

1. Winning Entry – Llinos Anwyl: ‘Interference’

27, Aberystwyth, Wales

* “*y môr*” means ‘the sea’ in the poet’s first language, Cymraeg (Welsh).

Interference

We were taught the sea

at a distance.

A diagram.

Arrows crossing static shores

without drag.

At home

it arrived as sound.

Stone taking water.

Wind testing what stayed.

Sand where it shouldn’t be,

inside sandwiches and shorts.

In a fishing village

mackerel came easily -

a limpet

prised from the rock,

a line dropped

where the sound changed.

It felt ordinary.

Which is how nothing ever starts.

Listening mattered.

Not insight,

attention.

The weather shifted

before it arrived.

My father crossed oceans.

For him, sound instructed:

engine pitch,

hull under load,

the note that said

something would give.

Distance taught him.

Nearness taught me nothing.

I lived beside y môr.

Close enough

to stop hearing it

That was not innocence.

It was a condition.

There came a time

when the background failed.

Interference.

Occupied sound.

Nothing surfacing.

Pressure repeating itself.

Nothing clearing.

No accident.

The sea is named now

in reports.

Operational.

A word rinsed clean.

Routes imposed.

Metal enduring.

Margins accepted.

Older patterns

withdraw

without ceremony.

This is how futures arrive.

Not imagined,

not announced;

authorised.

Living beside y môr

now means listening

without consolation.

What continues.

What remains

after we have moved on.

2. Rosie Green

20, Coventry, UK, @greenhouse_illustrations

Cannot sleep tonight,
Bitter as the breeze
wrapped in clingfilm
in a plastic box
desperately seeking a way out,
ignoring my instinct calls
But in the end they win.
Because I am a piece of nature,
Belonging to the Earth
longing to let it consume me,
to feel the breeze through my skin,
to feel the ripples on my fingertips
as I once did
to blow oxygen onto the dying fire
before it is blown out
by this plastic house
in this plastic world
I am fighting
A battle of will and want
of nature and human destruction
A battle I didn't ask to fight
But was born to win



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3. Anna Cooper: 'Again and Again'

25, Wiltshire, UK, @naturewithanna

Again and Again

I often visit the ocean to find the peace I've desired, its wondrous vastness leaves me inspired.

From finding beautiful shells along the shore, to paddleboarding the waters I love to explore.

The serene calmness of the ocean, both blue and grey, gently persuades me to prolong my stay.

It clears my thoughts and washes worries away, revealing hidden new worlds day after day.

Seagrass dances along carefree with the tide, I linger for hours, my heart full of pride.

The ocean reminds me of my family and home, its endless horizon inviting me to roam.

It brings back days of being young and wild, how I long for a moment to sit with that child.

I wish others could find a sanctuary here too, the magic the ocean shares with only a few.

Even when travelling great distances from here, I know I'll find comfort whenever it's near.

Because the ocean remains beloved to me, a good old friend I'm always reassured to see.

A magnetic pull draws me back again and again, like to the moon to the tide, again and again.

4. Mia Snyder: 'What Survives Us'

21, Maryland, USA

What Survives Us

I grew up with the Chesapeake Bay

just down the road,

a gift I didn't know how to name at first.

Fishing lines cutting the morning stillness,

hands smelling of salt and bait,

learning early that water can hold stories.

The feelings were never clear-

like the Bay itself,

its bottom hidden by years of recreation,

by harvest stacked on harvest,

by the weight of us living beside it.

This water once fed thousands,

carried livelihoods in its tides,

and somehow, even now,

it holds its head high.

It keeps breathing, keeps giving,

even after everything it has taken on.

Not everyone grows up knowing the ocean this way.

Not everyone meets it daily

or builds a relationship with it over time.

Maybe if more of us did,

we'd treat it less like a distant place



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and more like something personal.

Maybe connection would slow our hands,
make pollution feel less disposable.

The ocean brings life into our bays and marinas-
fills nets, fuels recreation,
keeps fisheries and coastal towns alive.

We tell ourselves we are separate from it,
but we can't disconnect from
what sustains us,
even if we can't always see it.

That invisibility is where harm hides.

Plastics breaking down into fragments,
chemicals dissolving quietly,
moving through water, through flesh.

Out of sight has never meant out of reach.

I saw this truth carried into conference rooms.
I attended INC 5.2,
meant to be the culmination
of a global plastics treaty-
a moment to choose unity
over convenience.

And still, nations could not set aside differences
over a pollutant so pervasive
it has entered not only the ocean,
but our bodies,
our blood,



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our hearts.

There is hope- I know that too.

The BBNJ Treaty has been embraced

by many nations,

a promise to protect life

in the waters beyond borders.

It is a meaningful step forward.

But protection alone is not enough

if we refuse to stop what causes the harm.

You cannot save biodiversity

while feeding it poison.

You cannot heal the ocean

without changing ourselves.

A thriving ocean would be clearer, louder, alive-

strong enough to hold future generations

without carrying our waste.

If I were granted the power to decide,

I would choose courage over delay,

accountability over profit,

and policies that remember

the ocean is not endless.

The Bay raised me.

The ocean shaped me.

And if we are willing to face ourselves,

it can still survive us.



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5. Liliana Tarrant Snedden: 'Tide of Action'

24, Pembrokeshire, Wales, @liliana.rts

Tide of Action

Desolate, ravenous, bleached and raw

Silent reef, shadows of long gone shoals.

