



## Seamus Heaney dies 30.08.13

### Comments from the Poetry Society:

Seamus Heaney was the great poet of our time, the one most equal to its history, in Ireland and elsewhere. His poems, in a phrase he liked himself to borrow from Yeats, were often 'befitting emblems of adversity'.

His death is a great personal loss for his family and friends. It's a great loss, too, to a vast community of poets and writers, and people who simply loved his poetry. For many he was like a father or an elder brother, resourceful and inventive in his care for people. He was a friend to presidents and celebrities, but also attentive to the person in the street asking for his autograph or for a book to be signed.

His poems will live on, loved by many, and will indeed be loved by readers not yet born. Today the man is gone, the voice, the hearty laugh, the generous embrace. It's the felling of a great oak.

**Maurice Riordan**  
Editor, *Poetry Review*

We're stunned by the news. That there'll be no more of Seamus's poetry is hard to accept. But we've also just lost an incredibly warm and generous man. He was a great man, with a great mind, yet he was always approachable, and always took the time to support others.

We've been very lucky, for so long, to have had a poet of such powers, whose work could speak so directly to people of all ages and backgrounds; and a poet, too, who could speak of our islands to the world. There's no question that Heaney will be one of the enduring voices of the century.

**Judith Palmer**  
Director, Poetry Society

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