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# Poems of Ireland 2016

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Original works by Tarbert Comprehensive  
School Transition Year Students March 2016



Coordinated and produced by

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*Mary Lavery Carrig*

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# Introduction

*Mary Lavery Carrig*

While attending the Bantry Arts Festival during the summer of 2015, I met Claire O'Mahony. Claire spoke about her desire to draw young people into the process of commemorating 1916 through poetry. I found that a fascinating idea because so many of the men and women who were part of the revolutionary movement that led to the 1916 rising were in fact artists, dramatists, and poets. Timetabled with Transition Year for SPHE for the academic year 2015/2016, I thought it would be good to encourage them to write their own poems in response to the centenary year and present those same poems at a specially convened event. With the excellent assistance of Claire O'Mahony, the students began to compose their own work. On February 23rd, we travelled to the Tralee Library. The staff there had prepared a venue which allowed members of the public to attend, and invited guests. Those students who had completed their poems, and were present on the day, performed at the podium and microphone. The students were a credit to the school and to themselves. What follows are those same poems, here in print, as recited by each student on that special day. Enjoy!



# Fly

*Lara Ausborn*

It's difficult leaving the place  
I love the best,  
Unwilling young swallows  
Still fledge their nest,  
Outside to this world  
That's both dangerous and new  
I make this brave journey  
And the swallow must too.

# Time for change

*Aimee Austin*

5000 homeless

100,000 empty homes

People thrown out on the street

Why do we feel so alone?

250 emigrate

Every single ay

How on earth did it go so wrong,

That nobody wants to stay?

Our work force is adaptable

At least that's what they say

But now we've adapted to hardship

And that's really not the way.

We're leaving the next generation

With a country worse for wear

It's only going to continue

Unless we start to care

Our little country needs not fear

The threats of war and fuss

The only threat our island faces

Is us.

# I Will Not Live in A World

## *Alannah Brent*

I will not live in a world  
where I feel my education deems  
me stupid because I'm better with a  
paintbrush than I am with a calculator.

I will not live in a world  
Where a man can walk down the street at  
two in the morning and know that he's safer than  
the woman walking 20 metres behind.

I will not live in a world  
where I feel judged to talk about my mental health.  
Just because you can't hear the voice saying "Cut",  
doesn't mean it's not there

I will not live in a world  
where even though it's my future and  
my choices, it's all still being  
decided for me.

I will not live in a world  
that still hungers for so much change,  
but is not being fed.

So I will rise. I will be the change. I will be the voice.  
I am my future; but so are you.  
So, will you stand with me? And fight for the future  
we may lose?

# Apparently

*Molly Cluney*

Apparently

You are not

I am not

He is not

She is not

They are not

We are not -

racist

Yet,

Who is it then,

that mocks

that boy

that girl

because

their skin is black?

Yes, yes , yes -

I, you, he and she

All of us, they and we...

we all want

equality

but who wants it enough

to stand up in 2016.

# Leaving Home

*Aisling Culhane*

1/2

It says

Loud and clear

A whole new nation

Shall cherish all the children

Of that nation equally

Did it?

Does it?

Will it?

Please, please

Don't go

Don't go away they say

In my reply – "I will be back another day"

Now, away

I yearn, alone

I don't want to use a phone

I simply want to be back home

Many days

And months

And years have all flown by, so, so fast

A decade has passed and I am coming home

At last, at last

I am coming home

With my children, with my spouse

We are planning, planning, planning to build our house

Ireland is my home

Ireland will be my home

Ireland, our new home, 2016

# Like Stacking Cards

*Cian Culhane*

Like stacking cards  
2016  
Ireland  
comes tumbling down  
when the young  
men and women  
pour out on  
the ferries and planes  
bound for continents  
far from Eireann's Isle.  
It's a choice they have to make.  
We'll be the same.  
You.....and I .....

Or will we?  
Is it too late?  
Leaving home, leaving Ireland –  
It's hard to take.  
Words and poems won't  
Make a difference.  
Or will they?  
What do you say?

# What Did They Want?

*Megan Farrell*

What did they want?

One hundred years ago

In a different world,

What did they want?

They were passionate for freedom, for their rights,

What do I want?

What do we want today?

Is it good internet connections?

What if the bullies everywhere,

Even popular, some voted into power!

Yet people are abandoned

In their hour of need.

This world, our world,

Goes at speed.

