

magma open poetry pamphlet competition

First Prize: *Dear*, by Alice Willitts

Rachel Whiteread casts your corpse

I loved the day the artist visited and turned you inside out tenderly
casting the bed sores and the plasters, the drip and your blue decay

in white relief I kissed your wrinkled belly where I first lived
a stranger place hot water bottle going cold dear corpse

know my hands that bathed your rubbering skin don't mind
my callouses they were earth-earned Rachel said see how

plaster picks up the worn use of her so perfectly the ghost of her
existence as she wore it what was hidden ordinary revealed

the artist with her buckets of plaster her precision and her care in the
mess in solving the problem of vacated space

Rachel said see how the sculpture-self opens its mouth and gulps down
the plaster smiling despite itself with no mind

she could have cast the room instead poured whimpers and cries into
solid silence around a hairbrush, a tray of pills, a vase and

flowers, cards, Granny's silver mirror, wet-wipes, Complian,
nail scissors, blue-glass bottles of oil-love or cast

the bastard bed that never did relieve or the short turn of carers
that could not or your hunched family named them

with her dripping buckets and measuring tape but oh
how you would have loved it too

Second Prize: /s:ɪd/ by Ben Egerton

	soil			soil	
	seed			cede	
		rain			rein
dew				dues	
	sun				Son
		root			root out
field				yield	
		fill			fall
	stem				stem
		bough			bow
	incipient			insipient	
		<i>adamah</i>			<i>Adam</i>
bloom				blood	
		scent			ascend

Third Prize: *Satyress* by Audrey Molloy

Anna Karenina smiles as she steps from
the platform

Admit it, woman, to die not having lived
is more common than cow's milk.

Who would trudge the poplar-lined avenue
to where it meets Moral High-ground?

Who would not have gold fleck their eyes?
Who wouldn't lunge into their bodice

and produce a shining meaty heart
for all to look upon in curiosity?

You chose to coat your daily bread
in butter, thick and yellow,

chose *passiflora* over cabbage rose
or dreary chamomile.

This path is narrow, vine-choked,
but runs true as the aorta. They say

a woman has only so many heartbeats
in her life and yours are running low.

You will have a quick death – savage (yes!)
as all best ends are, blood returned to iron.

Know you can hold your lovely head high
in the station lamplight. Know you tried.

Fourth Prize: *I invented a metaphysics* by Alison Winch

Once Enjoyed

Prop. XXXVI

He who recollects a thing which he once enjoyed, desires to possess it under the same circumstances as those with which he first enjoyed it. Baruch Spinoza

Proof:

now beef now cigarettes now raspberries
he lets go of his soft palate
for the salt leak of his *cicisbeo's* cock

shucks his self in the holly bush
and dirt dark
of last year's oak leaves / the warden's bell

therefore when he sprints to Pure Gym
to stay lean for his lover
to squat and pull-up on the rotational plane

he swallows the recollection
sinks it and submits
and therein he rolls / *wherein* is genius

and he wipes this thing
across the saline heavens
so that the city seizes him: its sweet meat sweats.

**cicisbeo* – toyboy of eighteenth-century aristocratic married woman