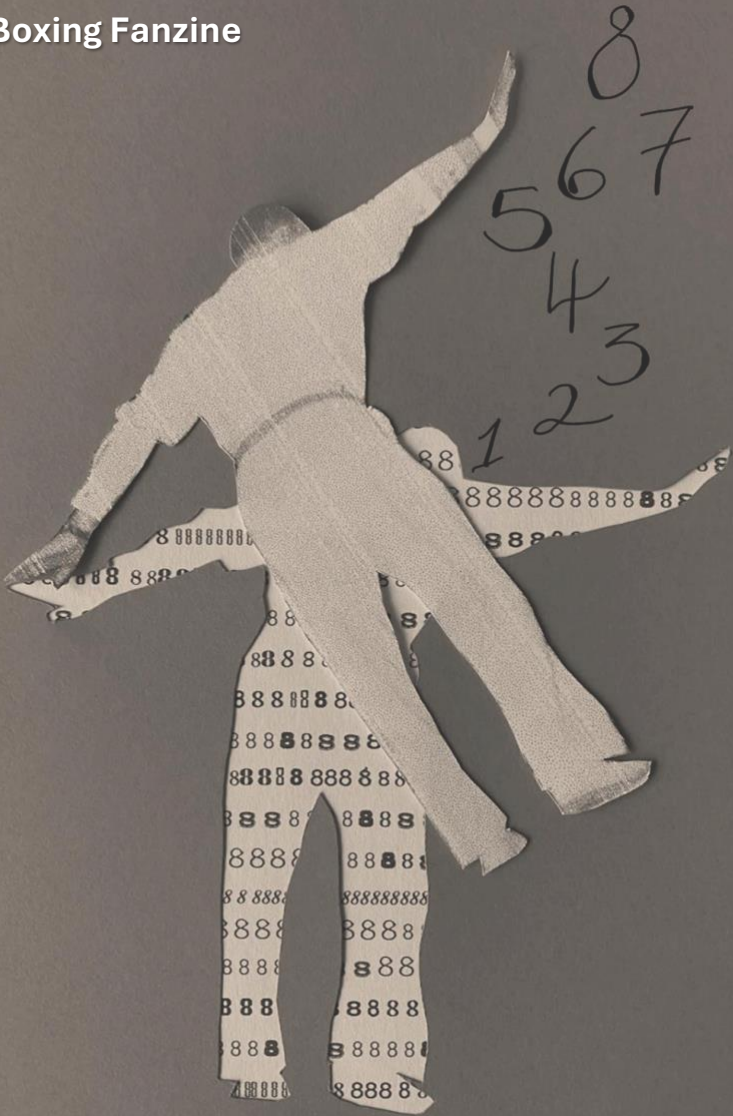


THE SPIT BUCKET

A Boxing Fanzine



Issue #8 – April 2026

With thanks

We would like to thank all our contributors for their generosity in allowing us to publish their wonderful work free of charge, allowing us to produce this zine without cost to the reader. However, if you enjoy what you read and see within then please do check out the links to the writers and artists to find out how you can support them in producing more brilliant work.

If you're feeling extra generous then please consider donating £4 to the excellent Ringside Charitable Trust, who are trying to raise money to build and maintain the UK's first residential care facility for retired boxers. Visit theringsidecharitabletrust.com to find out more about their aims and how to set up a regular donation payment. Alternatively, use the QR code below to make a one-off payment.



The Spit Bucket team

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Editor's note

So here we are, late in the 10th and we've been caught with a clean shot. To the uninitiated it looks like luck but for those in the know we've just fallen into the trap set for us since the middle rounds. Our guard – all loose and baggy – has succumbed to fatigue. It wouldn't even be so bad if we'd fallen for a deliberate feint but in reality we just got caught anticipating something which was never coming – and missed what was. The ref has backed us to the ropes – opponent sent off to neutral territory – and given us the most generous of eight counts.

In this fantasy it's Mickey Vann at York Hall looking up from the swirling vortex below, telling us we've given as much as we can and did the belt proud, but in reality, it's a face we don't recognise, on an undercard in a leisure centre in Essex. And the realisation we were always out of our depth. As the fight is signalled over we half-heartedly push away at the pristine white shirt and dickie-bow combo to indicate our brave intention to continue, but it all quickly turns into a slumping and grateful embrace.

We're finished... thank f***!

Eight issues! As so often happens with these small projects, what initially was going to be a one-off object escalated into something we would never have imagined at the start. It's been a wonderful experience to provide a home to such brilliantly varied boxing-themed art and writing, and to share it with an audience already in love with the sport or finding it for the first time. From both of us I'd like to thank all of our talented and generous contributors, all of whom gave us their work for free so that we

could get the zine out without any cost to readers, and in the hope of raising money and awareness of the fantastic folk at The Ringside Charitable Trust.

