

How to Get Your Poetry Out There

Visit: <http://www.poetrymagazines.org.uk> where you can browse past issues of most of the UK's poetry journals. This is a vital resource as it gives you a very good idea of what types of poetry each magazine publishes. Another online resource is The Poetry Kit: http://www.poetrykit.org/mags_print.htm which also lists poetry magazines from around the world, not just UK. Both online resources also list poetry publishers -but before submitting a full manuscript of poems to a poetry imprint, you need to:

Get some of your poems accepted for publication by at least half a dozen poetry magazines. It's tedious but unfortunately it's how it works. Most poetry publishers won't even consider a manuscript unless the poet has been published in a minimum of six recognised poetry journals; some editors require up to a dozen acknowledgements. The main reason for this is it proves that your poems have contemporary appeal and a potential readership.

When submitting poems to magazines usually send no more than six poems at a time, though some journals permit more than that amount, or ask for just a couple. No 'simultaneous submissions' i.e.: it's generally not considered good poetry etiquette to submit the same poems to more than one journal at the same time. (This rule is all very well in theory, but many magazine editors take a long time responding to submissions, sometimes weeks, often months, even longer, and if rejected after a long wait, it means you've lost a lot of time when you could have been submitting the poems elsewhere, and possibly with better results. So I've always found this rule rather unfair on poets, and have therefore never requested the same rule of those who submit to The Recusant).

Once you've had poems accepted by at least half a dozen poetry journals, and you feel you have enough poems to make up a full collection (on average, 30-40pp of poems for a chapbook/pamphlet, and between 50-80pp for a first full volume), then visit here: <http://www.poetrylibrary.org.uk/publishers/poetrybook> which also includes website listings so you can visit publisher sites where you can often read samples of the poets they publish.

Contrary to popular belief, there is no stigma attached to self-publishing, and sometimes it can be a quicker way to get one's poetry 'out there' and, hopefully, reviewed in a few places, which can in turn attract attention of publishers. But there is a massive stigma associated with what is termed vanity publishing: that is, paying a publisher to publish your book. If ever in doubt about this, always opt to self-publish.