

## *The Rialto*

Selected comments from the 2012 Subscriber Survey

### Summary

While the majority of respondents declared that they would not like to see anything changed about the layout of *The Rialto*, six people suggested that two short poems could appear on the same page. Several potential avenues for increasing revenue were suggested, including publishing an anthology of poets from the magazine, soliciting advertisements, selling cards with poems and art from the covers, publishing collaborations between poets and artists, and creating downloadable audio recordings. Two people lamented the disappearance of the line drawings in previous editions. Six poets felt that the turnaround time on submitted poems was too long. Two subscribers suggested including volume and issue numbers on the spine.

### Comments

I have greatly enjoyed *The Rialto* since my first copy arrived because of the quality poetry; quality presentation, card, paper, cover; mix of best of new and established; mix of best of forms and 'free style'; interesting biographies; I love 'Rumours, Books, Events'; I look forward to the Editor's Letter; the amount of white space per page is a plus point. I hope you will have more poetry competitions like the recent one -- and I hope you will continue to publish new voices in addition to well established ones!

I always delight in the arrival of the new *Rialto* on my doormat. I like the presence of the editor--his personality, comments, etc. Conveys a sense of knowing what's going on, what's what--certainly between here and America. Always enjoy Les Murray and generally am interested by poets talking about how they came to poetry and their observations on their processes etc. This is the only poetry magazine, or indeed, event, that I am committed to and I would not be without it. My father as a young man had absorbed Palgrave's *Golden Treasury* and it coloured his perceptions and conversations--bless him.

I like the directness, unpretentiousness and the feeling which comes across that you genuinely enjoy the poetry you publish. This is the first year that I have read and subscribed to *The Rialto* but I shall certainly continue. Many thanks.

I think *The Rialto* is one of, if not the best poetry magazines in the country. I particularly like the fact that the magazine publishes both well-known and not so well-known (even unknown) names. I get the impression everyone has an equal chance of being accepted -- whether they have published several volumes of poetry, or are just starting out. Note: Fellow poets are always envious when I say I have been published in *The Rialto*!

*The Rialto* is the one poetry magazine that I am reluctant to pass on.

*The Rialto* is probably the last pleasure I would give up. It reminds me that the human spirit speaks and communicates from every corner of life and needs only someone willing to listen.

I appreciate the size of the magazine -- gives each poem a place of attention and significance. There is a good mixture of well-known, famous poets down to ambitious newcomers, with evident talent. The information from the editor is usually interesting and useful -- as is the piece at the back -- websites etc.

*The Rialto* is well designed and well produced. Its A4 format does justice to longer lines and alternative formats. Too many magazines' penny-pinching formats sell poetry short. The tactility and quiet reading experience of the printed page links the reader to the centuries of poets and readers who have gone before, and in a sense produced what they read. This communing cannot be replicated electronically. I do read poems online, but I always feel "time's winged chariot" at my front".

I have a complete set of *The Rialto* from day 1. Originally I was attracted to it through the magnificent line drawings that once were a feature. I regret their passing. I am an ideas man rather than a content man. I think much of *The Rialto* very good -- in my opinion it lets itself down by allowing too much "home movies" (as I think Geoffrey still calls them) perhaps inevitable while you encourage (quite rightly) new blood. I am put off by young ladies being coy and ironical though occasionally that approach can be amazingly good (see Leontia Flynn). On the whole very good.

I enjoy receiving *The Rialto*. It is a well-produced and attractive magazine. I like the space given to each poem on the page which allows you to appreciate it "visually" as well as from the point of view of the "content". The cover and the quality of the paper also matter. I'm surprised these things affect my appreciation of the poetry but they do. A lot of the poetry in magazines (e.g. *PN Review*) I find off-putting and incomprehensible. In *The Rialto* I always find something to enjoy and appreciate. It doesn't feel like a closed shop for the "initiated". I hope you can keep going and I hope that one day you may publish one of my poems!

I particularly like the format in terms of size of page and layout of words that *The Rialto* uses. I look forward to reading the 'From the Editor' and 'Rumours, Books etc': always find something I don't know, often amused to the point of chortling out loud (much to my husband's annoyance) and find leads to follow...Keep doing what you do!