Hopefully we've inspired a few people along the way to get projects off the ground no matter how niche or singular they are – and to nurture a feeling that we can all do this without competing with each other.

Through my *Writers on Boxing* blog and this zine we've met some amazing people and I just wanted to use this final editor's letter to say how grateful we were to meet boxing writer Melanie Lloyd just before she passed away. We all share the same commitment to promoting the voices of others in and around the sport, and had a special time talking at the London Ex-Boxers Association meeting at the end of last year. Of course it's sad to think about her not being around anymore but there is at least a lot of comfort in holding onto the memory of the time we did spend around each other. If you haven't already, do check out her *Sweet Fighting Man*, editions one, two and three.

When you walk away from a project like this there are always going to be nagging feelings of ideas unrealised, but we both feel that's a positive thing as it usually means you're not walking away having run out of warmth towards what you were doing. A couple of things I have wanted to write about but never got around to (though hopefully will in the future):

- The featherweight bout between Danny 'Seaman Clarke' Frush and Billy Matthews at The Ring in Southwark, London on 31 December 1923. The bout ended controversially, with the risk of crowd violence, so the venue promoter Bella Burge postponed the

announcement of the result to avoid any trouble. The result of the fight therefore was technically announced the following year. A bout and its result announced in consecutive years is a pretty unique thing and ripe for thoughts on time.

- Somewhere amongst the piles of boxing books which I have at home is the story of a wife, sister, or mother of a boxer who would keep time for sparring sessions in her head while she knitted. I'm a bit obsessed (you might have realised) with forms of time which 'exist within people' and I've definitely got to get back into those books and find the original story.
- The shape of soundwaves created by clean punches landing on bags, mitts or flesh. How does something so visceral break through the air on its way to us?

Anyway, thank you again to everyone who has shared work with us, and to those who have read a single contribution, or have read every issue cover-to-cover (it's crazy how many of you there are). Remember, when it feels like you're being overwhelmed, sometimes all that's needed is a small step to the side.

David Turner

*You always say, "I'll quit when I start to
slide," and then one morning you wake up
and you've done slid.*

Sugar Ray Robinson

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Punchstrokes – Macey-Murray R3 by Lizzy Turner (ink drawing)

Boxing, Sparring and Handbags

Eric Palmer

Wisely or otherwise, at the age of 16 I joined the Royal Navy as an Artificer Apprentice, with a commitment (on completion of my apprenticeship) to serve 12 years from the age of 18. In those days it was without parental oversight, or consent: on a train, on my own from Norwich to Plymouth. Alone, doing something I had never done before, and crapping myself.

However, the Navy were used to getting wimpy kids like me, and the first part of the manning-up process involved getting us fit enough to survive the bullying and home-sickness blubbing. In other words, Discipline – military and self. Marching (properly), cross-country and all the other physical training tortures that had been refined over the years. Thankfully there was no longer any flogging – that had been replaced by more of the physical training tortures, including boxing. If you couldn't cope with it, tough – you kept on doing it til you could. After all, you had signed a piece of grey paper to say you would! (Form B2351). All this, alongside your engineering skills training – another joke.

The first year was spent making 'things' big and little by hand, out of blocks of mild steel, with files, chisels and drills. The second year, making things out of bent steel, brass and aluminium. I soon began to question my career choice of becoming a radio & electrical engineer.

Boxing: Every couple of months there was a boxing 'tournament', where 'volunteers' 'fought' to gain points and 'distinction' in a competition where skill was not obligatory, so long as you could differentiate between your opponent and the referee!

It definitely wasn't Boxing, but in a few instances could be called Sparring. I can still vividly recall, 58 years later, one of my contemporaries, a deceptively fit looking lad, leaping forward at the bell, arms swinging left and right like a horizontal windmill (see Gorilla below). His opponent, I now realise, being ahead of the Disco years, hopped backwards evasively like a mix of John Travolta and Michael Jackson moon-walking, until he encountered a lucky windmill sail.

Another bout included a contender whose action and intent appeared to be to hammer his opponent vertically, via the top of his head, into the canvas.

This reminiscence has got me wondering. Apart from humans, what other animal species box (or spar) in such a skilful manner?

Well, kangaroos have gained notoriety in Australia for 'boxing', but this is in reality a natural behaviour for delivering powerful pushes, and kicks using their powerful hind legs, while balancing on their strong tails, aimed at establishing dominance over other males to sort out social hierarchy, status, and privileged access to females; and for defence against predators. When fighting humans the kicks coincide with below-the-belt damage to the bollocks of their human competitors; quite silly really, but uniquely Australian.

