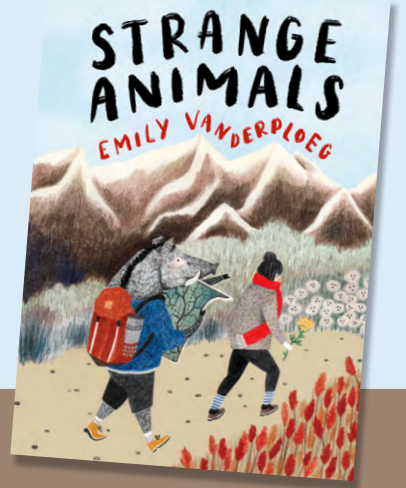


Each month we will focus on an inspiring author based in or writing about Wales! You'll have an introduction to their latest book, what inspires them to write, and any advice they have for young writers!

Get to know



Emily Vanderploeg



A Canadian grandchild of Dutch and Hungarian immigrants, Emily Vanderploeg explores issues of language, ritual, death and identity in poems about her family which open the collection in a close intimate space, which is then ruptured as she and the poems travel to Wales and elsewhere, physically and emotionally, leading us to look at the world through the experiences of animals as people and people as animals, culminating in a sequence of poetry as Tarot – leaving the reader with a fortune told, but more questions than answers.

Summary:

Strange Animals is a collection of experiences – its thread is the author's journey from childhood home to settling across an ocean, moving through the vagaries of modern love as she travels to new cities and a newfound maturity, whilst contemplating the end of youth and what one loses and gains in the process. Throughout these journeys, strange animals appear in the poems, challenging and disrupting both the author's and the reader's experience, asking questions and forcing us to both see and to look at life in curious new ways.

Tell us a little about your poetry collection ...

Strange Animals is a series of journeys, from my childhood home in Canada to settling across the ocean in Wales, through to modern love and new maturity, contemplating what one loses and gains in the process. Throughout these journeys, strange animals appear in the poems, challenging the reader to look at animals as people and people as animals and to contemplate life in curious new ways. Some of the poems deal with my experience of being a grandchild of immigrants and becoming an immigrant myself, as well as issues of language, death, love and identity. And finally, the book finishes with a Tarot reading written as poetry – it's up to the reader to decide if their own fortune has also been told.

What do you hope readers will take away after reading the book?

After reading *Strange Animals*, I hope that readers will identify with the feelings I've tried to express in the poems and that even if they are sad, they will feel hopeful about love and human nature and the passage of time. Writing the poems helped me to feel that way, so I hope I can pass that on to readers, too.

What inspires you to write poetry?

A combination of a feeling or thought or observation that's been weighing on my mind that I need to make sense of, and going for a walk, tend to inspire me to write poetry. It's not very often that I deliberately sit down to write a poem – rather the idea will begin forming, and usually when I am out walking, I end up stopping to scribble down a rough draft in my notebook, that I always carry with me. I try to be patient with the poem in my head, and I really enjoy the sensation of letting it germinate in my mind until it's ready to be written. Then, when I get home, I'll happily spend hours crafting the poem into shape.

PARTHIAN

parthianbooks.com

 **Welsh Libraries**
Get more from your library

... more Q&As
on the website libraries.wales

