SHANE MCCRAE

WHO RUNS

STILL IN MY

BLOOD

WHO CHASES?

WHOSE BLOOD

DARKENS WHERE

THEY MEET? WHO

FIGHTS STILL IN

MY HEART FOR WHAT?

HEX AND OTHER POEMS

Bad Betty Press is an independent publisher of new poetry, established in 2017. We love writing that's bad (meaning good) and beautiful (a Betty, in 90s slang). We believe strongly in art's capacity to challenge its own definition, to curve away from the norm, making space for more and varied voices.

Our books include: Poetry Book Society Pamphlet Choices, Poetry School Books of the Year, a Telegraph Poetry Book of the Month, Laurel Prize longlistees and BAMB Readers Award shortlistees. We've been twice shortlisted for the Michael Marks Publishers Award, named The Book Hive’s Indie Publisher of the Month, and described by The Big Issue as ‘the epitome of bold independence’.

This year, we received a historic grant from Arts Council England—their very first £30K Small Project Grant—which we’re using to publish 12 books of poetry by 12 exceptional writers, and to programme a UK-wide tour of live readings.

Our 2022 titles include full-length collections by two award-winning writers: Whatever You’ve Got, the third book from acclaimed poet, theatre-maker and screenwriter Molly Naylor (April), and Housebreak, the debut collection from Okinawan American poet, Shareen K. Murayama (July).

We’re proud to be publishing pamphlets by Helen Bowell, Eve Esfandiari-Denney, Christopher Lanyon, Shane McCrae, Jess Murray, Shanay Neusum-James, Anja Konig, Melissa Lee-Houghton, Kandace Siobhan Williams and Cai Draper—just that includes Costa and T.S. Eliot Prize shortlistees, and winners of the White Review Poets’ Prize, Ledbury Poetry Competition and more.

As always, we’re committed to publishing the most exciting, innovative work from new and established writers, honouring the diversity of contemporary poetry and poets, shining a light on stories less often told, and putting fresh and emboldening language into readers’ hands.
One Woman-Horse Show
JESS MURRAIN

28th June 2022, £6, PB, 978-1-913268-29-9

One Woman-Horse Show is the debut pamphlet by Ledbury Poetry Competition 2021 Winner, Jess Murrain. Murrain is a poet, actor and co-founder of Theatre with Legs, and a member of the Southbank Centre’s New Poets Collective. She won Silver Prize in the 2021 Creative Future Writers’ Award.

‘Poised and lyrical.’ Anthony Anaxagorou on Ledbury winning poem, ‘Evolution of a brother gone quiet’

Christopher Lanyon’s playful, topographical poems embody what it means to swell: in the rising and falling breath of landscape, in the joyous vulnerability of intense friendship and love, in the wake of the inexorable changes to which body and world are bound. This pamphlet takes a kaleidoscopic view of the material; full of flex and growth, feather and claw.

‘Raw, sharp and compelling, each poem in swell asks – where does it hurt?’ Ella Frears

The Barman
HELEN BOWELL

28th January 2022, £6, PB, 36pp, 978-1-913268-26-8

A witty exploration of the nuances of a sometimes reluctant codependency. At times it feels like you are the third housemate, pressing your ear to the wall to hear conversations as intimate as they are absurd. Bowell deftly interrogates what it means to feel both othered and adored, comfortable and wary.

‘A unique collection of poems so full of heart, humour and ache.’ Rachel Long

My Bodies This Morning This Evening
EVE ESFANDIARI-DENNEY

28th February 2022, £6, PB, 34pp, 978-1-913268-24-4

In Eve Esfandiari-Denney’s debut, we see the body in so many states—ranging from survival to affection—that it achieves a sense of the elusive. Like water, Esfandiari-Denney’s poems move and seep into the gaps that exist between ourselves and the languages that define us.

‘A remarkable, original, profound debut.’ Jack Underwood

Whatever You’ve Got
MOLLY NAYLOR

28th April 2022, £10, PB, 62pp, 978-1-913268-27-5

Whatever You’ve Got is the letter you wish you could send to your younger self. Naylor cuts to the quick of modern anxiety, of love and its many dilemmas, of trauma and recovery, with unfaltering insight and wit. Full of left-hook quips to make you laugh out loud, and joyful, anthemic rhythm.