Male gorillas can be similarly aggressive, but more so, in the protection of females and families, and in the protection of territory. But because of their physiology, a gorilla's idea of boxing is several good open-handed swipes to the head. Enough to break a human jaw, or skull, and render you unconscious. But definitely not boxing.

Other primates lower down the social ladder exhibit degrees of the same type of behaviour – except Bonobos, they prefer casual sex.

The Grizzly Bear (*Ursus arctos horribilis*), there's a clue! Its behaviour is pretty similar to the gorilla, except for one thing – it has big sharp claws, that not only slap and break bone, but rip your face off in the process. Still not boxing though.

Hares! Think of hares as small fluffy versions of the kangaroo, but without the attempts at castration. Rather than skilled fighting, it's more handbags at dawn that make the fur fly.

Finally, we have the Glasgow Kiss species. These are the species that literally go head-to-head, such as the Musk Ox, Ibex and Red Deer. All driven by testosterone, and a small bruised brain, and aimed at getting sex if you win. No Pain No Gain.

So, it seems the only species that actually 'boxes' skilfully is humans. Human boxing would undoubtedly have evolved from ape-like defensive fighting, but even *Google AI deep dive* can only say it evolved from Mesopotamian, Greek and Egyptian bare-knuckle fighting. So 3000 years ago it had already evolved into the basics of a regulated competitive sport. And in the 3000 years since, with the application of skill, the evolution of training, precision and regulation it evolved into what we have today. And in doing so it attracts money and large crowds to watch with an almost religious reverence.

But why? Why suffer pain and injury and inflict the same, repeatedly, having transformed territorial and sexual dominance into the promise of gold and short-lived glory?

Well, this is what *Google AI* has to say:

“ . . . boxing involves mastering intense mental skills like focus, emotional regulation, and resilience to manage fear, pressure, and loneliness in the ring, transforming aggression into controlled power and discipline for peak performance, with benefits extending to improved self-esteem and emotional intelligence outside of competition, though it requires deep self-awareness to combat self-doubt and negative self-talk. Boxers develop a unique mindset to stay calm and tactical while delivering maximum effort, using techniques like visualization, ritual, and positive self-talk to maintain a winning edge and overcome challenges.”

No Winners That Day

Bruno Noble

‘One!’

He remembered the rough of his mother’s skirt against his cheeks and her hands on his shoulders as she shouted at the boys on his estate to, ‘Leave him alone!’

‘Two!’

He remembered his father kneeling, holding his arms tight and saying, ‘Go on, son. You’ve got to hit them back. You can’t have them thinking you’re afraid.’

‘Three!’

He remembered throwing a punch for the first time, the pain in his wrist.

‘Four!’

He remembered leaving school, with the world solid below his feet, and thinking, *But what does the world rest on?* Meeting a girl and thinking, *She’ll do*, and she did.

‘Five!’

He remembered the warmth of the sun on his back and the weight of the hod on his shoulder. His and the girl’s joy at his first week’s pay. The ups and downs of jobs gained and lost, of building sites that became homes for others but never for them.

‘Six!’

He remembered the tremor of the girl’s hand as he pushed the ring onto her finger. The swelling of her belly as their love grew to

show. His decision to do what he was good at, to exchange swinging picks for swinging punches.

‘Seven!’

He remembered the smell of his son’s head when he held him for the first time, the promises he made to him, the pride with which his wife looked at them.

‘Eight!’

He remembered going down on his knees, looking at his son at eye level and saying, ‘Go on, son. You’ve got to hit them back. You can’t have them thinking you’re afraid.’

‘Nine!’

He remembered the boxing glove that caught him on the chin. ‘Everlast,’ it had written on it.

‘10 and knockout!’

He looked down on his victor, one arm still gripped aloft by his trainer, his look of triumph giving way to one of concern. ‘It’s alright,’ he shouted down at him, ‘don’t blame yourself.’ But the music was pumping and the fans were shouting and the ring was too far below him for him to be heard.

He looked down on the backs of the paramedics as they knelt by his side.

He looked down as his victor pulled himself free and fell to his knees and mouthed he was sorry. He felt the soft splash of his victor’s tears on his face.

He heard the peal of the bells.

He looked down at the ring below him, now just a pinprick of light in the distance.



