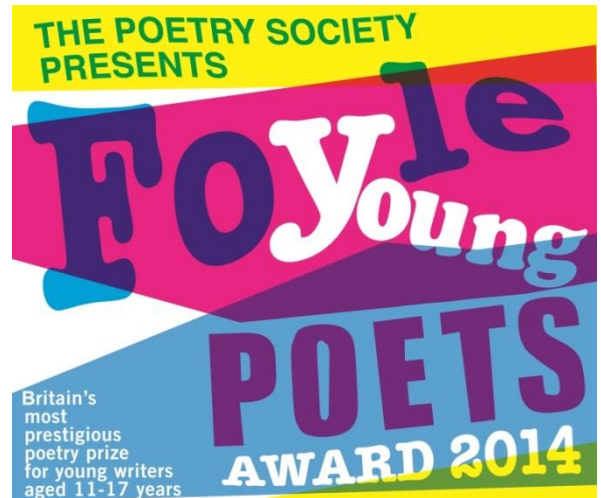


Martha Kearney appointed patron of the Foyle Young Poets of the Year Award, the World's no.1 poetry competition for young people



The Poetry Society is delighted to announce that broadcaster and journalist Martha Kearney has been appointed patron of the Foyle Young Poets of the Year Award. Martha takes over from acclaimed poet Ian MacMillan as the Award's second celebrity patron in its prestigious 17 year history.

The [Foyle Young Poets of the Year Award](#) is the world's largest and most prestigious poetry prize for young writers aged 11-17. Last year's competition attracted entries from over 7,400 young people from 75 countries worldwide. The 2013 winners (15 top winners and 85 commended poets) spanned the globe, from Nigeria to Malaysia and right across the UK.

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

Speaking about her appointment, Martha Kearney said: *"It is fantastic to see a poetry competition which includes young people from all over the world. I am proud to support Foyle and welcome all those brave enough to show their work to the judges."*

Judith Palmer, Director, The Poetry Society, said:

"We are delighted that Martha has agreed to be a patron of Foyle. The growing popularity of Foyle and its international reputation for exciting young writing makes it perfect timing to appoint a patron who can help us build on these achievements and expand Foyle's appeal and reach. We could not ask for a finer patron, Martha has such a strong interest and appreciation of writing and the arts."

There are just a couple of weeks left to enter this year's Foyle Young Poets of the Year Award: the Award closes for entries at midnight on the 31st July 2014.

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.

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. They will also attend a week-long residential creative writing course at the prestigious Hurst Arvon centre in Shropshire, 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). Full details on entering the competition can be found at www.foleyoungpoets.org

The Foyle Young Poets of the Year Award 2014 is generously supported by the Foyle Foundation.
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Editor's Notes

Martha Kearney

Martha Kearney presents *The World At One* on BBC Radio Four and has developed a reputation as one of the BBC's most respected political journalists. She is also a regular presenter of BBC2 arts programmes, including *The Review Show* and the *Arts At* strands.

Martha is a keen apiarist and in spring 2014 hosted *The Wonder of Bees*, a four part documentary on BBC4 which won critical acclaim and followed a year in the life of her own bee hives. She also fronted a BBC4 documentary in 2009 about the desperate plight of the bee entitled *Who Killed The Honey Bee?*

In 2011 Martha presented *Jane Austen: The Unseen Portrait?* a BBC2 documentary in which Martha joined Austen biographer Paula Byrne on her quest to verify the authenticity of a possible portrait of the author through forensic analysis and scrutiny by art historians and world leading Austen experts.

Martha joined *Newsnight* in 1994, having previously been a reporter for BBC1's *On the Record*, since 1988. She has also reported for *Panorama*. She began her journalistic career in radio, and worked as Lobby correspondent for LBC/IRN, before joining Channel Four TV's respected *Week in Politics* team. She became political editor of *Newsnight* in 2000. She presented *Woman's Hour* on BBC Radio Four from 1998 to 2007.

In 2001 Martha won the Sony Radio Bronze award. In 1998 she was nominated for a BAFTA for her coverage of the Northern Ireland peace process.

In December 2005 she was named Political Commentator of the Year by the *House Magazine*, voted for by MPs and Peers.

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

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