long night,
The fishing net coming in for the last time.

Storms bring rain and lightning,
But also something else,
For some people it brings fear, others relief.
But we all feel a foreboding feeling,
A feeling of anticipation,
As we all wait for it to hit.

Judges' Comments

Atmospheric imagery.

WINNER - LOWER PRIMARY

Adele Scully

PROUILLE CATHOLIC PRIMARY SCHOOL, WAHROONGA NSW

Poetry in the Sky

The sky is darkening
letters form in the clouds.
They join together somehow
and fall
like
rain.

In the night sky
letters twinkle like stars
A milky way of words
in
a
galaxy
of
poetry.

Judges' Comments

A sensitively crafted poem by a
very young poet.

RUNNER UP - LOWER PRIMARY

Jai Walker

ST. COLUMBA ANGLICAN SCHOOL, PORT MACQUARIE NSW

Dandelions Haiku

Dandelions rock
They polka dot the green grass
For decoration

Judges' Comments

An original haiku with lovely
language.

WINNER - ASSISTED LEARNING PRIMARY

Amy Kwak

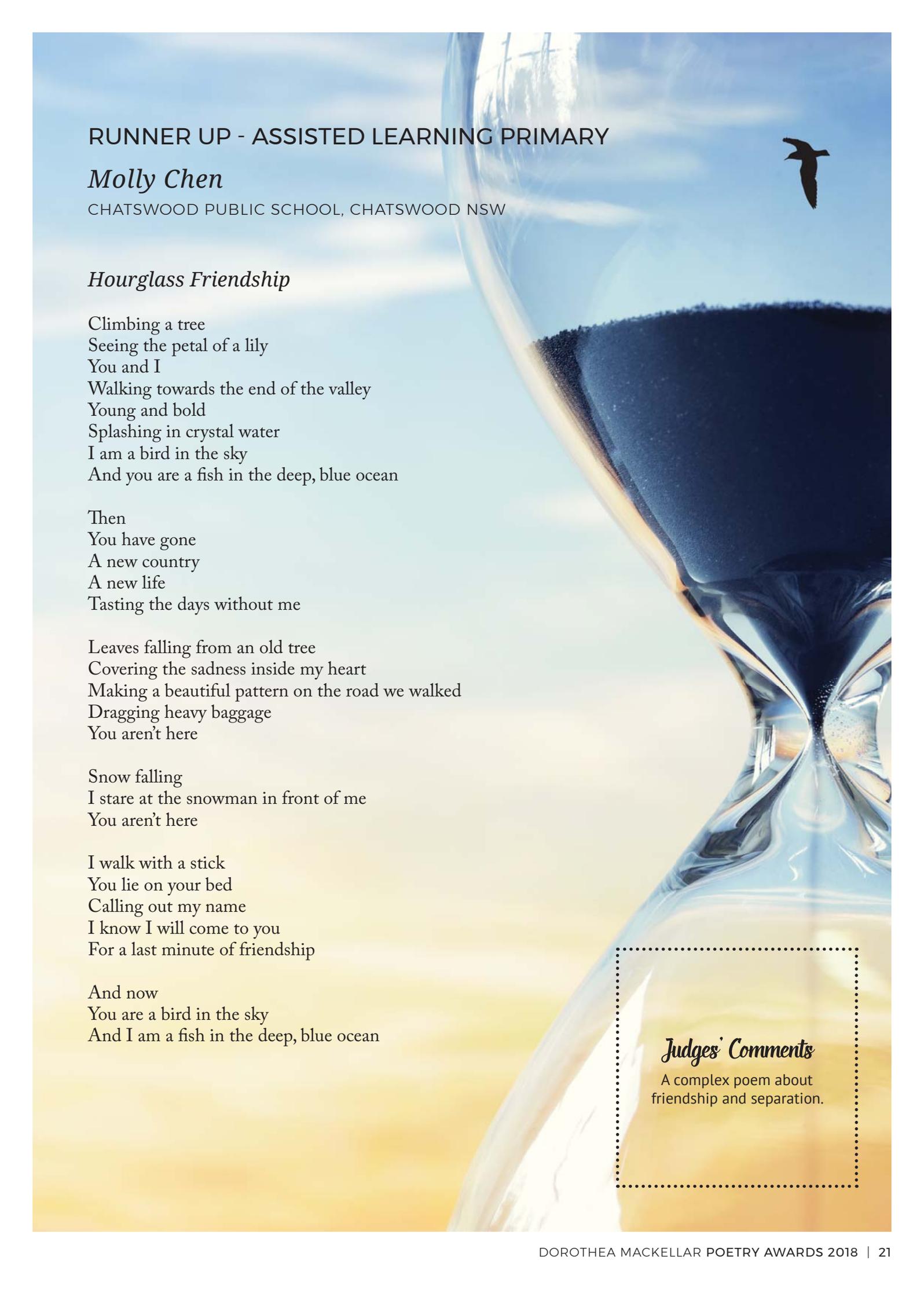
REDEEMER BAPTIST SCHOOL, NORTH PARRAMATTA NSW

Autumn

As I walk, I watch the leaves.
They float back down, down to the ground.
The wind throws them up to the sky.
I step on them.
They crunch and bunch,
And swirl and twirl.
Where they go I follow.
Lifted to the ends of the world.
I too float with the wind
As my heart soars in enjoyment.
Some land in the water and are taken away.
I watch, as my cares are carried by the current also.
Autumn is my season too.

Judges' Comments

Good imagery and a concisely realised poem.

