



The year's best poetry for children: the CLiPPA shortlist 2020

By *AndreaMReece*

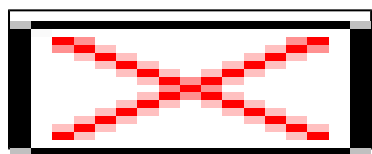
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[Poetry Special](#) [1]

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The **CLPE Poetry Award** shortlist 2020

This year, **National Poetry Day** and the announcement of the shortlist for the **CLiPPA (Centre for Literacy in Primary Poetry Education Poetry Award)** coincided. Established in 2003, the **CLiPPA** is the UK's only award for published poetry for children and has done huge amounts to champion children's poetry. Previous winners include Steven Camden, [Karl Nova](#) [2], Kate Wakeling, [Joseph Coelho](#) [3], Michael Rosen, [Rachel Rooney](#) [4] and [Sarah Crossan](#) [5].



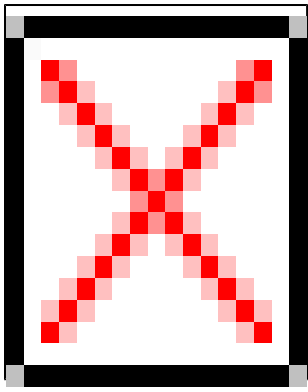
This year's shortlist reflects the extraordinary vitality of the UK's poetry publishing for children in 2020. There are two books by the Emma Press, one from fellow independent Troika Books, one from Bloomsbury and a beautifully illustrated collection from Walker Books. The shortlist will be celebrated at a special [Poetry Show](#) [6] coming live from the **Cheltenham Literature Festival** on Friday 9 October and open to all schools. Hear five poets perform from the shortlisted collections, watch author and illustrator **Chris Riddell** draw along and find out who has won the 2020 award, live! There will be news about how schools can be involved in the **CLiPPA Shadowing Scheme** too.

This year the judges are poets **Valerie Bloom** and [Steven Camden](#) [7], winner of the **CLiPPA** 2019, alongside **Tracey Guiry**, director of the **Poetry Archive** and **Charlotte Hacking**, Central Learning Programmes Leader at [CLPE](#) [8].

The judging appears to have been an enjoyable experience. **Steven Camden**, poet, winner of the **2019 CLiPPA** commented: 'I was pretty nervous going into the judging meeting because I felt really strongly about my choices. My favourites on the list really affected me and I was apprehensive about fighting their corner with people I didn't really know. Within five minutes it was clear that those books that touched me had touched the other judges just as strongly and what followed was a gorgeous celebratory conversation of some truly stunning creations. What a treat and privilege.'

Here's a look at the five books on this year's shortlist.

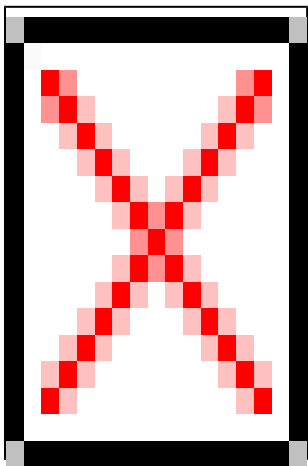
Midnight Feasts. Tasty Poems chosen by **A.F. Harrold**, illustrated by Katy Riddell, Bloomsbury



Food is the one thing that unites us all - across time, nations and peoples. From chocolate, rice pudding and sandwiches to breakfast in bed, marmalade in the bath and the fruit of a mythical jelabi tree, in **Midnight Feasts** A.F. Harrold brings together a wonderful and diverse collection of poems to tickle your taste buds. Poets include Ian McMillan, Brian Patten, Choman Hardi, Imtiaz Dharker, William Carlos Williams, Salena Godden, Joseph Coelho, Sabrina Mahfouz, Lewis Carroll, W.S. Gilbert and A.E. Housman, as well as A.F. Harrold himself.

The CLiPPA judges say this is a delicious and quirky collection of poems, skilfully curated and perfectly paced. They loved loved the voice too and found the pictures are a perfect fit. ?It felt like being woken up at night, and being allowed to stay up ? a treat!?