Impact by Vera Nederlof (ink drawing)

Erislandy Lara

SJ Fowler

We are in the age of nerves.
The muscle hangs,
Like a memory, in museums;
but we are not the weaker for it:
True vigor
Resides in the head
Vicente Huidobro

partagas) defector, by way of Europe I decided to dedicate my talents
to the boxing business
even when boxing I continues to mature 'to live'
for others boxing had never required such treatment
I started out on an adventure
I have never regretted

larranaga) a marvelous sense of contentment
who cannot enjoy the evening?
precious moments
Stendhal wrote that those who have known happiness
four or five times in their lives should feel gratified
how can one say that the glove, nothing but an object, has a
soul?
what is the noble quality
that leather brings to skin

as for Cuba itself
all the greats
have discovered long ago
the irreplaceable virtues of this magic island

it's geology

bock) it is always the discourse of the
victim

always the marrow of suffering

bone

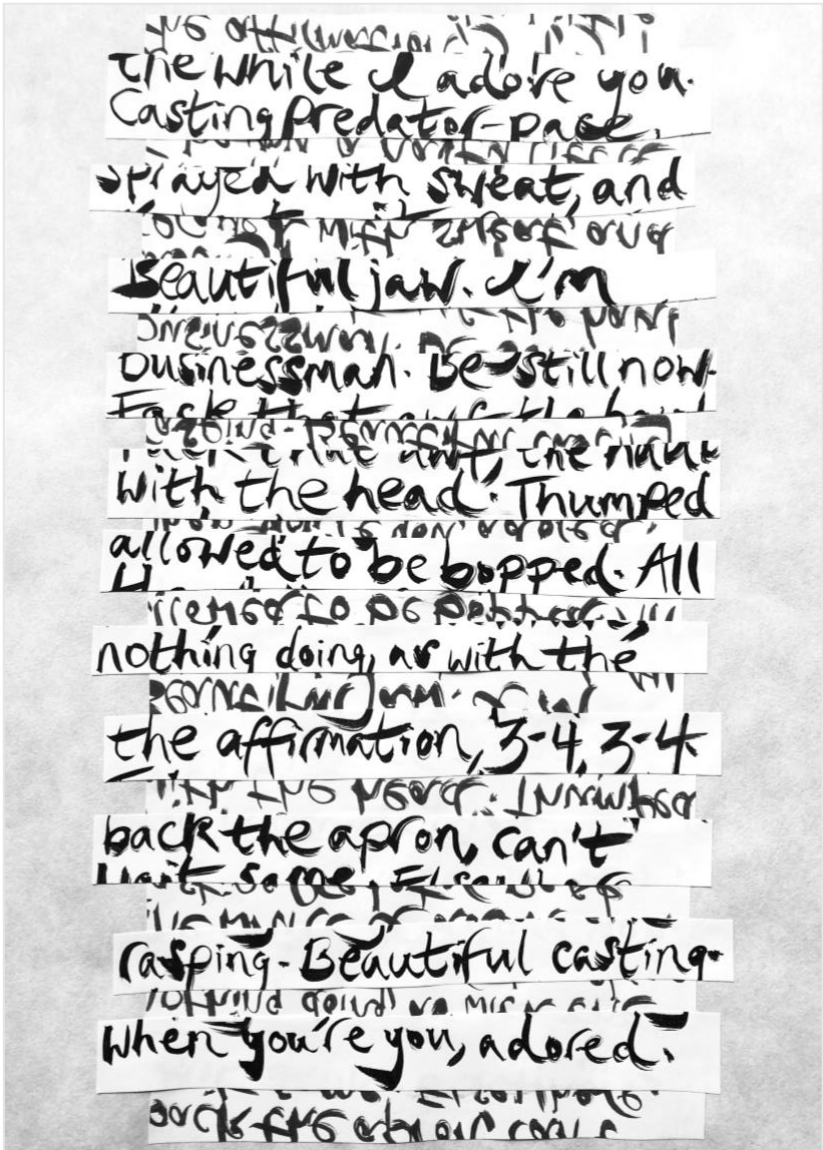
never the drill

on goes the empathy

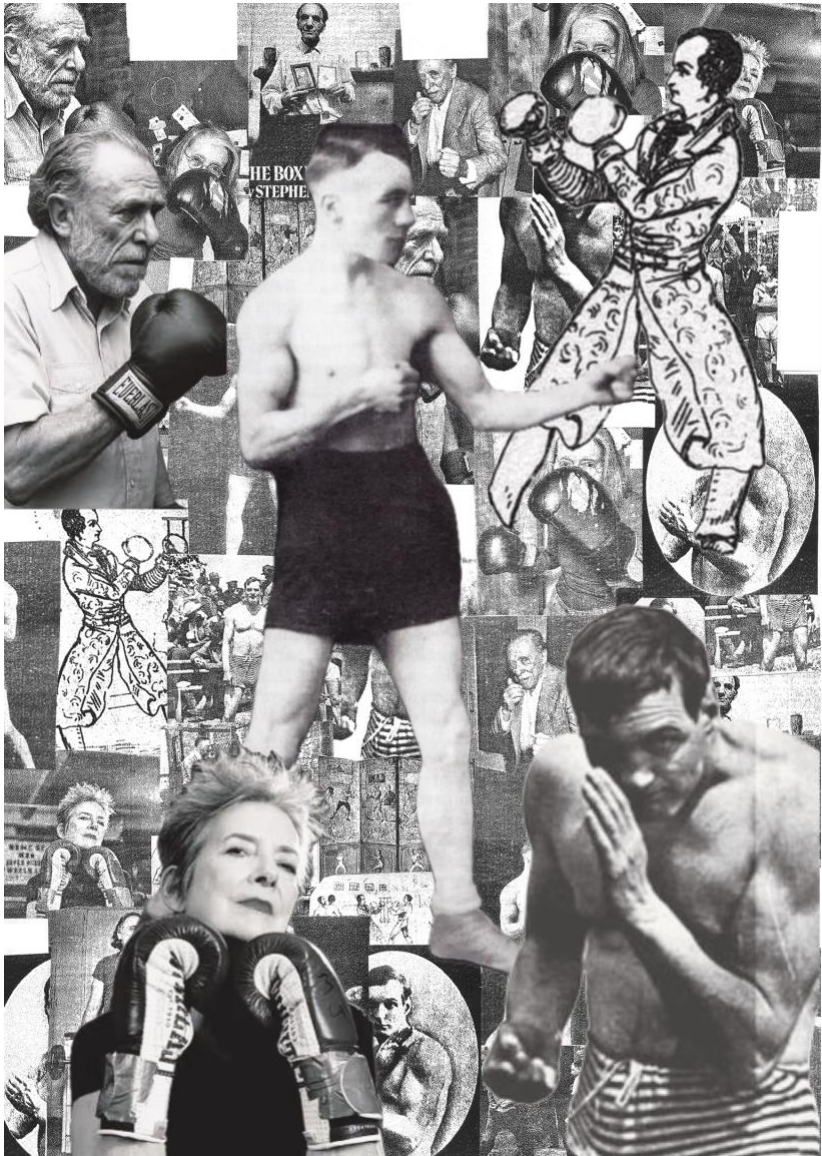
I can imagine myself in but one position

and where I used to sleep

now I simply lay beneath the cover



the while I adore you by Lizzy Turner (collage)



Bukowski, Byron, Carson, Cravan, Hicks by Martin Wakefield (digital découpage)

Interview with Dr Donna Lyon, founder and CEO of Left Write Hook, a charity organisation based in Melbourne, Australia.

Please can you tell us a bit about Left Write Hook, and who it is that you serve?

Left Write Hook is a survivor-led charity that brings together writing, boxing, and peer support for people who've experienced childhood sexual abuse and gendered violence. We work mostly with women and gender-diverse folks, creating spaces that are trauma-informed, structured, and genuinely community-driven.

It's not about 'fixing' anyone, it's about giving people tools, language, and connection so they can start to reclaim their own story and bodies, in their own way.

