

**MY BROTHER JACK
AWARDS 2021**

**SHORT STORIES AND
POETRY**

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Senior Secondary Poetry

Judge's Report – Alicia Sometimes

2021 has been another year with so many moments of uncertainty and one where we all have so much to express. Numerous poems displayed innovatively crafted themes on helping others, humanitarian causes, loneliness, exuberance, friendships, caring for the planet and reaching out to those we love. It can't be overstated how many entrants submitted high quality work. It does make the judging harder but rewarding when you read a poem over and over again. Just know, that if your poem wasn't chosen, there's a strong chance it was on the shortlist I came back to multiple times. It is inspiring to know that so many people are communicating with poetry.

Congratulations to all the wonderful poets who entered the *My Brother Jack Awards* this year and much praise and glitter to those incredible writers who won!

First Prize

Eidolon by Selina Richter

This section, more than any other, was unpredictable in what I was about to read next. It was if no two poems were in the same style or on the same subject. The winning poem, 'Eidolon' is part science-fiction and part epic soul story. It is a unique study of the illusory nature of worship. At first read it seemed to be only about love through lust's eyes but it is also cautionary: 'whisper my shadow fingers over the planes of your mind'. An idealised person is never a good thing, not for them and certainly not for the person who has this fantasy. 'Looking at the world with eyes other than my own' is so important. This poem, with its ghost-like being, is dark and foreboding and by the end, the word 'masterpiece' is as frightening as it gets.

Highly Commended

You Say I'm a Distraction by Sara Saffer

Highly Commended

For we are Africa by Gabriella Voges

Senior Secondary Poetry – First Prize

Eidolon

By Selina Richter

EIDOLON

noun:

1. *an idealised person or thing.*

Eyes flickering,
You turn your face to me, a movie playing behind a revolving door.
I lean in closer, too close-
and then I fall.

Slipping out my skin
And sliding into yours, it feels different now
Looking at the world with eyes other than my own.

Sinking in, I totally unwind
Unfurl, get comfortable,
Whisper my shadowy fingers over the planes of your mind.

Ghost, phantom, phantasm, illusion, eldritch, life-like
spectre, that is what they call me oh
How they hate my race but
How they love you so.

My Sybarite, my Helen of Troy
I can give you everything.
We will be renowned
We will be legends
We will be apparition.

If you're my possession then I am yours.
How I missed your soul, its multitude of colours.
And those golden eyes, I now see through them
always thought you were beautiful. Now your body is my medium.

The movie behind your eyes
is also the media
I use to draw us closer,
Paint us together,
in ectoplasm,
Our future.

It is going to be a *masterpiece*.

Senior Secondary Poetry – *Highly Commended*

You Say I'm a Distraction

By Sara Saffer

You say I'm a distraction, a sight for sore eyes,
I am something a man must win, some may say a prize.
But just because I'm precious, doesn't mean I have to hide,
I make the choices I want to and I can because I'm mine.

You say I'm a distraction, a voice that's just too loud,
The words and tunes that leave my mouth, fail to make you proud.
But when you quickly shush me and say "turn your volume down",
I scream a little louder and polish up my crown.

You say I'm a distraction, that I expect too much,
How dare I have the audacity to choose when I am touched.
But when you tell me to lower my standards and never interrupt,
I take another step away from the thought of giving up.

Maybe I'm distracting because I'm your nightmares and your dreams,
I'm everything you want and everything you could never have or be.
So don't call me a distraction, don't blame it all on me,
Just say that you're distracted, it's a you issue, let me be free.

Senior Secondary Poetry – *Highly Commended*

For we are Africa

By Gabriella Voges

**We are Africa
Our roots run deep,
Deeper than the roots of the soil on which we stand upon.
Our skin tells the story of pain and success
Of oppression and freedom
It shows we are so much more
And nothing less,
For we are Africa.**

**We are a nation of colour and pride
Filled with creatures with hearts of gold.
Our history and culture
Shapes us and never grows old.**

**Where our each and every stride intertwines and constructs the significant narratives of our
lives,
For we are Africa.**

**Every road you travel, every path you walk, every unique individual with which you talk
Are filled with vigorous life
And a burning desire to live with passion
To love and inspire,
For we are Africa.**

**A land composed of unending beauty
Where our spirits run wild and freely
Where the captivating sunsets can take your breath away and the generous souls of Africa can
do exactly the same.**

**Our roots run deep ,
Deeper than the roots of the soil on which we stand upon.
Our skin tells the story of pain and success
Of oppression and freedom
It shows we are so much more
And nothing less,
For we are Africa.**