

Ben Ray, poet & reviewer

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Published full collections:

- The Kindness of the (*The Poetry Business, 2020*)
- What I heard on the Last Cassette Player in the World (*Indigo Dreams Publishing, 2019*)
- After the Poet, the Bar (*Indigo Dreams Publishing, 2016*)

Published in the following anthologies:

- Pembrokeshire (*Seren Books, 2019*)
- The Borders (*Seren Books, 2019*)
- For the Silent: an anthology in aid of the League Against Cruel Sports (*Indigo Dreams Publishing, 2019*)
- V10 (*Gloucester Poetry Society, 2019*)

Poetry published in the following journals:

Algebra of Owls, Ash, Bath Magg, Bonnie's Crew, Catweazle, Clear Poetry, Confluence, Door is a Jar, Eunoia Review, Foxtrot Uniform, The Hedge, The Kindling, Milk + Beans, Moonchild Magazine, The North, Riggwelter Press, Vamp Cat, Words for the Wild (*all work appeared in editions published between 2016 – 2020*)

Reviews published in the following journals:

- Poetry Wales (*2020*)
- The North (*2020*)
- Review 31 (*2020*)

Competitions:

- The Poetry Business 2020 New Poets Prize (*awarded first place*)
- Longlisted as 128 out of 14,000 for the 2019 National Poetry Prize
- 'There Is No Plan B' Stafford Green Arts Festival poetry competition, with the work published in an anthology (*awarded third place, 2019*)
- The Binsted Prize Poetry Competition (*highly commended, 2019*)
- The Torbay Open Poetry Competition, with work displayed at the Torbay Poetry Festival (*'highly commended', 2018*)
- The Yaffle Prize (*longlisted, 2019*)
- The Martin Starkie Poetry Prize (*shortlisted, 2017*)
- The Geoff Stevens Memorial Poetry Prize (*2015*)

Workshop, performance & residency experience:

- Performed at the following festivals: Gloucester Poetry Festival (*2020 & 2019*), Ledbury Poetry Festival (*2019 & 2011*), Mitcheldean Poetry Festival (*2019 & 2018*), Cheltenham Poetry Festival (*2020 & 2018*), Coleford Literary Festival (*2018*), Fleet, Dumfries & Galloway BigLit Festival (*2017*), Bristol Poetry Festival (*2016*)
- Planned, organised and run poetry workshops at 'Interpreting oral history as poetry' as part of the Our Living Levels Project, Gloucester Poetry Festival, and Cheltenham Poetry Festival (*2019 & 2020*), as well as having

organised & ran poetry workshops & discussion groups for young people at schools such as at Wynstones, a Steiner Waldorf School (2018), and at Hereford Sixth Form College (2018)

- Work commissioned by the EU Commission, part of the European Union institutions (2020)
- Performance at the 2020 Saboteur Awards
- Testimonials commissioned for collections by Anna Saunders and Z.K. Dicks
- Presented the academic paper 'Writing ourselves into the earth: poetry and its role in understanding and tackling the climate crisis' at the World Youth Forum: Right To Dialogue (paper published in the Forum journal) in Trieste, Italy (2019)
- Performed a solo poetry show at the Edinburgh Festival Fringe for two weeks (2019 & 2017)
- Hosted and taken part in various poetry evenings & events in spaces across the UK such as theatres, public libraries, village halls, charity events & elsewhere (*see website for details*)
- Performed alongside the poet laureates of England, Scotland & Wales at the 'Shore to Shore' Pan Macmillan event in Monmouth (2017)
- Ran one-to-one poetry mentoring sessions with fellow poets (2018 – onwards)
- Hosted a Poetry Group for the town of Ross on Wye, meeting monthly to read, discuss and respond to a specific publication (2017 – onwards)
- Artist in residence with the month-long Seven Voices Project at Oxford University (2017)
- Artist in residence of the county of Herefordshire, as Herefordshire Young Poet Laureate (2011-2013)

Skills:

- Collaboration with others
- Workshopping & discussion
- Expression of space & identity
- Writing within deadlines & given parameters
- Performance & sharing work

Testimonials:

- Ben Ray's new poems have the gleam and muscle of the river fish he writes about with such feeling. They are story-telling, risk-taking and exact in all the right ways. – *Professor Fiona Sampson MBE FRSL*
- A fresh and original poetic voice – full of wit, twists, surprises, echoes and challenges. – *Alan Rusbridger, author, journalist & former editor-in-chief of The Guardian newspaper*
- These poems reveal a canny understanding of life and language – and the landscapes that give rise to them, from northern no-man's-lands to the circuitous path of the Pacific island exile. In his engaging first collection, Ben Ray has built a fascinating 'future library of shades' which will haunt the reader long after the book has closed. – *Nancy Campbell, 2018 Canal Poet Laureate*
- 'What I heard on the Last Cassette Player in the World' is a raw and intimate collection that moves with tenderness and humour through politics and war, land and love. Ben Ray has a unique ability to look at the complexities of the human experience with precision and distance, intimacy and removal, creating something that seems to both expand and enclose the human heart. – *Rebecca Tantony, poet, author & performer*

(Please find further testimonials from writers, teachers & the public on my website)

Other literary work:

- Articles and interviews on European affairs in EU specific journals (2019 & 2020)
- A theatre script, 'Valuables', performed by a student cast in an Oxford theatre (2017)
- Deputy Editor & journalist at The Cherwell, Oxford's city-wide newspaper (2014 – 2017)

**For further information on my work, including testimonials, images & videos, please go to Ben's website:
www.benray.co.uk**