What programmes do you offer at LWH?

Our core program runs over eight weeks and combines creative writing workshops with non-contact boxing training, alongside facilitated group reflection. We basically sit in a boxing gym, write, share, and learn the art of boxing. Importantly, you get to be in a space with others who 'get it'.

We also run one-off workshops, community sessions, and training for organisations, such as 'Write. Box. Connect.', which is a shorter, experiential version of what we do. Increasingly, we're training up participants to become facilitators themselves, which is where it gets really exciting – it starts to become a ripple effect rather than a one-off intervention.

In making this zine we've found an international community of writers and artists who love boxing – what do you think people enjoy about that relationship, and what benefits do we get from combining sport with creativity?

There's something very honest about boxing. I have often thought of it as a powerful metaphor to life and to recovery. You can't really fake it – your body tells the truth pretty quickly. Writing does a similar thing, just in a quieter, more internal way. Put them together and you get this interesting feedback loop. Boxing helps move energy, anger, fear... all the stuff that gets stuck with trauma. Writing can begin to make sense of it. One is physical release, the other is meaning-making.

Also, both require a kind of presence. When you're on the bag or in the ring, you have to be there. When you're writing something real, you also have to show up. That overlap feels powerful and is very raw. I think there's a poetic contradiction which people are drawn to, the idea that something as brutal as boxing can sit alongside something as reflective as writing. Turns out they're not opposites at all.

What aspects of LWH's activities do you think allow people to reclaim their power and begin to thrive?