I want happiness

Where people can find cures,

Where those abroad

Come homeward bound

My world, your world, our world

Needs to change,

To end human suffering

Let's begin to change,

In Ireland, 2016, at home.

# Wishing for Ireland

*Nicole Fitzgerald*

I wish Ireland 2016  
Made me feel  
So safe -  
So safe as I feel  
Inside my family's world.

My family gives me love,  
Warmth and happiness,  
I never feel alone.

On the doorstep  
At the crack of dawn,  
I am leaving but  
to know I shall return  
To where my heart  
feels safe,  
At home.

With my siblings, talking  
About the days ahead,  
Feeling wanted, feeling safe.

So that's what I want  
For Ireland  
For young Irish everywhere  
To feel wanted, to feel safe  
In the modern Ireland, right there

# Time to Leave

*Caitriona Fitzmaurice*

It's time to leave I hate to go  
I'll miss my friends I'll miss my home  
I hate to leave all on my own  
And as I stand in the back door for the final time  
Memories rush to my mind  
Of people and places I'll never forget  
Of good times and bad I have no regrets.

# Leaving Home

*Patrice Galvin*

Through  
The hallway  
Of Ireland,  
I reach the end  
Of the green corridor  
And close the door  
Behind me  
I am leaving home  
Birds whistling in the trees.

Good times are stored  
Inside my heart  
But it is time to go  
Ireland 2016,  
No room at the inn-  
As the country's youth leave  
Ireland is losing-  
Losing the energies-  
That young people bring.

# Gunned Down 1916

*Anthony Hanlon*

We recall

1916

Unforgettable scenes

Gunned, gutted, dead

Bruised and battered bodies

Lie bare in streets of blood

Now

In 2016

These men and women lie

In their graves

Their ideals engraved

These brave soldiers fell

But a new country arose,

Arose to become Free

A Free nation

The pride of future generations

Your generation and mine.

Yes My generation My pride My life my future My world

# Is it 2016?

*Grainne Heaphy*

Is it 2016?  
Was it always a problem  
Money and jobs  
Jobs and money  
Irish people  
All over the globe  
Explore  
Forced in recent years  
Or has it always been?  
To say goodbye  
Our last goodbyes  
Tears well up  
Fill my eyes  
I'd always imagined  
Spending all my days  
Here, right here, at home  
But I fear it's a fantasy now  
The Irish state has made it clear  
I'm bound to leave

# Will I Return?

*Aoife Lynch*

I glance back  
One last time  
My mother  
Holds herself  
Together  
I know she  
Hopes  
Like me  
That I  
Will not be  
Gone forever  
The door shuts  
The wind howls  
Who is lonesome?  
Who is abandoned?  
Who are memories?  
Promises I make  
I will return  
I will revive, relive  
Happy happy days  
I move to far away fields  
Greener, deeper in my empty heart  
I know what is sweeter, dearer and it's the  
Green green grass of home  
So don't drive us out, Don't drive us out

# Work

*Ciara Mahoney*

Work, work, work,

So hard to find it

When you get it

You gotta mind it

Ireland 2016

Work is thin on the ground

Maybe I won't stick around

For the dole queues

Because I have my dreams

and my schemes

so goodbye Ireland

I am leaving

Yes leaving

I'm finding a job

I'm heading abroad

Yes, travelling alone

out into the vast

open spaces beyond Ireland's shore.

2016? What a bore!

# Be Careful

*Stephen Martin*

Shut the door  
On one another  
Is that what they  
Dreamt we would do?  
Those rebel hearts  
Those visionaries  
Of 19 and 16  
All said goodbye  
Too.  
Goodbye to life  
To love to joy.  
There are parents  
Everywhere  
'Be careful' they call  
To every girl, every boy  
So be careful in 2016  
Not everything is..... As it seems

# Careers in Ireland

*Hannah Meyler*

How come if I'm bad at music or drawing  
I'm told it's okay, it's not my calling  
But if I'm bad at science and math  
I'm told it's easy and I'm daft  
We're told to choose a career at such a young age  
Around the same time we're going through an awkward stage  
And for those who are not sure?  
Mayhem-panic-struggle-strife  
Choosing subjects crazily  
A passionless career looms  
In the gloom ahead  
We'll end up bored and tired  
We have bills to pay  
Responsibilities..trapped  
And so then we can't get fired  
Can't afford to risk happiness  
So we stay  
Until our youth  
just drains  
drains, drains, drains  
away

# Rebellion

*Micheál Moriarty*

Rebellion, freedom,  
The right to control,  
To control ourselves.  
No more dictators from the U.K.  
This is our way.

