



Forward Prizes for Poetry

THE FORWARD BOOK OF POETRY 2015

Foreword by Jeremy Paxman (embargoed to 21 September 2014)

Book cover design by Gary Hume

The three Forward Prizes and the publication of this collection – now in its 23rd edition – are missionary work...giving readers a snapshot that demonstrates the immense variety of poetry being published in Britain and Ireland today.

Jeremy Paxman: Chairman, Forward Prizes for Poetry

The Forward Book of Poetry 2015 brings together a selection of the best poetry published in the British Isles over the past year. It features all the shortlisted entries for the prestigious Forward Prizes for Poetry, highly commended poems and a foreword by the Chairman of the judges, the historian and broadcaster Jeremy Paxman.

The judges, singer-songwriter Cerys Matthews and poets Dannie Abse, Vahni Capildeo and Helen Mort considered 170 collections of poetry and 254 single poems. Their recommendations give a strong sense of the variety, vitality and wit present in poetry today, making this anthology valuable both to first-time poetry readers and to those looking for new poetry to enjoy.

The three Forward prizes are unique in honouring both the work of established poets (Best Collection £10,000) and the debuts of brilliant unknowns (Felix Dennis prize for Best First Collection £5,000). The Best Single Poem award (£1,000) is a prize for which only award-winning poems and published works not yet collected in book form are eligible.

The shortlists features 16 intriguing and engaging voices; a former machine-gunner, a National Health Service doctor, a Black Country “wench” set on redeeming her much-mocked dialect and a Jamaican who uses Rastafari “dread-talk” to unravel the island’s colonial past. The highly commended poems include work by Douglas Dunn, David Harsent, Andrew Motion, Ruth Padel and Michael Schmidt. The youngest poet featured is 17-year-old Ian Burnette.

The prizes will be awarded at London’s Southbank centre on Tuesday 30 September, at an event described by the Financial Times as “the bardic equivalent of the Oscars”. The 23rd annual Forward Book of Poetry will be launched on the same day, with a cover by renowned contemporary artist Gary Hume. The event falls in the week of National Poetry Day – Thursday October 2 – a mass celebration of poetry co-ordinated by the Forward Arts Foundation.

Tickets for the event, directed by Samuel West and introduced by Jeremy Paxman and Cerys Matthews, are on sale at www.southbankcentre.co.uk/literature

For more information on the Forward Prizes for Poetry the shortlisted poets and National Poetry Day, visit www.forwardartsfoundation.org

The shortlists for this year's Forward Prizes are as follows:

Shortlisted for the £10,000 Forward Prize for Best Collection

Colette Bryce	<i>The Whole & Rain-domed Universe</i>	Picador Poetry
John Burnside	<i>All One Breath</i>	Cape Poetry
Louise Glück	<i>Faithful and Virtuous Night</i>	Carcanet
Kei Miller	<i>The Cartographer Tries to Map A Way to Zion</i>	Carcanet
Hugo Williams	<i>I Knew the Bride</i>	Faber & Faber

Shortlisted for the £5,000 Felix Dennis Prize for Best First Collection

Liz Berry	<i>Black Country</i>	Chatto & Windus
Fiona Benson	<i>Bright Travellers</i>	Cape Poetry
Niall Campbell	<i>Moontide</i>	Bloodaxe Books
Beatrice Garland	<i>The Invention of Fireworks</i>	Templar Poetry
Kevin Powers	<i>Letter Composed During a Lull in the Fighting</i>	Sceptre
Vidyan Ravinthiran	<i>Grun-tu-molani</i>	Bloodaxe Books

Shortlisted for the £1,000 Forward Prize for Best Single Poem

Tim Nolan	<i>Red Wing Correctional Facility</i>	Troubadour International Poetry Prize
Denise Riley	<i>After La Rochefoucauld</i>	Eggbox/UEA Poetry Series
Stephen Santus	<i>In a Restaurant</i>	The Bridport Prize
Jack Underwood	<i>Thank you for your email</i>	The White Review
Jeffrey Wainwright	<i>An Empty Street</i>	PN Review

Forward Arts Foundation, which runs both the Forward Prizes for Poetry and National Poetry Day, is one of the UK's foremost supporters of the literary arts. The Foundation seeks to extend poetry's audience, raise poetry's profile and link poetry to people in new ways. Its supporters include Forward Worldwide, Arts Council England, the John Ellerman Foundation, the Esmée Fairbairn Foundation, the Rothschild Foundation and the estate of the late Felix Dennis.

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Publisher's information

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