A large, clear glass hourglass is the central focus, with dark sand falling from the top bulb into the bottom bulb. The background is a soft, blue sky with a single bird in flight in the upper right corner. The overall mood is contemplative and serene.

RUNNER UP - ASSISTED LEARNING PRIMARY

Molly Chen

CHATSWOOD PUBLIC SCHOOL, CHATSWOOD NSW

Hourglass Friendship

Climbing a tree
Seeing the petal of a lily
You and I
Walking towards the end of the valley
Young and bold
Splashing in crystal water
I am a bird in the sky
And you are a fish in the deep, blue ocean

Then
You have gone
A new country
A new life
Tasting the days without me

Leaves falling from an old tree
Covering the sadness inside my heart
Making a beautiful pattern on the road we walked
Dragging heavy baggage
You aren't here

Snow falling
I stare at the snowman in front of me
You aren't here

I walk with a stick
You lie on your bed
Calling out my name
I know I will come to you
For a last minute of friendship

And now
You are a bird in the sky
And I am a fish in the deep, blue ocean

Judges' Comments

A complex poem about
friendship and separation.



MULTICULTURAL NSW WINNER

Wadia Mubashira

NARRABUNDAH COLLEGE, KINGSTON ACT

Desi Woman

cherish the day you meet a desi woman
for she is the brightest star on a cold night's sleeve
as she gently rocks her baby forward
and feeds him from her breast
she is the first drop of dew to nourish the plants on the cusp of a new dawn
she is the honey with which you sweeten your tea at the end of a long, tiring workday
she,

