

# Three Weir-D Poems

## Imagine

We're in an underwater chamber.  
How do fish encounter us? Stood still.  
They observe, we aren't swimming.

It's damp, smells like the river. Eutrophic,  
earthy and fishy. Pressure-held, we breathe  
without struggle, without gills.  
Around us, the river seeks to come in, join in  
the underwater world. We're feeling alien,  
like sturgeon returned to the River Severn.

Prehistoric wonders and modern mystery,  
they cruise waters not taking notice of us  
humans. We never swam with dinosaurs.  
Return to the chamber. Concrete, a view in?  
Below murky surface to fish passing. Silent.  
Will we feel calm under pressure?

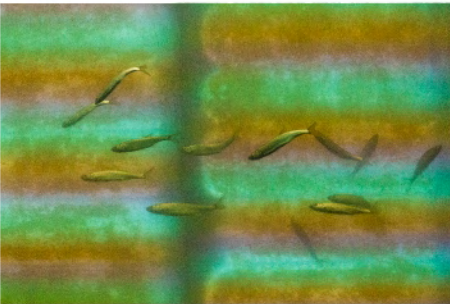
Cautious, we imagine things differently.  
Size, materials, quality of light. But silence,  
silence we agree on. Until the river's on,  
through a speaker that fills us with water.  
Gurgles fill the dry silence, flowing freely,  
beyond our ears or gaze, moving instream.

Now below water. Anything can emerge  
from the depths, reminiscent of snorkelling  
floating leaves drift by the windows.

It's rather gloomy, like an empty theatre  
until words fill, float around the space.  
We're surrounded. Turbid, tannin colours.

Was it a Sea Lamprey? We ask, intrigued.  
Like dreams remembered, fragments of life  
we peep through a keyhole to their journey.  
We surface. Some wanted to stay.  
Fishes walking, our memories top-up.  
Saturated by raindrops. Curtains draw,

in shadow and soft light, the window,  
the portal to another way of living,  
where dancing fish lead with careful steps, we respect.



## Watching a Window

All my memories are visual,  
graceful manta rays gliding overhead and smiling with their strange mouths.  
Interactions, and displays to connect people to the underwater.  
A sense of wonder and sadness.

Quieter, murkier, damper places  
purposefully illuminated.

I look up from below.  
I see them but stay dry.  
Breathing, reminds me I'm a mammal,  
but my skin is soaked in the memory of swimming.

The feeling of pressure and the sounds of the deep.  
So much potential.

The temperature changes and gravity is no more.  
Blissfully lost in daydreaming, about my past and future.  
I see the Barbel.  
A sense of home.

Silhouetted people, watching a window to another way of living.  
And I am there, wondering, surrounded by water.

## This Place

This is not an aquarium.  
There is no clamour of sound.

There are no children running,  
No riot of colour and banners.  
I will not rush to the next exhibit  
To see manta rays with smiling mouths.  
I have no map of the things I will see  
- or my money back.

This,  
Is a window.  
It is a portal to another place.  
I am a guest in the fishes' silent realm.

Temperate, murky and raw.

In a bunker beneath the surface,  
This art installation in the riverbank,  
All is concrete and grey.

Through thick glass, the water lies unknown.  
A grainy picture of the river beyond.

Passionate others look on in suspense, lingering.  
Light on their faces, waiting,  
As leaves dance by in playful Autumn.

Then the barbel, inching upstream, enters stage right.  
A connection, my friend, we observe each other.  
This,  
Is your world.

