



PRESS RELEASE – 17 March 2015

A L Kennedy to chair 2015 Forward Prizes jury

Royal Festival Hall prize ceremony on 28 September 2015

***Poems of the Decade: an Anthology of the Forward Books of Poetry*
is A Level set text**

The writer and performer A L Kennedy is to chair the jury of the 2015 Forward Prizes for Poetry, which will be awarded at the Royal Festival Hall on 28 September 2015.

She says “I’m delighted to be chairing the Forward jury this year. The Forward Prizes for Poetry have an admirable record of integrity and a proper interest in quality writing.”

The Forward Prizes for Poetry, now in their 24th year, are among the most prestigious literary awards in Britain and Ireland. Past winners include Seamus Heaney, Alice Oswald, Ted Hughes and, in 2014, Kei Miller and Liz Berry.

Awards are made in three categories for poetry published between October 2014 and September 2015. The three prizes - £10,000 for Best Collection, £5,000 for Best First Collection and £1,000 for Best Single Poem - are unique in honouring both established names and new voices. They have been sponsored since 1992 by the content marketing agency, Forward Worldwide.

A L Kennedy’s fellow judges include BBC producer Emma Harding and the poets Colette Bryce, Carrie Etter and Warsan Shire, the first Young Poet Laureate for London. The poems they commend will feature in the 24th annual Forward Book of Poetry, published on the eve of the prizes in September 2015.

Susannah Herbert, executive director of the Forward Arts Foundation, the charity that runs the Prizes and co-ordinates National Poetry Day, says: “The members of this year’s jury feel strongly that good contemporary poetry deserves a wide audience. Their shared love of well-turned language and willingness to take risks suggest that they will come up with intriguing shortlists and a Forward Book that is required reading for anyone interested in the state of contemporary poetry.”

This week also sees the publication of a new edition of *Poems of the Decade: an Anthology of the Forward Books of Poetry* (Forward Worldwide & Faber: £8.99, ISBN 9780571325405), chosen as a English Literature set text at A Level and A/S Level for students enrolled with the Edexcel examination board.

The anthology features twenty poems that students will be expected by examiners to know well: these include work by Seamus Heaney, Carol Ann Duffy and Simon Armitage alongside less familiar names.

Poems of the Decade, edited by William Sieghart, can be ordered here:
<http://www.faber.co.uk/shop/poetry/9780571325405-poems-of-the-decade.html>

For further information, photographs and copies of *Poems of the Decade*, please contact the Forward Arts Foundation on info@forwardartsfoundation.org or Susannah Herbert on 07825 527465

Notes to Editors:

1. The Forward Prizes, now in their 24th year, are the most sought after accolades in the UK and Ireland for both established and emerging poets. With a total value of £16,000, the prizes are divided into three categories: The Forward Prize for Best Collection (£10,000), The Felix Dennis Prize for Best First Collection (£5,000) and the Forward Prize for Best Single Poem (£1,000)
2. Past winners of the Forward Prize for Best Collection are: Kei Miller *The Cartographer Tries to Map a Way to Zion* (Carcenet) 2014, Michael Symmons Roberts *Drysalter* (Cape Poetry) 2013, Jorie Graham *PLACE* (Carcenet) 2012, John Burnside *Black Cat Bone* (Cape Poetry) 2011, Seamus Heaney *Human Chain* (Faber and Faber) 2010, Don Paterson *Rain* (Faber and Faber) 2009, Mick Imlah *The Lost Leader* (Faber and Faber) 2008, Sean O'Brien *The Drowned Book* (Picador Poetry) 2007, Robin Robertson *Swithering* (Cape Poetry) 2006, David Harsent *Legion* (Faber and Faber) 2005, Kathleen Jamie *The Tree House* (Picador Poetry) 2004, Ciaran Carson *Breaking News* (Gallery Press) 2003, Peter Porter *Max is Missing* (Picador Poetry) 2002, Sean O'Brien *Downriver* (Picador Poetry) 2001, Michael Donaghy *Conjure* (Picador Poetry) 2000, Jo Shapcott *My Life Asleep* (OUP) 1999, Ted Hughes *Birthday Letters* (Faber and Faber) 1998, Jamie McKendrick *The Marble Fly* (OUP) 1997, John Fuller *Stones and Fires* (Chatto) 1996, Sean O'Brien *Ghost Train* (OUP) 1995, Alan Jenkins *Harm* (Chatto) 1994, Carol Ann Duffy *Mean Time* (Anvil Press) 1993 and Thom Gunn *The Man with Night Sweats* (Faber and Faber) 1992
3. Forward Arts Foundation, which runs the Forward Prizes for Poetry and National Poetry Day, is an arts charity that seeks to extend poetry's audience, raise poetry's profile and link poetry to people in new ways. Support for its activities is generously provided by Forward Worldwide, Arts Council England, the Esmée Fairbairn Foundation and the Rothschild Foundation. Find it at www.forwardartsfoundation.org and @forwardprizes and @poetrydayuk.
4. Forward Worldwide, one of the UK's leading content marketing agencies, has been the sponsor and key supporter of the Forward Prizes for Poetry since they were first awarded in 1992. Forward Worldwide is based in London, Shanghai and Singapore, and creates engaging, shareable editorial in multiple languages. Clients include Patek Philippe, American Express, Standard Life, Fidelity, B & Q and Tesco. Find them at www.forwardww.com and @tweetfwd.



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