Rebellion, freedom,  
That's what I say,  
Values I admire,  
Values I desire,  
With my heart and head on fire.

Rebellion, freedom,  
2016.  
Politicians, taxes, property tax, water tax, car tax, poor roads, pot holes.  
What's going on?  
What's gone wrong?

Is this the Ireland they dreamed of?  
What do you think?

# Ireland's Goodbye

*Roisin Noonan*

Leaving the cat,  
Leaving the dog,  
Leaving the heat  
And the smells of home.

I open the door,  
I walk out.  
The door bangs.

Ireland bangs the door.  
Ireland bangs the door  
Shut, on me.

Everything blurs to memory,  
A mother aging,  
Is it 85?  
Alone, alone  
Alone in her chair.

Still I feel the  
Green Irish fields,  
Her rivers, her streams  
..... In my dreams.

# Change

*Aisling O'Carroll*

Our language is dying  
Our people are too  
We have to make a change,  
It's all up to you

Death from not caring,  
In any way  
We see these atrocities  
Every day  
From homelessness to unemployment  
There is misfortune all around  
But instead of helping and making a change  
All we do is sit around

So it's up to us  
To you and to me  
I hope 2016 will see changes  
Let's wait and let's see

# Calm Down

*Eileen O'Connor*

1/3

I am an egalitarian  
I know, big word, Right?  
It means I believe in equality for all  
democracy, freedom, and justice  
But we're here to talk about Ireland,  
so let's get real

I've been discriminated against;  
I've been stereotyped;  
I've seen discrimination;  
I've seen belittlement, prejudice and injustice

"But they were only messing;  
they weren't serious. Calm Down!"

I'm here to say  
Who says it's your business to judge?  
People should love who they want to love,  
Pray to whatever God they want to pray to,  
and laugh with whoever makes them smile,  
without being called queer, towel head, or loser

"But they were only messing;  
they weren't serious. Calm Down!"

We are all born equal, and human, but different.  
Skin colour, accents, nationalities, and languages

They're all decided for us,  
before we decide who we are.

But I don't understand  
how one person could judge another  
because they aren't what you want them to be

I won't hear it!

I won't hear the mocking  
when you don't pronounce your word the same as me

I won't hear the racial slurs  
when the funniest word to call your coloured friend is nigger

I won't hear the remarks  
when he says, "She's a girl; she can't do that!"

"But they were only messing;  
they weren't serious. Calm Down!"

But we're here to talk about Ireland

So, let's get real

because discrimination is separation,  
and separation leads to desperation,

following the latter by motivation  
to feel valued by people who mock and jeer

because...

it's funny;)

"But they were only messing;  
they weren't serious. Calm Down!"

Obviously, there's a problem,  
so we should fix it, right?  
cause people shouldn't feel stranded on an island,  
surrounded by waters of endless mocking and "miscommunications"

"But they were only messing;  
they weren't serious. Calm Down!"

But, discrimination causes hurt and pain,  
so stand up with people not against  
It's time to put your people first

Because it's 2016  
We're not back with Mr. King, Susan B. Anthony, or Rosa Parks fighting for our Civil  
Rights  
Apparently, we already have em!

So at this day and age,  
maybe they were messing,  
but I won't calm down  
cause seriously it's just rude.

# Our Nation

## *Amy O’Riordan*

The prosperity of the whole nation....

The words of Pearse....

But what about me ?

A gut wrenching fear takes me over,

I step out into a strange and far off land,

Will it be an eternity until I see her?

My mother, again

As I walk down the path,

Her endless angry sobs I hear from the kitchen.

I am tearing my family apart she cries and cries and cries.

So, Padraig Pearse, don’t let us normalise this emigration.

Our nation, in ruination,

Devastated I turn around, go back, I hold my mother’s strife, and vow to stay in Ireland.

I’ll fight for a better life.

# Out of Africa

*Jack O'Shaughnessy*

In Africa, They forget me,  
I don't forget them,  
Who cares here in Ireland about my life?  
I am locked in an old school house,  
Waiting for a judge to read my case,  
It's five years since I escaped.  
I am out of Africa  
But I belong nowhere  
In Ireland 2016

# Pointless

*Rachel Rowlands*

Is this me?

Is this you?

Is this modern Ireland?

