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CITY LAUREATE TO PUBLISH DEBUT POETRY COLLECTION

Thom Boulton, Plymouth's current Poet Laureate, will be releasing his debut poetry collection *Prima Materia* on the **23rd of November**. The collection will be published by Waterhare Press.

Thom Boulton is the current Poet Laureate for Plymouth (2016 -). He is a regular performer in Plymouth and the surrounding area, having read at Cross Country Writers, Wonderzoo, Plymouth Language Club, and The Port Eliot Festival. Thom has been published in The Broadsheet, The Dawntreader, and Domestic Cherry. He has been featured on strange-poetry.com, uglywriters.com, and will have two poems in the next edition of Epizootics. Thom was involved in the artistic response to *Poppies:Wave* during its stay on Plymouth Hoe, and was recently featured on BBC Spotlight to showcase a robotics/poetry project he organised with Volume AI.

Prima Materia is a poetic autobiographical reflection on a period of transformation. Thirteen years unfold across thirty eight poems, delving into the struggles of mental health, the discovery of love, a spiritual awakening, and the worries that come with being a human in the 21st century. Thom said, "This book has been two years in the making and I've gone through several versions of it before it evolved into what it is now." He continued, "By sharing my own personal experiences of mental health, I hope to connect with people and encourage conversation about a topic which still faces stigma."

Steve Spence, author of *Many Red Fish* (Knives Forks and Spoons Press) and *A Curious Shipwreck* (Shearsman Books) said, "This debut collection is by a way of an odyssey into the self, an exploration of an individual's journey through the dark to the light, taking in a wide range of materials and experiences. I love the mixing of the 'secular' and the 'spiritual', the way images and actions brush up against each other and most of all I love the unexpected strangeness of these mini-narratives, these delvings into the psyche which are often abruptly interrupted by the 'here and now'."

Prima Materia will be available online from waterharepress.weebly.com as well as through Thom's social media channel - [facebook.com/thomboultonpoet](https://www.facebook.com/thomboultonpoet).

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If you would like to arrange an interview or event then please contact Thom directly through either his email greenbanddruid@outlook.com or by phoning him on 07814 683856.