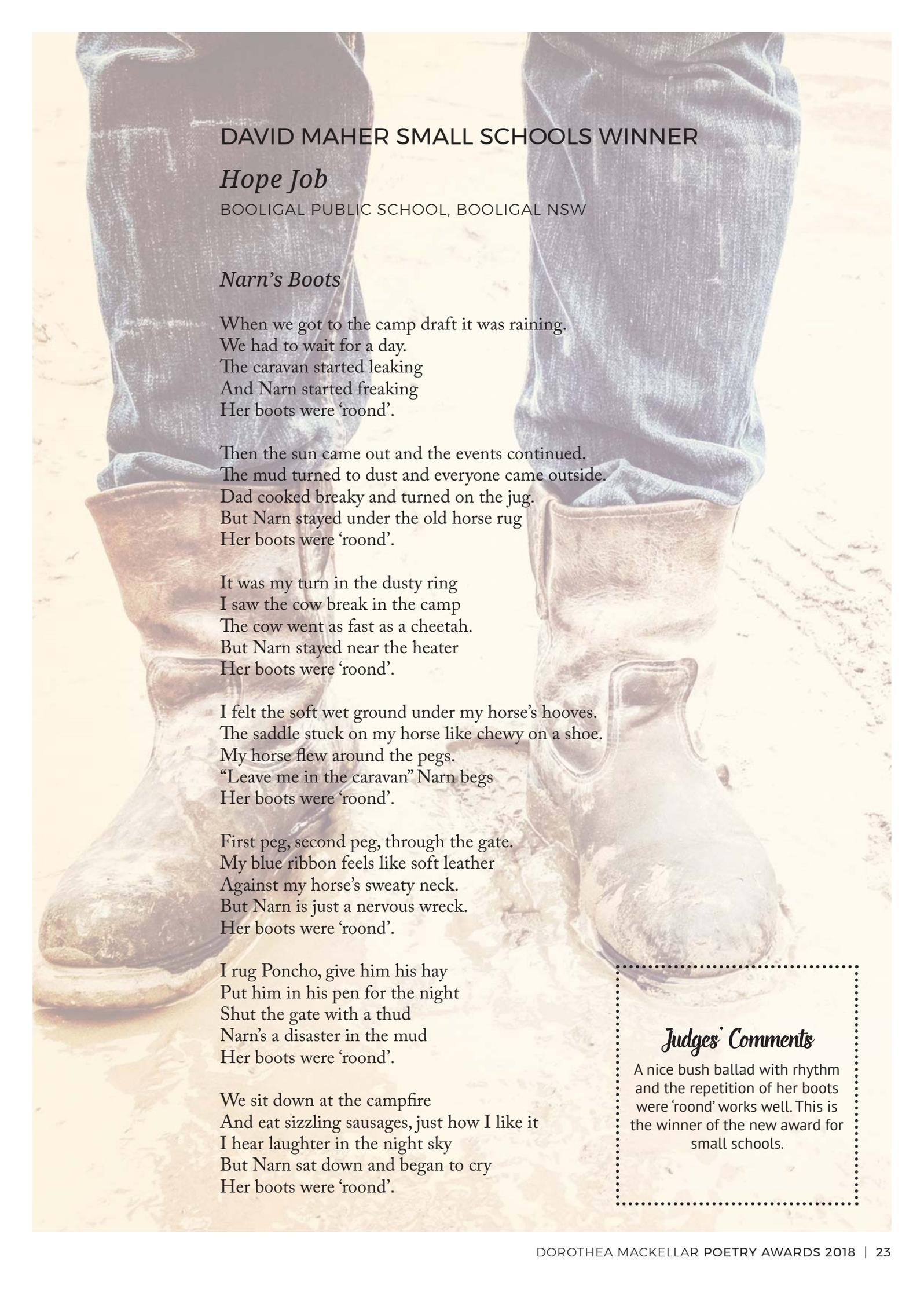
is a desi woman
the colour of her skin like molten gold
shiny, with the luminance of a face just cleansed with turmeric
a healthy sheen of sweat highlighting her nose
her hands; slightly yellowed at the nails
her jewellery a reflection of the soul that lay inside

watch your tongue
as it slips carelessly into a
monotony
of hate against the things about her that have brought
a new dimension to your life

cherish the day
you meet
a desi woman

Judges' Comments

This has a lyrical quality to it and a strong voice. A well-realised poem with good imagery.



DAVID MAHER SMALL SCHOOLS WINNER

Hope Job

BOOLIGAL PUBLIC SCHOOL, BOOLIGAL NSW

Narn's Boots

When we got to the camp draft it was raining.
We had to wait for a day.
The caravan started leaking
And Narn started freaking
Her boots were 'roond'.

Then the sun came out and the events continued.
The mud turned to dust and everyone came outside.
Dad cooked breaky and turned on the jug.
But Narn stayed under the old horse rug
Her boots were 'roond'.

It was my turn in the dusty ring
I saw the cow break in the camp
The cow went as fast as a cheetah.
But Narn stayed near the heater
Her boots were 'roond'.

I felt the soft wet ground under my horse's hooves.
The saddle stuck on my horse like chewy on a shoe.
My horse flew around the pegs.
"Leave me in the caravan" Narn begs
Her boots were 'roond'.

First peg, second peg, through the gate.
My blue ribbon feels like soft leather
Against my horse's sweaty neck.
But Narn is just a nervous wreck.
Her boots were 'roond'.

I rug Poncho, give him his hay
Put him in his pen for the night
Shut the gate with a thud
Narn's a disaster in the mud
Her boots were 'roond'.

We sit down at the campfire
And eat sizzling sausages, just how I like it
I hear laughter in the night sky
But Narn sat down and began to cry
Her boots were 'roond'.

Judges' Comments

A nice bush ballad with rhythm and the repetition of her boots were 'roond' works well. This is the winner of the new award for small schools.

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