**Segments April 2020. The Vinyl Revolution**

**Poetry inspired by the workshop**

**Christine Hopcutt**  
We always had a record player in my home  
A red dancette player in a smart cream case  
It sat on the sideboard in the centre, pride of place  
The records neatly in their sleeves in order on a shelf

The music in order of seniority in the house  
My Dads selections first of course, then Mums  
Followed by me as oldest of us kids  
And last not least my brother the smallest of our crew.

My Father loved classical,  Beethoven, Brahms and Liszt  
The music rising, falling echoing round the house  
Some of it somber, dark and gloomy,  slow and ponderous  
Others light and flutey the notes dancing round the walls.

My Mother preferred musicals, anything with a tune  
The King and I, Oklahoma, South Pacific to name but a few  
We often heard her singing, mostly out of time  
Lyrics always perfect,  melody not always known.

My music had a beat,  repetitive, romantic to my ears  
Yearning for The Beatles, The Searchers,  Singing Blue Jeans, The Move  
I could see them, smell them, even touch them if I tried  
The scratchy tinny noise they made  was surely just for me?

Last there was my brother the rebel in the clan  
Screeching sound, the record bouncing off the turntable  
No tune, just noise, floors, walls, tumultuous,  shaking  
Along with his limbs and his long  haired shaggy  head

**WORLD RECORD STORE DAY by Gill B**  
Lockdown has unlocked memories  
Disembowled boxes of photos, books and vinyl.  
It is vinyl that holds the masterkey.  
But what I have kept prompts hurt, sharp hurt  
At what I have lost.

Moving house moved me to monstrous acts.  
Downsizing, decluttering, disposing, dissembling.  
The things I lost!  
A list and a litany too long to lament.

The vinyl picks at my losses, unravels my thoughts  
Which land on the boxes and boxes of audio cassettes  
I dispatched to landfill.  
Memories and madness and mixtapes  
All gone.

Eradicated in an orgy of efficiency  
Consigned to rot in the ground and unravel in the breeze.  
The carefully inked inlay cards will decompose  
Matching my decomposure when I threw them away.

What was I thinking?  
New house, new start.  
The past is the past.  
Thank God I kept the vinyl.  
The past is who we are.

**Remember by Jayne Arnott**  
It took so long to save, so many sixpences  
that’s how much I coveted your perfect form,  
I knew inside your cover and your sleeve  
lay  paradise in shining, jet black vinyl  
such promise, such hope, oh such allure.

Between the finger tips of both my hands  
I held the passport to my teenage self,  
my heartbeat racing as I laid you down  
tenderly on the spinning turntable,  
and my trembling hand lowered the needle.

**You’re winding me up by Perry Walker**  
I am black.  
Black my pebble-dashed exterior. Black the records I play for you. Your choice, your taste, your terrible taste, the taste that you lacked.  
I am silver. Silver my one arm, silver my needle, silver my deck.  
In my day, and don’t you forget it, I was à la mode, I was high tech.  
But above all I am black, black of heart, black of soul.  
Black because I am the exile in the attic, in this dark hole.  
You shit.

**Dury’s Clout by Malcolm Whitehead**  
In a London pub in seventy-three  
‘e limped out onto stage, just five foot three.

Polio damage right down ‘is left side  
Oi you! Look at me! I’m not gonna hide.

Each live performance began wiv a bang,  
fearless lyrics made from old London slang.

Certainly damaged but far far from dead,  
Kilburn High Roads followed by those Blockheads.

That polio bridge had taken its toll  
but not of sex…nor drugs….nor rock and roll.

**Record Players by David Winbow**  
They have no dignity, these Johnny-come- latelies,  
no presence- mere plastic- no Master’s Voice.  
No sneaking into the front-room, when it isn’t even Sunday  
to wind that plated handle.  
Just constant noise.  
No sense of occasion, these “ instant” devices-  
you could be anywhere;  
no intent, anticipation,  
it’s just there!  
So polish the Victrola, let it roll-  
open the doors, unpack the horn, again,  
Select a needle (it must be new), and then  
turn back the heavy carpet, if you choose  
ready for a slow Sinatra schmooze.  
Wipe the wax disc (or is it Bakelite?)  
Let Frank Crumit rip, into the night-  
“Abdul A Bulbul”- still those words live on,  
then to Frank’s finale, the Prune Song.  
The Inkspots once again, “Saint Loius Blues”  
This nickel-plated sound is what I choose

**Life’s Record by Ian Rabjohns**  
This is not a look at scientific progress,  
more a bio-study of my auditory decline.  
There is no sign hanging there to say where  
this all began but memory stores it all.  
The brain has it in that vast record can.

