CONTENTS

JAMES BELL
a new carboniferous
time flies
time after time the cherries were fine
c’est la vie dans le monde des araignée

MARY BRAY
Moon crossed star.

LESLEY BURT
requirements for clocks

BOB COOPER
Between the new and the old
Outside St. George’s Hall, Liverpool, Midsummer Night

JAN HARRIS
Timekeepers

FRANCESCA HUNT
Inner Beat
Where Time is Stored
The disintegration of Persistent Persistence

MARTHA LANDMAN
Delirium of an Early-October Commuter
It wouldn’t add up

DAPHNE MILNE
Magic
Family album - Grange-over-Sands
Time slips sideways

MARIA NORTH
Slowtime
Wrinkles in Time

STUART NUNN
Belyaev’s foxes

GRANT van WINGERDEN
Just in Time
James Bell - is Scottish and now lives in France where he contributes non-fiction and photography to an English language journal. Widely published in print and online poetry publications. He has two poetry collections to date *the just vanished place* and *fishing for beginners* and a third collection *Here at the End of the World* forthcoming from Lapwing Poetry.
a new carboniferous

dthis summer our neighbours felled
three firs around fifty feet tall
upward movement curtailed in two days
of chain saws and tractor grab arm
left space for more light to lengthen
the days and shorten night a little
otherwise nobody has control over seasons
yet adore the light and sight of fields
and trees beyond as change of point of view
the perspective stunning at least for now
while thick trunks

of firs lay side-lined
further up on the road long ways
towards us – proof they won’t be back
anytime soon – needles on branches brown
as autumn arrives – prodded by tractor grab
further down a bank long used like this
shoved down though above a lower gulley
where a stream emerges and becomes
a river later – flows instead of trickles now
with no regard for what descends from above
among old rotted stumps shaped in moss
like a new carboniferous just commenced
time flies

(Time flies like an arrow; fruit flies like a banana)

Anthony G. Oettinger

bananas come in bunches
apples can’t fly like a banana
drop in their own time

raspberries and strawberries
and their ilk get in a jam
go nowhere

all fruit has its season
arrows never go that far
time never stops
time after time the cherries were fine

until one day
after being dipped too long in hot water
their plastic container melts
though the cherries stay well rounded
so lips can mould around them
in a slight pout as teeth bite into the stone
in a soft reverence for the fruit
savour in the mouth for a time then
the hard centre is indelicately spat out
  springs a smile
  of cherry juice on redder lips
the next is still warm
  cherry trees take a long time
to grow - first to blossom
  viewed
for days of admiration among
many others
the fruit in its own season
packed in small plastic containers –
still better loose
  to caress first in cold water
you see the spider creep along
under the kitchen cabinet –
calculate there is time
to get the fly swatter and effect
its execution
one of those long-legged ones
that doesn’t go at great speed
its web making concentrated and deliberate
all over
especially where
you don’t expect it to build -
evidence that spiders see their world
much different to us –
decide on a stay of execution
and see the spider hirple
round the cabinet corner
and head for a darker place
where time no longer exists
and you couldn’t and wouldn’t want to go
Mary Bray hails from Norfolk in the United Kingdom. She is a writer and silk painter. She has three self published books on prose and poetry written under the name Samantha Beardon. She also has had work published in several anthologies.
Moon crossed star.

He stands braced, knees slightly bent
to counteract the movement
from the ship’s deck
the cold icy wind viciously, adds
its voice to the buzz
of the ropes and rigging,
whilst the crash
of a breaking wave sends shivers
through ship and man.

Night sprawls over the horizon
softening its edges
the stars spread like dancing dust motes
the gibbous traversing heaven.

For the first time in four days
he sights the constellations,
he finds the big dipper, the kite
and Arcturus the bright star
which will be crossed by the moon.

He has used his innate knowledge
of wind and tide
combined with the ships speed
to estimate his ships position
but he knows this is a wild approximation.
Now ge can get an accurate fix.

