

Change your world forever: The largest poetry competition on the planet Foyle Young Poets of the Year Award - just weeks left to enter



2013 Foyle winner Ian Burnette, 18, South Carolina, USA

Deadline: Midnight 31st July 2014

Announcement of the winners: 2nd October 2014 (National Poetry Day)

Judges: Grace Nichols and Simon Barraclough

"Winning Foyle changed my world forever. In the past year alone, Foyle Young Poets has introduced my writing to an intricate poetic community full of opportunities I would never have been exposed to otherwise, connected me with a group of passionate young writers who have become some of my closest friends, and given meaning to my writing life."

Ian Burnette, Foyle Young Poet of the Year 2013 Top 15 Winner.

www.foleyoungpoets.org

With over **7,300** young people entering their poems into last year's competition from a staggering 75 countries worldwide, the Foyle Young Poets of the Year Award has cemented its position as the largest and most prestigious poetry prize for young writers aged 11-17. Now in its 17th year, the Award has become a fixture in thousands of young people's calendars as they flock to enter the world's no. 1 poetry competition in the hopes of being selected as one of the Top 15 winners or 85 Commended writers. Young people have just weeks left to enter: the Award closes for entries at midnight on the 31st July 2014.

With such fierce competition, the poets that reach to the top of the pile mark themselves out as exciting young writers of a world-class standard. Ian Burnette (pictured) from the USA is the latest to join a glittering roster of poets that have risen through the ranks of the Foyle Young Poets of the Year Award. His winning 2013 Foyle poem '[Dutch Baby](#)' has been Highly Commended by the judges in the prestigious Forward Prizes for Poetry and as such will be included in the [Forward Book of Poetry 2015](#). The judging panel included broadcaster Jeremy Paxman and acclaimed poet Dannie Abse. At 18, Burnette is the youngest recipient of a High Commendation in the Prizes' 23 year history, and shares his success with an impressive list of world-renowned poets including Imtiaz Darker and August Kleinzahler.

Since the Foyle Young Poets of the Year Award began in 1998, it has kick-started the career of many other exciting new voices, including *Poetry London* editor Ahren Warner, Gregory Award winner Martha Sprackland and T.S. Eliot nominated Helen Mort.

Any young person aged 11-17 writing in English can enter the Foyle competition, whether they have been writing for a long time or just started, and the competition is free to enter. Full details on entering the competition can be found at www.foyleyoungpoets.org

The top 15 winning poets will have their poems published in an anthology in March 2015, which will be sent out to more than 24,000 people worldwide, making it one of the largest circulated poetry anthologies in the world. The current anthology '[Rattle the hatches](#)' celebrates last year's winners and invites entries to the 2014 competition.

The top 15 poets will attend a week-long residential creative writing course at the prestigious Hurst Arvon centre in Shropshire, where they will be tutored by this year's judges, or receive a visit to their school from a professional poet, followed by one to one and distance mentoring (age dependent). The 85 Commended Winners will receive book prizes and a year's Youth Membership of the Poetry Society, the UK's leading poetry organisation.

All 100 winners of the Foyle Young Poets of the Year Award benefit from ongoing support and encouragement, via publication, performance, promotion and internship opportunities. In the past year, Foyle winners have been showcased widely, including the BBC Proms, Cheltenham Literature Festival, Ledbury Poetry Festival and Southbank Centre – not to mention being published in each of the 250,000 books given away for World Book Night in April 2014.

The prizes will be awarded at a special ceremony held at the Royal Festival Hall in London on Thursday 2nd October (National Poetry Day).

The Foyle Young Poets of the Year Award 2014 is generously supported by the Foyle Foundation.

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Editor's Notes

The Foyle Young Poets of the Year 2014 Judges

Grace Nichols

Grace Nichols was born in Georgetown, Guyana and grew up in a small country village on the coast. A move to the city with her family when she was eight greatly influenced her first novel, *Whole of a Morning Sky* (1986), a story set in 1960s Guyana amidst the country's struggle for independence. This period shaped her writings and sparked her interest in Guyanese folk tales, Amerindian myths and the South American civilisations of the Aztec and Inca. She has lived in the UK since 1977. Her first poetry collection, *I is a Long-Memoried Woman* (1983), won the Commonwealth Poetry Prize. The book was subsequently dramatised for radio by the BBC, and adapted for film, winning a gold medal at the International Film and Television Festival New York. Her latest books are *Picasso, I Want My Face Back* (2009); and *I Have Crossed an Ocean: Selected Poems* (2010). She also writes books for children, including *Come on into My Tropical Garden* (1988), and *Everybody Got A Gift* (2005) which includes new and selected poems. Her two new children's books, *Cosmic Disco* and *Sun Time, Snow Time* were released in August 2013.

Simon Barraclough

Simon Barraclough was born and raised in Huddersfield, West Yorkshire and studied literature in Nottingham and Brighton, eventually moving to London in 1997. His poems have been published widely in journals and

anthologies and he is a regular contributor to Radio 3 and Radio 4, particularly The Film Programme for which he has been commissioned to write several new pieces. His debut book, *Los Alamos Mon Amour* was nominated for Best First Collection in the Forward Prize of 2008, going on to publish *Bonjour Tetris* (2010) and *Neptune Blue* (2011). He is the editor of *Psycho Poetica* (Sidekick Books, 2012) and co-author of *The Debris Field* (Sidekick Books, 2013). He works as a freelance writer in the creative and technical fields and runs occasional school workshops on writing and poetry, and is currently poet in residence at the Mullard Space Science Laboratory in Surrey and working on a book and event entitled Sunspots.

"I'm incredibly excited about judging the Poetry Society's Foyle Young Poet of the Year Award. When I was 11 or 12 I fell in love with poetry, hard, and I feel this journey will take me back in time to when poetry was a vast and mysterious continent, waiting to receive my inky footprints. I can't wait to see how, and what, our young poets are writing and I'm looking forward to helping them explore their abilities and potential via the Arvon course." - Simon Barraclough

The Foyle Foundation

The Foyle Foundation is an independent grant-making trust supporting UK charities which, since its formation in 2001, has become a major funder of the arts and learning.

The Foyle Foundation has invested in the Foyle Young Poets of the Year Award since 2001, one of its longest partnerships. During this time it has trebled its support and enabled the competition to develop and grow to become one of the premier literary awards in the country.

www.foylefoundation.org.uk

The Poetry Society

The Poetry Society was founded in 1909 to promote a "more general recognition and appreciation of poetry". Since then, it has grown into one of Britain's most dynamic arts organisations, representing British poetry both nationally and internationally. Today it has nearly 4,000 members worldwide and publishes the leading poetry magazine, *Poetry Review*.

With innovative education and commissioning programmes, and a packed calendar of performances, readings and competitions, the Poetry Society champions poetry for all ages.

As well as the Foyle Young Poets of the Year Award, the Poetry Society runs the National Poetry Competition, one of the world's longest-running and most prestigious prizes for an individual poem, and the Ted Hughes Award for New Work in Poetry – the prize founded by Carol Ann Duffy with the honorarium the Poet Laureate traditionally receives from HM the Queen.

www.poetrysociety.org.uk

Forward Prizes for Poetry

The Forward Prizes, now in their 23rd year, are the most sought after accolades in the UK and Ireland for both established and emerging poets. Past winners include Seamus Heaney, Ted Hughes, Alice Oswald, Carol Ann Duffy and Simon Armitage. 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)

www.forwardartsfoundation.org

Contact

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