

2023 My Brother Jack Awards Open Poetry Award

Congratulations to all the magnificent poets who entered the My Brother Jack Awards this year and a mountainous amount of awe and praise to the incredible writers who won!

The submissions for 2023 are full of variety, originality and skill. This year was a bumper year for poetry with many strong poems. The consistently high quality of work is inspiring. The open section was such a pleasure to read, with so many different voices in my head, I wallowed and swam in the words and took time to read each one. There were so many lines about strength, heartbreak and yearning. I loved reading every one of them.

Thank you to Glen Eira City Council for the opportunity to be a judge again this year. I hope you enjoy the winning poems as much as I did.

***Broken Wing* - First Place**

Broken Wing is a suburban love story. The '...skip with its broken sofas and rolled up rugs' and the magpie with the 'trestle of notes' being stubborn and as 'demanding as a Viking'. This poem encapsulates the sing-song of the streets, the music and laughter of the everyday and those familiar birds who become family and main-stays in our daily life (sometimes, only visiting briefly). A sweet composition on the celebration of life.

***Not a Single Death is Wasted* – Second Place**

A delightful and surreal dreamscape that is engaging and poignant.

***Markers of Modern Life* – Third Place**

A clever and relatable list of how we mark our daily life with what we spend our focus and time on.

***Memory, Simple but Everything* – Highly Commended**

A sharp prose-poem about the elusive nature of memory and how it morphs into a life of its own.

***Blackbirds in a Rose Bush* – Highly Commended**

Artful and considered observations of the 'open-beaked, urgent' blackbirds who nest in the garden.