Horizon, the rising moon and Arcturus
a blessed triumvirate, he can measure
angles and distances and calculate
the time in Greenwich
then he can pinpoint his longitude
All he needs is accurate time.
Lesley Burt’s poetry has been successful in competitions and published in magazines over many years, including: *The Interpreter’s House, Prole, Sentinel Literary Quarterly, The Butchers Dog* and *Tears in the Fence*; also online, including by the *Poetry Kit, The Poetry Shed, Algebra of Owls, The Blue Nib* and *Ink, Sweat and Tears*
requirements for clocks

if planning ahead demands
consistent observation and recording
of recurring seasons first map the heavens

where stars at sunrise and twilight
predict seasons for drought flood
when crops will grow or die

then make a case for mean time
engineer cogs gong pendulum
beat and chime notion into noise

set pointers to mark and circle
at constant speed count numbers
equidistant on the edge of a dial

and exert a name over their movement
clockwise as if the sun might take
an alternative direction
Between the new and the old

It’s late. They watch their telly:
a floodlit tower, lit clock face,
hear - as everyone cheers on the screen,
raises glasses to the camera,
hugs and kisses cheeks -
the first midnight chime of Big Ben.

Then the remote’s lifted,
slowly aimed,
firmly pressed:
a blankly darkened silent screen.

Soon heads touch their settee’s wings
while they hear their own soundless music
when they stood elsewhere in familiar rooms
and, here, now, silent laughing ghosts appear,
mingle, lean forward, almost touch them
until one of their phones calls out its tune
- the ghosts hover, wait to disappear
but listen, expecting one of them
to talk, come to life -

but it’s a drunken voice.
Hello, I’m at
a party. Someone’s
passed out, dropped
their phone - it was still
ringing. Happy New
Year. Who are you?
Names are exchanged.

Then silence. Silence
and the noise of their large clock
that’s almost wound down.
Out of time it whirrs, pauses,
bongs its slow bongs.
Outside St. George’s Hall, Liverpool, Midsummer Night

Under tall streetlights when the city’s clocks strike twelve
Victoria and Albert, who puts on his top hat, dismount,
watch as forty figures step from the friezes: many naked, some children,
women gathering their drapes so they look more decent when they move,
then look back, help others clamber, stand near them on the cobbles

where they grin, hug, talk, then hold hands, form a circle
and dance lightly in the almost warm darkness, moving faster, faster,
then, out of breath, stop. Laughter. Some sit on steps, cuddle then kiss,
before, in harmony, they all sing what they’ve known for centuries,
gentle songs at first, then the bawdy lyrics that belong to tonight,

then many simply stand, stare at the moon, name dimly-lit stars and planets
or point to buildings, floodlit silhouettes they feel are familiar again
while Victoria and Albert smile, stroll between them. She takes off her jacket,
gives it to a woman who’s shivering. He gives his hat to a bashful man
to cover what his hands try to hide as everyone saunters around

until they hear the clock’s strike. They count in unison –
again, twelve times. And at the last chime become solemn,
walk slowly back to their wall, climb up to where they belong
to be gazed at in sunlight by those who’ll never know their unsilent hour,
their bodies again unmoving, their faces unmoved.

published 2020 in The Broken Spine – see: https://thebrokenspine.co.uk/about/
Jan Harris’s poems have appeared in various journals including Acumen, Envoi, and Poetry Wales, and in anthologies, including several e-books published by Poetry Kit. Jan was awarded third place in the Wales Poetry Award, 2019. Her first collection, Mute Swans on the Cam, was published in July 2020 by Oversteps Books.
Timekeepers

in rings around heartwood
trees keep time
larch to lime

earlywood’s light
latewood’s dark
aspen to larch

rings grow wide
in warm wet weather
oak to elder

resin and scars
date forest fires
gum to sequoia

carbon-14
charts solar flares
yew to pear

frost rings date
eruption on Thera
fir to juniper

in rings around heartwood
trees keep time
teak to pine
Francesca Hunt is a retired Chemistry teacher, living in Mid-Wales. She is an enthusiastic writer, who enjoys writing Poetry, short stories and is currently working on a couple of novels. She has had success in several Poetry competitions and has had Flash Fiction published.
Inner Beat

electric rhythm pounds
    my body

arms pulsate with random moves
    angular cutting air

my feet jive not touching the floor
    waist flexes possessed
        by beat

colours red orange
    my fire burns alive

but

all in my head as I rest soft
in the pillow

hair fragments neatly brushed
    time stops
Endless dates and times float on currents of air before my eyes. I stand in an office building in front of a Paternoster going down, and a modern air-conned lift for up- *staff use only*.

