

BALLEA WRITERS NEWS

Winners Of Ballea Writers Young Poets Competition Announced

Sponsored by Martin Walsh Pharmacy and Maryville Equestrian Centre

The Poetry Award Ceremony will take place in the Library of the Carrigaline Community School on Saturday next, i.e. Saturday March 31st. The Junior/Ultra Junior awards will commence at 10.30am and the Intermediate/Senior awards will commence at 1.30 pm. All winners, finalists and semi-finalists will be invited to recite their poem at this ceremony but recital is not compulsory. All family members, school representatives, supporters, other poets and the public are most welcome to attend. A photographer will be in attendance throughout the day. Our Award Ceremony coincides with Carrigaline Arts Day so there will be art exhibitions, youth bands and dance on display in the school that day: An exciting day out for all the family. The quality of primary school entries surpassed all our expectations and left us with far more semi-finalists than we'd anticipated. We'd pledged to publish twenty poems from this age group but we're going to use a lot more than that. It could be several months before we can announce which semi-finalists will go forward to publication. Most of the semi-finalists require editing and it just depends which poems can be strengthened without losing the voice of the child. We have shortened titles of many poems because titles need to be as significant as possible. Some schools entered poems from younger children than we had expected and we're delighted with that because the standard from three of these little ones, Ultra Juniors, was so strong that we couldn't help but acknowledge them with special awards. Some other Ultra Juniors are among the bulk of the semi-finalists. Ultra Junior Winners (Alphabetical order) (Each win €50) Green: Dominic Clarke Granddad: Catriona Kelly Mo Dhaid: Orla Murphy

The following poem, Green, is by our youngest entrant, eight year-old Dominic Clarke of Ringaskiddy Lower Harbour N.S. Dominic wins Euro 50 for his poem.

Green

We worked and scrubbed

And cleaned all day:
We did our best
For the Green flag way.

We sorted the rubbish
And took out the trash.
On our Green Flag Day
We had a great bash.

We swept the yard,
Made it spick and span,
We recycled it all:
Plastic bottles and cans.

The inspector came
To our school next day
And told us we'd done it
The Green Flag way.

Dominic Clarke

Age 8

The following poem, Granddad, is by nine year-old Catriona Kelly of Scoil Bhríde Crosshaven. Catriona wins €50 for this poem. We got a lot of bereavement poems from all age groups but we particularly like Granddad, because it's tight i.e. its told in a minimum of words. Some of the bereavement poems were too long and went into such detail as to risk losing the empathy of the reader. As a general rule the longer a poem is the weaker it becomes. We will publish other bereavement poems but we'll need to condense the verses in order to make them stronger.

Granddad
My loving one is
Granddad,
I love him very much.
When he went to hospital
I couldn't get in touch.

He was not very well
And to Heaven he did go
And ever since that day
I've been feeling very low.

I miss his great big hugs
And the games we used to play:
He was so very loving
In Granddad's special way.

Catriona Kelly

Age 9

There was a tie for first place in Junior and in the Intermediate/Senior, Secondary School, categories so we are awarding four, rather than two, €75 prizes. The book might be called Clever Cuckoo as this title applies to any of the young poets who managed to get their poem in the book. We have added some additional prizes: fourth prizes and extra highly commended prizes. Tied prizes are presented in alphabetical order. First prizes are €75 each, we have no second prizes, third prizes are €25 each, fourth prizes are €15 each



Morgan Walsh, aged ten, from Shanbally School who's poem Clever Cuckoo won joint 1st in the junior category.

and Highly Commended, joint 5th, are €10 each.
Junior Winners
1st Is Mise An Ghaoth:
Seán Conaty
1st Clever Cuckoo:
Morgan Walsh
3rd Longing for Love:
Rosie O'Keeffe
4th Mask: Sophie Von M
5th Ghost: Diarmuid Cronin
5th Wind Man: Stephan Daunt
5th River King: Stephanie Harwood
5th When I Grow Old:
Aoife Hogan
5th Butterflies Rosie O'Keeffe
5th Sport Ciara O'Leary

Junior Finalists

Petrol Head: Peter Daunt
Nuair A Bhi Mé Óg: Peter Daunt
Playground: Anna Harrington
Daisy: Jennifer Kiely
It's All in a Poem: Kate Murphy
An Buachaill Dana: Michael O'Donovan