‘Wise, painful, beautiful, redemptive.’ Nathan Filer

The new pamphlet from American poet Shane McCrae, whose books have won the 2018 Anisfield Wolf Book Award for Poetry and been finalists for the National Book Award, the Los Angeles Times Book Award and the William Carlos Williams Award. McCrae teaches at Columbia University.

‘Shane McCrae is writing the most urgent, electric poems of his generation.’ Garth Greenwell

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‘Shane McCrae is writing the most urgent, electric poems of his generation.’ Garth Greenwell
A JOKE.

SHELTER ON AN ISLAND 43 MILES WIDE.

I CONFESS: THERE'S NO DEFENSE FOR A BALLISTIC MISSILE.
IF POP PUNK IS ABOUT LEAVING, THEN ALL OF US LISTENING WERE TRYING TO ESCAPE THE SAME PLACE. THE TOWN OF THE BODY.
Reading Summer Young is like folding yourself into a deceptively miniature world, a cat’s eye view of a dystopian Wonderland. Here, the family home encompasses a complex ecosystem of cockroaches and fireflies, mice and sea urchins. Young invokes the visceral candor of Tracey Emin and Sarah Lucas, and confronts trauma with a fierce and virtuosic wit.

‘A haunted dollhouse of beautifully crafted humour and pain.’ Bobby Parker

And They Are Covered in Gold Light
AMY ACRE

25th July 2019, £6, PB, 36pp, 978-1-9997147-9-6

Amy Acre’s second pamphlet reaches both arms out to the wild of being woman, the blood of being mother, the tragedy of being human. From deep within the dark of these poems, there is resolve; there is love; there is light.

‘Fizzes with energy, physicality and the levitating openness of song.’ Rebecca Tamás

Rheuma
William Gee

30th July 2020, £6, PB, 28pp, 978-1-913268-10-7

William Gee’s breathtaking, disruptive debut is written in the language of the body. A song from somewhere deep within, Rheuma sings of what the body remembers, how it rebels. These are dizzying poems, opening up and obscuring, primal and elusive.

‘Gee’s poems are slow-burning and lit up immediately—you feel yourself waking up to what a poem can do.’ Wayne Holloway-Smith

Passerine
KIRSTEN LUCKINS

11th February 2021, £10, PB, 90pp, 978-1-913268-13-8

In Passerine, Kirsten Luckins’ epistolary poems distill the daily process of grieving, healing, remembering, through nature’s wild and atomic industry. Linguistically lush, tack-sharp and playful, Passerine captures both the contradictions of being in and of the world, and the rare honesty of a true and fierce friendship.

‘Elegy to a lost friend and a world disappearing around us—one of the most dazzling collections I’ve read in a long time.’ Claire Trévien

Animal Experiments
ANJA KONIG

3rd June 2020, £10, PB, 82pp, 978-1-913268-05-3

Anja Konig’s is a voice we need now more than ever. While the world ends around us daily, these pages offer a macro and micro view, in which we find ourselves both culpable and insignificant, and it is in this paradox that, perhaps, we might be redeemed.

‘The antidote we need to the interesting times in which we live.’ John Glenday

‘Wild and devastating emotional heft.’ Jacqueline Saphra

Sylvanian Family
SUMMER YOUNG

30th July 2020, £6, PB, 34pp, 978-1-913268-11-4

Reading Summer Young is like folding yourself into a deceptively miniature world, a cat’s eye view of a dystopian Wonderland. Here, the family home encompasses a complex ecosystem of cockroaches and fireflies, mice and sea urchins. Young invokes the visceral candor of Tracey Emin and Sarah Lucas, and confronts trauma with a fierce and virtuosic wit.

‘A haunted dollhouse of beautifully crafted humour and pain.’ Bobby Parker
SOMEWHERE BETWEEN WHERE I AM AND WHO I WAS, I DECIDE TO BE BOTH LOVED AND LOVER

24th March 2021, £6, PB, 32pp, 978-1-913268-14-5
Joshua Judson’s disarming debut inhabits canal-side twitchels and river-thrashed hills, visiting wards and the Co-op, ‘the town of the body’. Judson’s poetry is pop punk in all its fierce and fragile beauty, the honesty of a power chord, the way ‘an old old song can hit you exactly where you are and fill you with light’.