Rickety wood takes me down, I jump off quickly on the twentieth floor, grab my ears, explosions, bombing and flares, memories of the twin-towers haunt.

There are no windows, there is no sense. I hear the click of nazi boots, and Hitler’s monotonic bite. Choking on the smell of burning flesh, I crouch and shake.

On the nineteenth floor, my body flows to Swan Lake, I smile, our first date- our ballet. Two floors down, a country gent rests in the shade of a tree, waiting for ripe apples to fall. Eureka- he’s got it.

Head swimming, jet-lagged without flying, I look at my watch, the digital date flurries madly. I creep past a chap painting the Sistine ceiling, and jump on the Paternoster back to the twenty first. After scouring for Exit signs, I sneak into the ‘staff only’ and press 22. Neon lights flash: *Public access to the future is denied, please disembark... Public access to...*
The disintegration of Persistent Persistence

A dishcloth of time wrapped over winter’s bough
drops tears.
Yesterday’s mountains and pastures dream.

Wading through high water, I kick the elephant,
slam the door on crumbling brickwork,
and leave.

After: The Persistence of Memory (1931) and The Disintegration of The Persistence of
Memory (1952-1954) by Salvador Dali
Martha Landman writes in Adelaide, South Australia where she is a member of Friendly Street Poets. Her work has appeared online and in anthologies in the UK, US, Australia and South Africa.
Delirium of an Early-October Commuter

never run after a man or a bus
there will always be another one

and here at Stop 9 on lower South Road
I’m not waiting but wishing
for the bus to take me from this wind howl
take me to the city streets are wind tunnels
I see it in the distance the bus on the other side of the train line
five minutes it will take five minutes
for the intersection to clear traffic like crossfire
westbound cars spit out from underneath the overpass the light changes
trains pass cars their eyes bright disappear into the underpass
at last the 8.48 arrives at 8.53
the driver sneezes blows his nose
if waiting isn’t time and time isn’t waiting is waiting for no one
and time doesn’t evaporate like water
but like missed opportunities or 24 hours
until I get to Stop 9 again a lone figure in the wind
not waiting but wishing
It wouldn’t add up

As old as her tongue, not her teeth
Mother’s response to the question of age.

*Never* was never accepted.
*That’s a long time,* she’d say
*take six months off.*

Her warning to a sour face:
*If the clock strikes 12 now*
*your face will stay like that.*

Accident or not, a broken mirror
accrued seven years of misery

while *wait until your father comes home*
lengthened the day exponentially.

I was doomed to fail Math
with an education like that.
Daphne Milne lives in Fremantle, Western Australia. She writes poems, flash fiction, short stories and is currently working on a flash novella and a collection of poetry. Her work is published in print/on line in magazines and anthologies internationally. Her pamphlet The Blue Boob Club is published by Indigo Dreams [https://www.indigodreams.co.uk/daphne-milne/4594486684](https://www.indigodreams.co.uk/daphne-milne/4594486684). She is interviewed regularly on local radio, most recently at [https://fremantleshippingnews.com.au/2020/07/07/poets-paddock-daphne-milne/](https://fremantleshippingnews.com.au/2020/07/07/poets-paddock-daphne-milne/).
Magic

Time is longer after dark. At 3 a.m. before the sun has crawled over the horizon each minute stretches into ten. You can live a whole lifetime between 3 and 4 a.m.
Family album - Grange-over-Sands
Between the duckpond and the sea

Those ducks must be the descendants of the ones Grandmother knew, they look just like their forbears.

The faces in the photos look much the same, only the frocks differentiate four generations of women.

Photos change from sepia to black and white, through colour until the final digital image, the fifth generation wears shorts and teeshirts, clutches bags of breakfast crusts.

There’s a smell of rain, duckshit, the saltiness of rock pools, damp sand, decaying dogfish, gossiping gulls drown out the sound of passing trains, the incoming tide, a scent of damp pine trees overwhelms.