I think you've got the mix about right, though never sure about contributors' biographies -- interesting, helpful if you want to read more of someone's work, but bound to influence your take on the poets, and thus your reading of the poems? The competition seems a good idea. If you continue this there will presumably be a different theme and adjudicators each year?

Please analyse this survey professionally and publish the results (or a summary of those) in the next issue of *The Rialto*. In future surveys consider asking about gender and disability. I applaud *The Rialto* for offering a (slight) reduction in subscription for those on low income. Thank you. *The Rialto* has long since been my favourite poetry magazine, offering well-written and interesting poems which are beautifully presented with enough room to breathe. I don't find reviews of collections very useful or interesting. I would like to see articles discussing the techniques and possible editions of specific poems which you also print, and about other aspects of the craft of poetry.

I would like to see a Corner in the magazine for say 'Prose Poetry' or a 'Minimalist Poem' or whatever -- these poems may not necessarily be the best that you would choose or select, but nevertheless by being 'genre' type poems it would provide a focus and keep in touch with developments structurally (especially if prose poems are in the best tradition and keep to a single paragraph) it will seem to break up the page of long poems. These corners need not be a permanent feature -- but hopefully maintain freshness, give flexibility, and can be changed round. Thank you.

Why I subscribe to *The Rialto*: choice of poems -- engage the cogs without seizing the box; presentation -- giving each poem the space I need to appreciate it; mix of new poets to me with those I know of -- even Pete Hoida -- a blast from the past; I return to *The Rialto* like any well-loved poetry book. I do not read it in a haze, think 'that's interesting', then shelve it forever. Additions for *The Rialto*: revival of concrete poetry; put issue number on spine and audio versions online.

I very much enjoyed the N+N Festival poetry readings that you hosted -- any chance of this happening more regularly?

I continue with *The Rialto* because of the choice of poems, the pleasing lay-out, details are given of the writers, news and views. I would always be pleased if "news and views" were expanded.

I do think of *The Rialto* as perhaps more "alternative" than e.g. *Poetry Review*. But I enjoy reading it more than any other magazine I've tried -- cover to cover, as a unified whole. Also love production values. My most treasured regular read. And I enjoy Michael Mackmin's editorial/blogs -- largely for his gentle humour. *The Rialto* is the last subscription I would drop. Thank you!

I really appreciate your truly catholic approach, and the fact that you never try to be avant-garde or trendy (while not excluding poetic experiment). I can't detect that you push a 'line' at all, in fact! Only quality... *The Rialto* is the only poetry journal I've subscribed to without a break, since I started publishing my work.

*The Rialto* is a superb magazine: both in quality and range of work it makes available to a wide audience. There are plenty of new names, which is encouraging: and the reader has a sense there is a finer critical intelligence in MM than in many other poetry editors. Excellent value!

*The Rialto* has been key for me in reading and publishing. They publish a refreshing cross-section of contemporary poetry and, where they feature distinguished names, they do not get the impression they are privileging submissions from the big names, or indeed commissions from them, as can be the case with other magazines of this stature. Personally, publishing in *The Rialto* has been crucial to my success as a poet.

It's the best there is and must not change!

## Negative comments

I was looking in a book in a charity shop in which "M Mackmin" sent back a questionnaire to the author and which said "I only publish other people's rubbish." Therefore I may not subscribe again. Do not deny it -- it was your handwriting and the whole letter was published. Waste of space putting one small poem per page. An Olympic special *Rialto* or a Queen's Diamond Jubilee *Rialto* would have been appreciated.

I am renewing my subscription because I think it is important to support you, but your print size is too small and your reviews appear several months after I've bought the books. This seems to be common to all poetry reviews, sometimes by the time a review comes out the book has been remaindered.

I don't read the prose in *The Rialto*, because the lines are unreadably long. You should get a typographer to tell you about the 65-character line.

Your work published in *The Rialto* does not represent the peripheries of Britain. It is very 'English' in tone and feel and fails to represent Anglo-Celtic writing. I don't feel it has its finger on the pulse any more. There is lots of interesting things happening in Wales, Cornwall, Man, Brittany but you ignore it.