‘Pitch-perfect poems of youth.’
Andrew McMillan

The Book of Bad Betties
ed. VANESSA KISUULE, ANJA KONIG
22nd September 2021, £10, PB, 84pp, 978-1-913268-23-7
An anthology of new work by 25 poets, curated and introduced by Vanessa Kisuule and Anja Konig. These poems pay tribute to the women who’ve changed our lives, globally or personally: the fighters, survivors, rebels, queens, bosses, mentors, mothers, lovers and friends.

‘An essential addition to the contemporary literary canon.’ Joelle Taylor

Camp Fear
TOM BLAND
31st October 2021, £10, PB, 144pp, 978-1-913268-20-6
Verse novel, Camp Fear, invites the reader to explore the dark corners of the human psyche, challenging the boundaries of contemporary poetics, fusing poetry with satire, surrealism and psychoanalysis. If the id, ego and superego met at a fetish club, it would look something like this.

‘A rich contribution to transgressive literature.’
Golnoosh Nour

Gongoozler
JOSHUA JUDSON
12th September 2021, £6, PB, 32pp, 978-1-913268-14-5
Joshua Judson’s disarming debut inhabits canal-side twitchels and river-thrashed hills, visiting wards and the Co-op, ‘the town of the body’. Judson’s poetry is pop punk in all its fierce and fragile beauty, the honesty of a power chord, the way ‘an old old song can hit you exactly where you are and fill you with light’.

‘Pitch-perfect poems of youth.’
Andrew McMillan
In **Spell for Melting Ice** by Kate B Hall, a life is given a shake and the reader is caught in the blizzard, feeling wonder and disequilibrium. Hall’s poems cast light on the troubling and joyful, blending myth and reality to forge a reckoning.

“These poetry spells are sparse and fierce, they make compelling reading.” — Pauline Sewards

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**The Opposite of an Exodus**

In **The Opposite of an Exodus** by Amara Amaryah, Niroshini’s poems intersect beauty, history and violence, evokingColonial and gender-based trauma. We find ourselves on a rooftop in Colombo, in Neruda’s latrine, in the waters of the Indian Ocean, and on the battlefield with Kali, imagined as a mother in conversation with her daughter. His poems are a ‘backward walk’ towards oneself and one’s history. A mother and daughter sit down together as children. Second-generation kids “choose language the way a carpenter chooses tools.” Archival in various forms, these poems hold dialogue with bell hooks, Jamaica Kincaid and Ntozake Shange.

“Rich with delicately myriad portraits of black girlhood and womanhood.” — Victoria Adukwei Bulley
I WANT THE STORY OF YOUR LANGUISHING, YOUR VOICE IN THE AIR, YOUR GASPS IN THE DARK.

Whatever you've got
BACKLIST

No Weakeners
TIM WELLS
SOLD OUT

The Body You're In
PHOEBE WAGNER
SOLD OUT

In My Arms
SETAREH EBRAHIMI
SOLD OUT

Unremember
JOEL AUTERSON
SOLD OUT

Solomon's World
JAKE WILD HALL
SOLD OUT

The Story Is
KATE B HALL
SOLD OUT

Field Notes on Survival
ed. Amy Acre, Jake Wild Hall
22/09/20, £10, PB, 128pp
978-1-913268-12-1

Alter Egos
ed. Amy Acre, Jake Wild Hall
03/09/19, £10, PB, 92pp
978-1-913268-02-2

A Terrible Thing
Gita Raleigh
22/10/20, £8, PB, 52pp
978-1-913268-09-1

bloodthirsty for marriage
Susanra Dickie
09/03/20, £6, PB, 36pp
978-1-913268-07-7

At the Speed of Dark
Gabriel Àkámọ́
02/05/20, £6, PB, 36pp
978-1-913268-03-9

War Dove
Troy Cabida
02/05/20, £6, PB, 32pp
978-1-913268-08-4

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Gita Raleigh
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The Story Is
KATE B HALL
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24/04/19, £6, PB, 28pp
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Anne Gill
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978-1-9997147-7-2

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28/11/18, £6, PB, 50pp
978-1-9997147-5-8

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Tom Bland
28/11/18, £6, PB, 50pp
978-1-9997147-5-8
THE EPITOME OF BOLD INDEPENDENCE, BAD BETTY PUBLISHES BOOKS OF A RARE BREED.

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