A few things working together, not just one magic ingredient. Choice is a big one. People can engage at their own pace, no one is forced to share, write, or punch harder than they want to – that matters more than people realise. Structure is another. Trauma can be chaotic, so having a consistent, predictable framework each week helps people feel safer to take risks. The combination of body and voice is probably the core – a lot of survivors have been disconnected from both. Boxing helps rebuild a sense of

physical agency, and writing helps rebuild narrative agency. You start to feel, “oh, I can take up space again, it’s okay to feel or take back power”.

And then there’s the group, being in a room where you’re not the only one... that can shift something fundamental. It moves people out of isolation, shame and silencing, and into community, which is often where the real change happens.

What impact has LWH had on wider communities in Melbourne?

We’ve seen impact on a few different levels. At participant level the research shows that people report increased confidence, better mental health, and a stronger sense of connection. Some go on to become trainers, which flips the script entirely from ‘service user’ to ‘leader’. At a community level we’re starting to shift conversations around trauma. Through screenings, talks, and partnerships we’re opening up space for more honest, less stigmatised discussions about childhood sexual abuse and recovery.

We’ve also worked with organisations and practitioners which means the impact travels beyond our programs and starts to influence how services are delivered more broadly. It’s still early days in the grand scheme, but you can feel the edges of something bigger forming.

How do you see LWH developing, and what would you like to achieve?

In the short term, it’s about growing sustainably. Expanding into more regions, training more facilitators, and making sure we

don't lose the integrity of the model as we scale. Longer term, the vision is a national network of survivor-led hubs. People running programs in their own communities, in ways that are locally relevant but grounded in the same core approach.

I'd also like to see more integration with research and policy so that what we do actually shifts how systems respond to trauma. I would love for approaches like ours to become normal, expected even. Movement, creativity, community... not as add-ons, but central to healing and recovery.

For more information about Left Write Hook (and if you would like to make a donation to the charity), please visit leftwritehook.org

Serpentina Boxistica (Aforismos)

Javier Soto

...tiene que haber un fundamento amoroso para que te enganches con lo que sea...

En el boxeo, en ese encuentro, ya hay cierta repetición: siempre los guantes, siempre el ring, siempre la esquina, siempre la estrategia, siempre la distancia, siempre el réferi, siempre los jueces, siempre el otro, siempre el abrazo y el paso hacia atrás.

Más vale conocer la repetición, si no la conoces, serás un tronco llevado por la corriente. Pero también debes saber que la repetición no es una fotocopia ni un intento de reproducción, es hacer otro uso, otra cosa con eso inexorable que retorna. En el intento, en el invento, repetimos y damos lugar a lo nuevo.

"La ética de la repetición"

...habilita nuestras diferencias de la mejor manera posible...

Aunque el boxeo sea una práctica del dominio y el control, este no vuelve a sus implicados en ajenos, en enemigos potenciales que no pueden permitirse ser otros. En él se da lugar a otra cosa, no se trata de ningún régimen totalitario.

"El boxeo no se inventa enemigos"

...sólo se está pensando en una sola forma la carencia de un bien importante para la subsistencia...

A veces creemos que la falta o la escasez son experiencias de déficit, pero si algo caracteriza al boxeo es su potencia. No tener o no encontrar lo que uno esperaba es el inicio de algo novedoso. Donde no aparece lo que se esperaba, lo que aparece es la posibilidad de creación, de cambio. En boxeo, a veces, lo que no funciona es lo que mejor funciona. En el boxeo no se crece por adaptación se crece por desadaptación.

"Déficit boxístico"

...entre el naranja y el rojo...

Boxeo que colorea con luces ámbar nuestra angustia y nuestro alivio. Luces ámbar que, para bien o para mal, anuncian el principio del fin. Luces ámbar que son tiempo de la prisa, de la urgencia de salir, de la urgencia de satisfacción.

"Luces ámbar"

Trap/Sanctuary

Joshua Walker

The canvas smells of leather and sweat,
the bell cracks.

Gloves fly like birds in a storm,
each punch a pulse, each block a heartbeat.

The ring is cage and cathedral,
benevolent, cruel,
trapping warriors to baptize them
in the rhythm of blood and will.

Silence here is loud,
pain becomes music,
motion alone writes the poem we call boxing.

Each step, each pivot, each swing etches a hymn in the air, a
testament to struggle.

The Comeback

Joshua Walker

The bell tolls.

He's down, counting seconds like sins,
half-shadow, half-flesh,
fingers clawing the air he does not own.

You read it in his eyes —
the spark of rage,
the slow ignition of focus,
a blueprint of a warrior carving his return from debris.

The ring holds him like a lover,
betrays him like a knife.

One rises, one falls.

