ALICE OSWALD: Candidate for Oxford Professor of Poetry
Vote via http://www.ox.ac.uk/about/oxford-people/professor-of-poetry

A Short History of Falling

It is the story of the falling rain

to turn into a leaf and fall again

it is the secret of a summer shower
to steal the light and hide it in a flower

and every flower a tiny tributary
that from the ground flows green and momentary

is one of water’s wishes and this tale
hangs in a seed-head smaller than my thumbnail

if only I a passerby could pass
as clear as water through a plume of grass

to find the sunlight hidden at the tip
turning to seed a kind of lifting rain drip

then I might know like water how to
balance
the weight of hope against the light of patience

water which is so raw so earthy-strong
and lurks in cast-iron tanks and leaks along

drawn under gravity towards my tongue
to cool and fill the pipe-work of this song

which is the story of the falling rain
that rises to the light and falls again

.. I cannot think of any poet who is more watchful or with a greater sense of gravity… *The Guardian*, 24 July 2016

**

Fox

I heard a cough
as if a thief was there
outside my sleep

a sharp intake of air

a fox in her fox-fur
stepping across

the grass in her black gloves
barked at my house

just so abrupt and odd

the way she went

hungrily asking

in the heart's thick accent

in such serious sleepless
	trespass she came

a woman with a man's voice

but no name

as if to say: it's midnight

and my life

is laid beneath my children
like gold leaf

from *Falling Awake* (Cape Poetry 2016)

..Oswald is one of our most unabashed interlocutors with the long-dead voices of centuries past… *LA Review of Books*, 3 January 2017

**

Nominators of Alice Oswald

Dr Kalina Allendorf | Dr Harriet Archer | Ms Kate Caoimhe Arthur | Professor Laura Ashe | Ms Hazel Barkworth | Professor Helen Barr | Dr Rebecca Beasley | Professor Matthew Bevis | Alice Bloom | Professor Elleke Boehmer | Professor Charlotte Brewer | Mr Alex Bridgland | Dr David Bryan | Professor Felix Budelmann | Professor Philip Bullock | Professor Colin Burrow | Mrs Kirsten Burrows | Dr Rachel Buxton | Miss Nancy Campbell | Ms Alice Carrington-Windo | Dr Robert Cassels | Professor Terence Cave | Professor Supriya Chaudhuri | Dr Matthew Cheung Salisbury | Mr Thomas Chivers | Mr Rossa Commane |