

The Naming Stone, Stromness

They carve their names at the sea's surge
in Billiacreu: *Marwick, Warnock, Spence, Flett*;
a palimpsest of Stromnesians. Names hewn
into sandstone layers laid down like lines
in a notebook. Waves charging at the foot
of Black Craig will one day claim them,
this directory of souls etched, engraved,
will be wiped clean, as chalk on slate.
The dizzying climb down still remains
a rite of passage, but my feet tarry at the edge.



Julie-ann Rowell

Hestemåne

Tvunget gennem skoven
uden vinger ligger det stille
navn i munden på en fremmed,
der vågner med en kystlinje tegnet
op i lommen. Grænsen er et påfund på papiret.

Horse Moon

Forced through the woods
without wings lies the quiet
name in the mouth of a stranger
who wakes up with a shoreline sketched
in his pocket. The border is an idea on paper.

Poul Lynggaard Damgaard



Shore People

(for R.M.A.)

My love, I know our moods, our ebb and flow
of crabbitness – seeking cause to glower,
keeping our inner self closed, mollusc-tight –

till in the dark the tide rolls in, rolls out
and in the morning we no longer stand
on dignity. For we are kids again

who cast off shoes and socks to breenge and splash
along a muddy shore, made new for us,
that shows two sets of footprints, and some shells.

Donald Adamson



Photograph: Sandgreen Bay
Angela Lawrence Clience Studio

«Skagerrak»

elleve måneder gammel
ser hun havet for første gang

sildemåker i vertikale dykk
og kilometerlange bølgekammer

som ikke prøver å være
bemerkelsesverdige

fotsålen grøsser
når den treffer sand

Linda Klakken



Skagerrak

eleven months old
she sees the sea for the first time

the vertical dive of black-backed gulls
and kilometre-long crests of waves

which are not trying to be
remarkable

her sole shudders
when it hits the sand

Linda Klakken, tr. Rachel Rankin



Who were the Vikings?

Their golden heads and flinty eyes

Blood red footprints from coast to coast.

Their longships leave, snake heads spitting white foam

Fire on the cliff tops, pillage and ribbons of smoke

Dark haired women and memories and sly laughter.

On the shoreline, the St Bride bird's sharp incantation

Be wise, be wise.

Marion F. Morrison



Na Lochlannaich. Cò iad?
Falt òr-bhuidhe, sùilean geura
Làraich fhuilteach bhon ear chun an iar.
Na longan-cogaidh air seòl, cinn nathraichean a' tilgeadh cop
Losgadh air na sgorran, sgrios agus riobagan teine
Nìghneagan donna le smuaintean seòlta 's gàire carach.
Air a' chladach an Gille-brighde, le channtaireachd bhiorach,
Bi glic, bi glic.

Marion F. NicIleMhoire



The Humankind Constellation

And then God decided to do it selfie.
When he unlocked his smartphone
like a tsunami a new constellation
appeared in the sky,
with the form of a pin code.
Only fish in the North Sea can see it
and forget in just 3 seconds.



Mane Manushev

The Swing of the Sea

There is no edge to the sea
it is always moving

the shallowest wave
hisses in on the shore

and in the deep
and over the deep
it is moving still

the whistling sand
the shifting sea

Laurna Robertson





from Bridge to Nowhere

It looks like heaven beyond the Bridge to Nowhere.
Sun on miles of sand, horses cantering in the edge of the sea.
But the tide is high; we are on the other side of the bridge,
river and sea joining to wash round the steps,
tide driving in relentlessly.

Elspeth Brown