Every fight is this:
a map of the soul in motion,
gloves speaking survival.

Sweat drips, leather snaps, muscles coil, release, relentless.

Flint, Michigan

Chip Hamer

The best boxer of the tournament.
The best woman in the competition,
if not the one with the best support.
Only boxer on that team to bring home gold.

The men who like to suppose they could take a point or two off
Serena,
would not have ventured to try to take a round off her.
Not if they had any sense.

See, it's one thing to get humiliated on court, quite another in the
ring.
A knockout competition, with only one winner.
Tough love, straight outta Flint, Michigan.



Getting Up by Vera Nederlof (ink drawing)

for all those who wake with a start

Tim Kiely

not sure if you're a lover dreaming / you're a streetfighter / or a
streetfighter

finding

a sudden spike in heart-rate / on the wrong side of four in the
morning

wrong side of the street / wrong beat / wrong point to find your
strikes won't land /

your knuckles don't bite / like you thought they would / your blood
tastes wrong /

when the night has narrowed you down / to a chance at survival
getting slighter

by the minute / as the curtain edges get lighter / whatever it was
that gave

you shape / whatever you saw in the bed / as the lights went out
what you cradled /

in the fever bed of your hate it'll all / be gone in a minute –

just you wait

Basics

Liz Gold

Eat right,
do your roadwork,
hit the bag.

Keep your back hand
high and steady
when you throw that jab.

**mouth piece mouth peace mouf peaf mouse
fleece mauth peeth moup eath mauff peece
mouuuffffppeeettthhh malph pees malfpiss
mowlfpease**

David Turner

Some suggestions (instructions?) as you make your way: **chew rubber throughout**. Wide thick slabs are recommended – pieces which you’d never imagining fitting (embrace any concerns you may have about the skin split-ting). These slabs should squееееееak when bitten and cause you to droooool in thin rivulets / steady streams / thick sticky lines of bubbling saliva building in volume and mass as they surge up like frog spawn / like colourless honeycomb / like glassy-eyed mutant flies, before collapsing under their own weight and oozing from the corners of your taut lips. The material should feel as though it will give-slide; yet stop sharp with friction instead. Dislodge your jaw in your keenity to nervous-chew. *Bite the contradict*.

Please consider reading with your head submerged in a bucket of hot water / a bucket of cold water / a bathtub of saline solution. Be sure to fill your ears to bursting. To *BURST*-ing. To fully engage with this text, you are encouraged to endure as much as possible – pain; shame; abject horror; volume. Consider replacing all hearing voids with shame. Think: ‘cloth-eared’.

Place a cartoon clock – large plain face, with two brass bells either side of an oscillating hammer – as near to your (((submerged))) head as possible. You should *feel* those **ticks** as well as hear them. You must not take shortcuts such as submerging the clock. No pain, no gain. *Yes pain, yes gain*. Take a Sharpie and write the following on a less agile limb: *I have gained for I have pained*. Tattoo your weaker flank. Tell passersby it is something *quite biblical*.

Through the silicone and the spit and the gain and the pain and the wall of the bucket and the endless bloody ticking, say *cloth-eared*. Say *cloth-eared* seven times. Say *cloth-eared seven times* seven times, weighing yourself before and after. How much have you lost of yourself?

Manipulate the rubber around the inside of your mouth using your tongue. Explore how the varying positions affect your pronunciation. Push it hard to your front teeth, and while it is temporarily weightless play on the **sssssssssilicone** notes, then push it back over the molars; enjoy the obstruction, feel it stretch your jaw muscles and revel in the **rubb-bahh-squeak** of the material. Enjoy the limitations of your physiology. As you bite down onto the **rub-bah** bring your attention to the chain of events triggered by this rewardless task – the unseen signals from jaw to temple. Remark on how strange it is that as your jaw flexes your temples bulge. Imagine (if you will) trying to pop the plastic fastening at the back of a childhood baseball cap using temple bulges alone.

Have you got a favourite hand? Not a dominant hand but one you favour. Prefer the look and feel of? Disregard the thumb of that hand and count in from its neighbour: one, two, three, while pinching the tips as in a nursery rhyme. Use these three fingers to explore your most tender parts. Trust yourself, and therefore the fingers, and have a good dig. A really good root abahtt. Ideally, locate a bruise and lay a light pressure on the skin, increasingly add more force until it begins to feel like progress.

Have you made it this far still submerged in the bucket? Is it possible to make notes / utilise a system of elaborate hand signals / rap in such a way that a companion or passerby might know your pain and translate all which you have now and continue to endure? Is it even true to call it pain at this point or are you lucky enough to feel peace? To feel contained and content. Is this vessel of water,

cold or otherwise, not, in fact, all you've ever wished for? Two comforting hands on either side of an unquiet head – reassuringly still.