Monotonous, stifling, utterly pointless

We sit here in our restraints, desperately

Trying to recite what they see as

Crucial, principal, a 'privilege'

Don't question it.

The wonder I once held inside me, the fascination

The need to learn about the world around me

Buried under books, essays, deadlines.

Buried under a mask of intelligence.

You see, I know nothing but this

I envy those who excel in other fields

I have only exams, grades

The time to explore has run out

My worth is measured in percentages.

I'd love to rebel. To find a way

To change all this but I'm just a kid.

The next one to fit their mould.

So I sit, ready to memorise the next page,

The fire inside me slowly dwindling

# Unborn in 1916

*Ciara Shine*

Mommy's belly is cosy and warm  
I spin and kick all day  
Inside I'm safe from any harm  
but can't wait to get out and play

Mommy and Daddy are shouting  
the Rising is not part of the plan  
He plans to stand at the GPO  
his role, a sniper, an IRB hitman

Mommy had to let him go  
she prayed he'd stay unhurt  
Word came back on Easter Monday  
Daddy lay face down in dirt

Mommy is always crying  
says she didn't have a choice  
She didn't foresee him dying  
I miss my mommy's happy voice

# 1916 - 2016

## *Mairead Spaight*

I have to leave, I have to leave  
I say goodbye, I hug and kiss  
I tell them I will see them soon  
I pat the dog and rub his head.

I walk into this brave new world  
I meet and greet and laugh and cry  
And be the best person I can be  
I have no choice.

Who has the power over Ireland?  
What Independence?  
The 1916 Rising is raising anger inside of me  
I have to leave, I have to leave.

# The Anonymous

## *Katherine Thornton*

They were the anonymous, the broken and the brave,  
They were the ones that the world could never save,  
Those reluctant heroes that gave up their own lives  
To save our war-torn country in the struggle to survive.

She is sitting at the table in the kitchen,  
Waiting for a letter from her father at war,  
While the girl in the future is looking to the past  
To a time in her life when her mother loved her more.

Money is just paper disguised as a promise  
That you worked so hard to get but it is stolen anyway,  
And the man that took that money lives a big cushy life  
While there's people on the streets who are starving day by day.

There are people who are poor and there's people who are rich,  
There's a boy who gashed his leg but he can't afford a stitch,  
And no one seems to care about that young man on the street  
Who is bruised and scared and bloody. And broken, freshly beat.

Oh how times have changed since 1916,  
Where there's more greed and cruelty than that time has ever seen,  
Now the girl in the past prays her father might come home,  
But the one in the future thinks she'll always be alone.

We. Can. Change.

# Gone

*Niamh Torley*

I stare and watch myself,  
Leaving Ireland,  
Leaving home,  
Hoping to return  
Hoping for one last glance,  
Before I depart.  
Time approaches  
My emotions change.  
Sadness, Excitement  
Mixed up with fear.  
What will the future hold?  
Does Ireland 2016 really even care?

# Leaving Home

## *Muirne Wall*

So says the Declaration  
This Republic claims allegiance  
Of every Irish man  
And Irish woman  
But maybe not this one  
Or maybe  
Because

I left home one day  
On my way to Summer Bay  
No jobs, no money  
No happiness, no fun  
I had to leave, my job was done

Irish culture, dance and song  
I learnt Irish music, all along  
Soaked in my Gaelic language  
A fine education, beautiful heritage  
A strong and bold foundation

Our goodbyes were filled with tears  
Divided by continents and sea water  
I was their first departing daughter

I left home one day  
On my way to Summer Bay  
No jobs, no money  
No happiness, no fun  
I had to leave, my time was up, my job, their job, was done!

# Missing Home

*Caoimhe Walsh*

Today I am  
overwhelmed  
by sadness,  
lonely now  
I miss my friends  
Here in this strange culture  
learning a language new to me  
thousands of miles from my own  
Ireland, Kerry, Tarbert home.  
I closed the door on my old ways  
I started out afresh  
2016, one hundred years later on  
from the birth of my new country  
and.....there is just no room for me.  
So, In 2016, will I be simply forgotten?  
Will I ever ever make it home  
or am I now exiled forever?  
Does it have to be this way?  
Listen to me when I say  
I just want to live at home.

# Éire

*Eoin Woulfe*

Who once said it?

I have a dream,

that one day,

Ireland can be....

can be,

completely free,

completely free,

of racism,

of homelessness,

of emigration.....

Yes....

I have a dream.