The engine driver waves at children on the promenade. They wave back. The past — another and a present country.
Time slips sideways

My grandsons know nothing of clock-springs or winders.
Hands curl beneath soft cheeks
Eyelids flicker like digital watches
They dream of dinosaurs
time rolled back a million years.

Half a world away I’m making lunch.
Time started here in 1788
brought from the Old World
to a world that’s older still
the continuum ignored
the dream time broken.
Maria North is a retired psychotherapist who was happy to move from London to Lincoln in 2017. She has always loved finding clarity in writing, whether creative, academic, or work-related. She has ventured into self-publishing, and has had a leaflet published with Poetry Kit.
Slowtime

Night stretches
beside someone else’s snores
Streetlight off at twelve,
sensor light on then off at one -
the fox again

Shall I swap the lampshades round
Why does that clock tick so loud
Why is it still only half past three, when

all that’s gone has gone
Fruitless,
these attempts to listen to the music
and keep time -

can’t beat it;
it has run away with me
even though tonight it hardly moves

One day
forever closer
it will run away without me
but not tonight -

tomorrow never comes
then does

The peaches are missing
from our Morrisons online order
We never get everything
Wrinkles in Time

Another Big Bang.
The millionth human race.
Father Time yawns,
upturns a creaking hourglass.

Same old flash floods and plagues,
famines, wars, ceaseless injustices.
A two-minute speck of silence, poppy-strewn,
a stolen twenty minutes as the gentlemen please
tilt heads and glasses to unnatural angles
to drain the last drops of the night.

He registers mild amusement
at the revelations of one Albert E.
Nothing is absolute, eh?
So he’s worked it out again.
About time.

But for Albert,
it is a source of wonder
to discover that time and space,
the fabric of the universe,
each atom, every sub-atomic particle,
yes, everything is relative.

He deduces
(though he cannot quite believe it)
that if he travels fast enough,
beyond the speed of light
there is a different kind of time –
he can arrive back where he started
before he has been.

(Cont)
Albert makes a call to the Mistresses of Infinite Possibility (the Masters, as usual, are otherwise engaged, watching Intergalactic Football and debating the state of nations at half-time). Humbly requests to undertake a journey round the curve of time and space to the farthest reaches of the universe and back. Piece of cake, they say. So off he goes.

And back he comes. It seems no time at all. Albert is perturbed to find his hair is no longer grey, and (unlike the fabric of space) he has no wrinkles. He fears he's going mad - which is not surprising: he hasn’t come up with his theory as yet.

Another war has broken out on Mars; Earth has the plague again.

A Great Grandmother clock chimes her stately hours as Father Time nods off over a glass of port.
STUART NUNN

Stuart Nunn is a retired college lecturer living in South Gloucestershire. He belongs to two poetry groups, beside the PK List, where he has lurked and contributed for several years. A poem of his is currently to be seen in South 62. He is secretary of the local athletics club and works as a starter, when the virus allows.
Belyaev’s foxes

Eyes flash yellow, teeth snarl and bite. He chooses the quiet vixen, puts her to the dog fox that’s merely sullen.

Generations pass up the evolutionary tree. He follows the chosen characteristic, recapitulating primitive hunter-gatherers.

Unlooked for, colour changes, fur stripes, ears flop, eyes turn winsome, lose the memory of snow on the taiga tails wag for approval. Heel, boy!
Grant van Wingerden is a poet and song lyricist from Wialki. He lives down among the tea trees and waterfalls of Hazelbrook in the Blue Mountains, west of Sydney. Grant is a long time member of the Poetry Kit and is glad to be back and active on the list.

**Just in Time**
I turned in time
I turned off taps
I learned a line
in tested traps

The current that passed overhead
the meaner words I might have said
The wiser ways to win the prize
the proper flex to exercise

The deeds I didn't as agreed
the mere nod to a near need
Consequent cancelling of consequence
an offering afforded to avoid offence

I dodged bull, let's say
hid my lid away
smothered smirks unqueried quirks
inner weigh whatever works

A split second
ready reckoned
time tested
I'm bested