The 78, that breakable plate so long revered;  
we stood there, take after take, the cold nave,  
a few chosen boys and the older men.  
No rave this just the tired choir before  
the Christmas boost, no glossy cover, 1954!  
brown paper and our name, I was only ten.

It went from there to Ronnie Scott’s  
Beatles, jazz  dives, learning clarinet  
to emulate the hot licks of the time.  
Monty Sunshine, Mozart too was there.  
Those discs collected scratches, wrinkles  
as the owner did, and all   things    changed—

–that value lost its place, the object lost its face  
became degraded, small, then seemed to have  
no place at all, lost in some cloud where  
like an apple it got plucked, eaten, core  
tossed back on high until the random  
sequence called  it for another try.

Now in age I’ve travelled round that ring  
of tape, CD,  and all the other things.  
They’ve had their day, they’ve played their part.  
I’m going round an old refrain; with Christmas come.  
Made a new case for my memories, cleaned them up  
and hear again that magic crackle start.

**Just for the record – waving and drowning by Grahame Rourke**  
Spinning memories across the collapsing  
chasms of spent time  
A running groove spiralling ever closer to silence  
The scars of bops and carefree touch  
Biographical graffiti, tattoos, deeply etched  
Across the highs and lows of jet black terrain  
The wounds scratchy, harsh, jarring  
Record, bear witness and seemingly conspire  
All the same

Adorned in their slinky iconic vests  
The recorded are ordered and horded  
Into treasured libraries of biography  
Stored in some unemployed space  
Collections of recollections collecting dust  
Until they can be let go round again.

**Vinyl by Susana Harthill**A loose, light sleeve holds  
a flat round disc, generally black.  
A long, narrow cut  
swirling round and around  
so we can groove  
to Motown, Mambo or Mafioso Rap –  
in a pop revolution  
with collector potential  
delivering the strains of a musical score  
with genius lyrics right there, at its core.

**A Window Into Our Lives by Maggie Matthews**  
In the window are two butterfly plants beginning their new season’s growth, and in my hyacinth vase an avocado stone soaking in hope of germination. Halfway up the window frame is a stained glass plaque of deer in a woodland scene reminding me of mother. Beyond the dominating, but very precious wall, (as it protects me and my home from floods) are a couple of lime trees bursting into leaf. Making me thankful that it is spring and summer we are going into and no winter. Beyond and across the park by the riverside Beech and Copper Beech are showing their promise of summer glory.  
**In Celebration Of World Record Shop Day by Maggie Matthews**  
We had a Music Centre,  
It was long and sleek and flat,  
Appearing atop the lid an unseen hand  
Did put “insanity is hereditary-You Get it From Your Kids”  
I hear myself repeating words my mother voiced before  
Too LOUD, TURN IT DOWN, and I CAN’T UNDERSTAND THE WORDS

The record collection grows,  
and diminishes too as the kids leave home.  
Leaving only Jacque Loussier’s Play Bach, and a solitary  
Vamos a Ver, an aborted attempt at Spanish

Our taste in music shifts to classical and Jazz  
And a collection of cassette tapes emerges  
Successfully stretching and contorting sound,  
Unlike the Spanish course staying pristine, aborted again

My Alexa friend now plays to me,  
And if asked tells me a joke!  
I’m waiting for the answer back  
When I order her to Stop!

My iPad offers me the Spanish course,  
and I’m on to lesson 5  
I get a daily reminder to carry on and strive

**Old Phones by Jenny Ridout (in the same vein as old record players)**  
One fell into the toilet,  
As I was sexually assaulted  
In the ladies’ locker room,  
While I was working in Wales.

On was a knockoff  
Like a Blackberry.  
Its files got corrupted,  
And I lost all my files.

One got a scratched screen,  
As it fell as I got out of the car  
When I arrived at a job interview.  
I’d just got it a new battery.

My first one is still going strong.  
There’s no camera, but does have snake.  
It’s had new buttons and a Tigger cover.  
Mum now uses it for texts and calls.

My current one is second hand.  
My father-in-law’s cast off.  
He has to have the latest model.  
I’m just happy to have one that works.