Junior Semi-finalists

(Random order)
Eimear Maverley,
Aoife Byrne-Ring
Aoife Brady,
Eoghan Callanan,
Erin Harrington
Martha O'Brien (2)
Ben Murphy
Kate Cullinane
Laurie Purkiss
Ellen Ryan
Caoimhe Fidgeon
Rachel Lawlor
Caoimhe Hoey
Ciara O'Brien
Sophie Charlotte
Orla Coghlan
Katie Shanahan

Corie Butler
Louise Mills
Kate Murphy
Amy Cullinane
Emilie Mackeown (3)
Stephanie Harwood
June Stone

The following poem by 11 year-old Seán Conaty, of Templebreedy School, won 1st prize of Euro 75 in the junior category.

Is Mise an Ghaoth

Is mise an ghaoth bhog,
Nuair a shéideann mé
Bíonn báid ar an bhfarraige
Agus an ghrian ag taitheamh.

Is mise an ghaoth láidir,
Nuair a shéideann mé
Bíonn eagla ar dhaoine
Agus crainn ar an dtalamh.

Is mise a ghaoth fhuar,
Nuair a shéideann mé
Bíonn na crainn lom
Agus an talamh roeite.

Seán Conaty

Age 11

Only about ten percent of the Intermediate/Senior poetry entries were in the Irish language yet they managed to win the majority of the top prizes for Secondary School poems. Many of these entries came in on the heels of the competition closing date so they were absent from the lists that we published last week. Secondary School Winners
1st Why: Diarmuid Clayton
1st An Dileachta: Arron Ó Conchúir

3rd Anam Gan Solas:
Séamas Ó Conchubhair
4th Leadrán na Scoile:
Aodán Ó Máthairbhúí
5th Mo Chara: Anonymous
5th Lost Dream: Diarmuid Hickey
5th Voiceless: Erica Lester
5th Tiomáint: Colm Ó Brosnacháin
5th An Saol Duair: Brian Ó Súilleabháin
5th Life at 13: Naomi Rhys-Davies

The following poem by 15 year-old Diarmuid Clayton won 1st prize in the Secondary School Category.

Why?
Millions die
Others scream
A race wiped out
A madman's dream.

In shallow graves
Their bodies lie:
A thousand voices
Call out, 'Why?'

The bombs transmit
A deadly rain
Of mass destruction
Death and pain.

And when it's done
The mothers cry.
Engraved forever
The question, 'Why?'

Diarmuid Clayton
Age 15

Secondary School Finalists (in alphabetical order)
Concert: Diarmuid Clayton
Dreamer: Lisa Dore
Inspiration: Clodagh Harrington
Raven: Erica Lester
Done Roamin: Cathal

Malone
Loss: Marie McInerney
Sunlit: Ciara O'Donovan
School: Alex Rhys-Davies
Be Bothered: Naomi Rhys-Davies
Regret: Chelsea Wiley

Please try to bring a copy of your poem with you to read at the awards ceremony. With a view to publishing: we would like to see more poems from any of the above authors: Ultra Junior, Junior, Intermediate or Senior, up to the age of 18.

This week sees the one-year anniversary of Ballea Writers and some of the above poems will be recited at our first anniversary dinner. Some of the participating schools are sending representatives to the dinner to meet the rest of our writers and discuss what Ballea Writers may be able to do for them in the future. As part of the poetry competition we gave free poetry writing workshops to eighteen local schools and the schools are keen to have us continue the workshops in the future. Some are talking about next year's competition already! I would like to tackle another discipline in a future competition. I particularly like the short shorts i.e. stories of up to 300 words but for now I need some time to get the poetry book ready for publishing.

Ballea writers are setting up a Creative Writing Network for local schools. The idea is that representatives from the schools can get together and identify their needs and pass them on to us. This competition revealed that the inclusion of Irish and English side by side, rather than as separate categories, worked to push up the standard of the Irish.

CONTACT

Ballea Writers, who meet in the Ballea Suite of the Carrigaline Court Hotel from 7.30-9.30 most Mondays, can be contacted at balleawriters@gmail.com Ballea Writers have adult sessions for fiction, poetry and journalism each month and children's sessions, throughout the year, in schools. The annual membership fee of €38 covers all the disciplines. There is a sub of €5 per workshop for adults and workshops for schools are free of charge.