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# Suzanne Batty is named winner of the inaugural Anne Born Prize 2013



Winner Suzanne Batty (top)  
and judge Penelope Shuttle

The inaugural Anne Born Prize, judged by Penelope Shuttle, has been awarded by the Poetry Society to the poet **Suzanne Batty**. This new award identifies an emerging or mid-career poet for a year of professional development and support. The prize was set up by the Born family in memory of the poet, translator and publisher Anne Born. Penelope said of the winning poet and her work:

'It was [the] human boldness in language and concept that made Suzanne's work stand out. Her very individual subject matter combined with a flowing control over language and form results in poems that are rich with startling yet adept images.' She added, 'Each poem has versatile, nimble and memorable articulation, be it the uncertainties and complexities of family life, the evoking of an historic figure in the grip of intense emotion, or a dream-like christ-figure on a train journey from Mumbai – the reader is constantly surprised.'

Suzanne wins a year of mentorship with Penelope Shuttle, with her second and as-yet unpublished collection as the focus. Reports by both mentor and mentee will be published in *Poetry News* throughout 2014 as the project develops.

'I am delighted and surprised to win. I tend to think of my poems as having a fairly small and particular audience, so it is very encouraging to have this, and some other recent successes,' said Suzanne.

Around 660 poets a year submit new poems to the Poetry Society's members' publication *Poetry News*. All 25 poets published in the *News* throughout 2013 were then considered for the prize. As well as choosing Suzanne Batty as the overall winner, Penelope Shuttle named three highly-commended poets: **Carole Bromley**, **Alyss Dye** and **Hilary Jupp**.

The Anne Born Prize was set up by the Born family and the Poetry Society in honour of the poet's contribution to literature in general, and poetry in particular. Anne, who died in 2011, had interests and expertise that ranged over many subjects, including local history, geology and literature; she was a prize-winning translator from Scandinavian languages, and as well as being a widely published poet herself, she founded and established the poetry publishing house, Oversteps Books.

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The prize is open to all Poetry Society members whose work is published in *Poetry News* throughout the year, and will be awarded annually.

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**For further information about the Anne Born Prize 2013, telephone  
Robyn Donaldson on 020 7420 9886 or email [marketing@poetrysociety.org.uk](mailto:marketing@poetrysociety.org.uk)**

**Notes to Editors:**

• **The winner: Suzanne Batty**

Suzanne has been writing poetry for a number of years, and lectures in creative writing at Sheffield Hallam University. Her first poetry collection, *The Barking Thing*, was published by Bloodaxe in 2007.

She is excited that the prize will help her to develop her work further, and explains, 'I'm hoping that I will finish my second poetry collection with the help of Penelope Shuttle and the mentoring project and also make a start on something new. At the moment I need both encouragement and ruthless criticism. Having such an experienced and exciting poet as Penelope to work with, I am feeling more optimistic about finishing it this year. And hopefully beginning some new poems.' Suzanne works extensively using creative writing as a tool for healing and sees it as an important part of the work she does. She explains, 'I've used creative writing, particularly poetry, to work with people experiencing and recovering from extreme mental distress for many years – in the community and on acute inpatient wards. I believe that any creative intervention can be incredibly healing, but writing is particularly good because it gives a voice to people who tend to be silenced, dismissed, even ridiculed; it enables them to bear witness and to rewrite stories that are doing them harm; to create beauty out of terrible suffering and confusion.'

• **The judge: Penelope Shuttle**

Penelope Shuttle has lived in Cornwall since 1970, is the widow of the poet Peter Redgrove, and has a grown-up daughter Zoe, who works in the field of sustainable energy. First published as a novelist, she has since published eleven poetry collections, with Oxford University Press, Oxford Poets/Carcenet and Bloodaxe Books. Her ninth collection, *Redgrove's Wife* (Bloodaxe Books, 2006) was shortlisted for both the Forward Prize and the T.S. Eliot Prize in 2006. *Sandgrain and Hourglass* (Bloodaxe Books, 2010) is a Poetry Book Society Recommendation. Her latest book, *Unsent: New & Selected Poems 1980-2012* (Bloodaxe Books, 2012), is drawn from ten collections published over three decades plus a new collection, *Unsent*.

Shuttle's work is widely anthologised and can be heard on The Poetry Archive Website. Her poetry has been broadcast on BBC Radio 3 and 4, and her poem 'Outgrown' was used recently in a radio and television commercial. She has been a judge for many poetry competitions, is a Hawthornden Fellow, and a tutor for the Poetry School. She is current Chair of the Falmouth Poetry Group, one of the longest-running poetry workshops in the country.

• **The Poetry Society** runs a number of influential prizes recognizing excellence in poetry, including the National Poetry Competition, Foyle Young Poets of the Year Award, SLAMBassadors UK, the Geoffrey Dearmer Prize, Hamish Canham Prize and the Ted Hughes Award for New Work in Poetry. Founded in 1909, the Poetry Society was set up to promote the study, use and enjoyment of poetry, and has grown to become one of the UK's most dynamic arts organisations. We organise extensive education and commissioning programmes, publish leading poetry magazine *Poetry Review* and edit the UK domain of [poetryinternationalweb.net](http://poetryinternationalweb.net). For further information about the Poetry Society visit [www.poetrysociety.org.uk](http://www.poetrysociety.org.uk)

• **Poetry News.** Every quarter *Poetry News* asks a professional poet to set a theme of his or her choice to which Poetry Society members respond. Each judge selects six poems for publication in *Poetry News*. These poets are then eligible to be considered for the Anne Born prize, which is awarded annually and presented by the Poetry Society on behalf of the Born family.

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