A diversity of plastic, a mockery of the breadth of life lost.

She rages with me,

Storm surges swell with tears,

The waves of pounding heartbreak against the cliffs of my chest.

But I am of Silurian stone, wild Celtic waves and Chough joy,

Galvanised by submersion in the powerful grasp of Her winter cold.

And this future of fear shall not rip me away on the tide.

Instead a light,

A ray of hope reaching towards those unknown depths of deep cave black.

Action - decisive, rapid and true,

To save ourselves, and that fast expanse of blue.

From boardroom to beach, from horizon to shore,

The rights She deserves, reciprocity long overdue.

Protection - unerodable, steadfast and strong,

Reigniting that orchestral great Sea song.

Rockpools refill with myriad delights,

Waters again vibrant with rejuvenated life.

From moon-silver sandeels feeding seabirds aplenty,

To bustling shoals supporting cetaceans in frenzy.

Polluted murk clears, to forgotten sacred crystal,



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Communities crescendo harmonising with Her symphony.

For all flowed together, restoring the cornucopia of life,

Shifting time's sands before further unrecoverable strife.

Let Sea fill your soul, salt air soothe your lungs,

Rise with me, to Her powerful anthem of solace,

Uniting in action - an unstoppable motion,

For time is running out, for our life-giver, our Ocean.

6. Chris Anane Konadu

26, Ghana, West Africa

If the ocean could speak,

it would not whisper

it would remember.

It would tell stories of nets once light,

now heavy with plastic promises,

of mangroves cut short before they learned

how to hold the land together.

I come from a place where the sea feeds families,

where dawn smells of salt and effort,

where children learn tides

before they learn time.

A thriving ocean, to me,

sounds like waves uninterrupted by engines,

looks like fish returning without fear,

feels like justice

quiet, fair, and enduring.

My “emoceans” are mixed:

gratitude for what the blue gives freely,

anger for how carelessly it is taken,

hope that repair is still possible.

If I held the pen of policy today,

I would listen first to coastal youth,

to women fishers, to the communities



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standing knee-deep in rising water.

I would protect mangroves like archives,
enforce laws like promises kept,
and treat the ocean not as a resource,
but as a relative.

Because the sea does not ask for much
only that we remember
we belong to it
as much as it belongs to us.

7. Awad-Umar Jallo-Jamboria: 'The Descent'

24, Greater London, UK, @jallojamborius

The Descent

The sea bears heaven's borrowed blue,
A thinned reflection we mistook for true.

We praised the surface despite the loss,
Trusted the shine, ignored the cost.

We tarnish the water again and again,
Such is the way of rule by men.

No path ahead—profit soils the main,
Sacred currents slosh, sullied, stained.

They dredge the seabed bare for gain,
Strip life to figures, charts, and chains.

We traded stars for littered light,
A growing heap that tames our sight.

And they tarnish the water again and again—
Yet small and sharp, there sings the wren.

These wounds we carve, the pressure we breed,
Drown out the grace that we need.

Our backwash is not retreat, but force,
A turning storm with no remorse.

We tarnish the water again and again—
The maelstrom is us. We descend.



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8. Kizzy Dewar: 'It cannot be replaced'

20, Greater Manchester, UK, @its_a_kizzy_thing_

It cannot be replaced

she lost an emerald earring

(while pretending to be a seal)

diving in and out

looking for a

shrimp

crab

lobster

alive

they were all but gone

9. Anonymous

I hear the ocean roar,
Fins and mask in hand,
Standing by the shore,
Ready to dive to its deepest end.

I hear the ocean roar,
Its sound resonating through my soul,
Music I cannot ignore,
Promises of mysteries untold.

I hear the ocean roar,
Crashing waves vibrating in my heart,
Drawn to the underworld beauty I adore,
A mesmerizing work of ocean art.

I hear the ocean roar,
Echoes of whale songs lingering within,
Drifting gently from the shore,
A feeling as boundless as the sea.

I hear the ocean roar,
Below the surface I feel drawn,
To its beauty, to its core,
But then I frown.

I hear the ocean roar,
I thought of its strength and resilience,
But this roar, was it truly a roar?



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Beneath the waves, I saw sadness and defiance,

Its beauty now lost, nowhere to be sought.

I hear the ocean roar,

But is it now a whisper,

My heart ache to what I saw,

What have we done to this ocean of wonder?

I hear the ocean roar,

No longer fearless, no longer free,

And I refuse to ignore it anymore,

I will listen to what it asks of me.

I hear the ocean roar,

Don't you hear it too?

Resonating deep within your core,

There is a chance for change. I believe it's true.

10. Jess Gynfeld

26, London, UK, @jessgpoetry

Let it be rough

an untamed rolling roiling rush

grey against the sky.

Let it be smooth

spread like satin, sun-sparkling

inviting you in.

Let it be loud

a gull's full-throated screech

let it speak full throttle

no bottle cap, no six-pack ring choking it back.

Let it digest

no stomach-sat plastic bags

spreading starvation.

Let it surprise you

with living ancients, coelacanths

tube worms thriving in the dark

and sponges sneezing.

Let it remind you

of holding your Mum's hand

following the tide out in your jelly shoes

writing messages to mermaids in the sand.

Let us be small.

Let our footprints wash away.



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Leave our drop of days to the waves
bobbing on a blue planet.