Please identify methods by which you might isolate your own shame. (Though, first it might be useful to acknowledge how your particular shame manifests itself.) Questions you might benefit from answering:

- Can you slide a pin up the underside of a fingernail?
- Can you pinch so hard you short circuit that predictable path to self-loathing?
- Can you (ironically) punch yourself full-force in the temple – not as easy as you think without (plenty of) practice.

Can you *lean into* this **shame**? Can you match it? Have you ever asked yourself if the problem is **denial**? That if you just accept these facets, and not only allow them, but actively encourage and support them, then they may lose their grip on you? Simple activities you might benefit from trying:

- Sit alone in a darkened room and listen to yourself breathe. Allow yourself to reach the point at which you'd consider your attack and remain seated. Observe, merely observe. **DO NOT do.**
- Write a list of all the compliments you have received from others in one column. In an adjacent column write the reasons for why you believe they are wrong. In a third, and final, column, answer this single question: *why can't I trust this person's perception of me?*
- Look at your hands – couldn't they just do something more productive?

It's a result of an overactive amygdala apparently – all this panic. This rush toward riling up. The amygdala is found in the lower part of our brain, formed before we, as a species, were capable of abstract thought. The amygdala *can't tell time*; is all **presentpresentpresent**. Is just convinced that EVERY LITTLE THING™ is a threat. Off it goes alongside the thalamus and you're flooded with dread once again, panicking and burning with shame. Maybe you knew this all along and this is what you've been trying to get kicked / punched loose?

Many people find expanding foam an attractive proposition. To be pumped full of that gunk and just letting it find its own way around and abahnt you. As it enters you there's an inventory to record: the sound of the rushing compressed liquid as it races toward freedom, the sharp stabbing smell of the accelerant inside the grotesquely long can, and the wonderful building of pressure in your pipes as it rolls in. **What's not to like?**

Many people find the best methods involve ways to mask anything acting as an identifier. Anything that coats, covers and obscures these traits. Many people realise that it's not enough to just hide but to erase, or at least to try. Remove all possibility of being perceived. What is it, exactly, that's **stuck in your head**? It's all about isolating these triggers. Highlighting patterns and motifs. Ways in. Once a way in has been established you can then explore methods of expulsion. Getting rid. But at this stage you are going to feel pretty alone with it all. And you might ask yourself if you've got it within yourself to see it through.

Repeat after us:

*mouthpiecemouthpeacemoufpeafmousefleecemauthpeethmoup
eathmauffpeecemouuuuffffppeeettthhhmalphpeesmalfpissmowlf
ease*

Contributors

SJ Fowler is a writer, poet and performer who lives in London. His 2011 poetry collection 'Fights' (reissued in 2014 from Veer Books) celebrated 15 boxers with sequences of experimental poetry www.stevenjfowler.com/fights

Liz Gold shapes up tricky. She's not in the I-hit-you-you-hit-me game. No, she's in the I-hit-you-but-you-don't-hit-me game. Which is why she's still so pretty.

Chip Hamer used to be a big light-middle, now he's a small light-heavy.

Tim Kiely is a criminal barrister and writer based in East London. His poetry pamphlets are available at timkielybooks.bigcartel.com

Dr Donna Lyon is the founder and CEO of Left Write Hook, a survivor-led charity based in Melbourne, Australia. 'Left Write Hook', an award-winning documentary about the organisation, is available to stream on Netflix Australia and New Zealand.

With boxing **Vera Nederlof** not only discovered a beautiful sport, but also an endless source of inspiration for her art. Timing, rhythm, risk, composition, improvisation.

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Bruno Noble is author of A Thing of the Moment (Unbound, 2018), and The Colletta Cassettes (Indie Novella, 2022; Inkspot Publishing, 2025). He has just completed a Creative Writing MA at Birkbeck University.

Eric Palmer continues to work on perfecting his sourdough loaf, keeping curious swans out of the greenhouse, and watching his granddaughters get taller and taller.

Javier Soto vive en la ciudad de México, fue boxeador profesional y actualmente escribe sobre boxeo tratando de mostrar una narrativa diferente, más personal y humana. Lejos del almanaque acercar a las personas a ver que detrás del boxeo y las peleas hay algo más.

Martin Wakefield is a poet.

Joshua Walker is The Last Bard, a freelance poet exploring human struggle, resilience, and beauty through vivid, cinematic, and emotionally charged verse.

And finally, I would like to thank every fighter who ever lived, past and present. Thank you all for lighting up my world so sweetly.

Melanie Lloyd