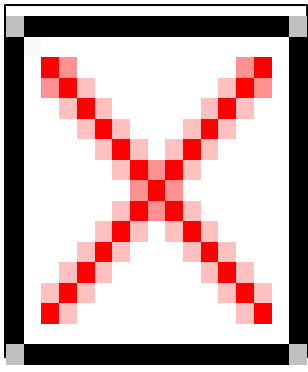
Poems the Wind Blew In, **Karmelo C. Iribarren**, illustrated by Riya Chowdhury, translated from Spanish by Lawrence Schimel, The Emma Press.



These poems reveal the magic in small, everyday things: a plastic bag dreams of becoming a cloud, raindrops go on holiday to the sea, and hats fill up with thoughts. The book builds an immersive, tender world and encourages the reader to look at the world around them with delight and wonder. **Poems the Wind Blew In** won an **English PEN Writers in Translation Award**.

The judges said that this is a book to carry around with you, proof that poetry is ideas, thoughts and emotions captured in words. They liked the space given to the poems and the contrasts ? the way there?s something sad next to a moment of lightness. @It shows that poetry doesn?t always have to be melancholy, it can just catch a slice of life.?

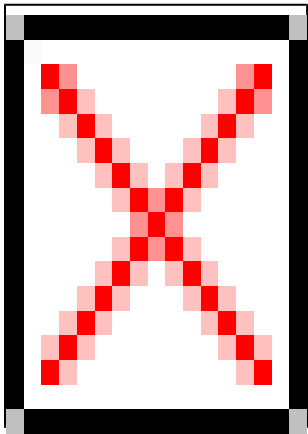
The Proper Way to Meet a Hedgehog and Other How-To Poems, compiled by **Paul B. Janeczko**, illustrated by Richard Jones, Walker Books.



From the practical (how to mix a pancake or how to bird-watch) to the fanciful (how to scare monsters or how to be a snowflake), the poems share a sense of joy. Poets featured range from Kwame Alexander to Pat Mora to Allan Wolf. Soft, evocative illustrations will encourage readers to look at the world with an eye to its countless possibilities.

The judges found this a wonderfully varied collection of poems that will speak directly to young children, full of beautiful examples of the craft of poetry. They loved the conversational tone, its variety and child-centredness. ?It felt like meeting friends.?

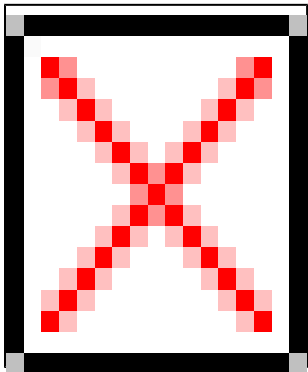
Wain. LGBT Reimaginings of Scottish Folklore, Rachel Plummer, illustrated by Helene Boppert, The Emma Press.



Wain is a collection of LGBT themed poetry for teens based on retellings of Scottish myths. The collection contains stories about kelpies, selkies, and the Loch Ness Monster, alongside perhaps lesser-known mythical people and creatures, such as wulvers, Ghillie Dhu, and the Cat Sìth. These poems immerse readers in an enriching, diverse and enchanting vision of contemporary life.

The judges found the voice fresh and admired its take on something that could have felt archaic but is made to feel new. They commented too on the music of the collection and the linked journey of the poems. ?This inspired us to find out more about Scottish folklore.?

Cherry Moon, Zaro Weil, illustrated by Junli Song, ZaZaKids Books/ Troika Books.



This poetry collection captures eye-popping moments, tender observations and whimsical reflections on the sheer joy of

the natural world. It poses big questions about life with poems and other small gatherings of words; encouraging children of every age to explore the power, enchantment and sheer wonderfulness of nature.

The judges found it meditative and beautifully paced. They very much like the way Zoro Weil presents snapshots of the natural world and her use of form. ?This is lovely to revisit and read again.?

Find out more about the [CLIPPA](#) [9]

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