

Feeling the Heat

TRÓCAIRE AND POETRY IRELAND

POETRY COMPETITION 2015

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trócaire

Working for a just world.

Feeling the Heat

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POETRY COMPETITION 2015

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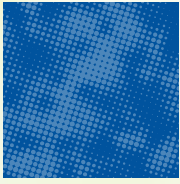
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Adult Published Category





MARKING TIME

She flips back loose wisps of hair,
walks further each day in search of water,
drifts into land assaulted by sun.
Her feet burn from the hot earth.

She picks up a handful of dust, watches it
fall through fingers, asks herself whether rain
might ever again remember how to fall.
What she owns now is memory,

knee deep in the river, the splash of water
pulsing through her body like early love,
going out into the night-scent of wet earth,
ripening yams, swelling maize.

She side-steps past dried out river beds,
past gullies that have lost their voice,
listens to thrumming rain-drums
invoking cloud gods.

Waves of heat lift her.
She is carried by water-scented wind,
carried and let fall into puddles of mud,
rocked in an empty boat of territory

that moulded her, that holds her in its clasp
even as the desert moves closer.
She walks further into the future
her feet heavy with need and want and heat.

Ann Joyce



BUILLE NA TRÓCAIRE

Tá na déithe ar buille
is an fharraige ina rabharta
racht feirige ón ngréin
is ár gcrainn ag caoineadh
lorg gaise ag cothú raic.

Tá Manannán éirithe chuige féin
le tuillte dearga fairsing
tá Anyanwo teite ón ngréin
agus Áine ag caoineadh
lorg an fhéir dhóite.

Tá tonnta teasa mharfacha
ag ídiú ár n-áitribhigh farraige
an bháisteach ag clagarnach
gan stop gan coinne is sinn ag caoineadh
lorg ár niompar carbónach.

Tá sé in am do choigilt fuinnimh
chun na déithe a chiúniú
is ár gcoillte i ndeire an áil
siad na boicht a chaoineann
lorg ár bpaidreacha ar fán.

Tá an fheirmeoir sa ghort teanntaithe
ag cíorthuathail an ghorta
macalláí ó shrutháin uisce
ag caoineadh ragairne is raidhse
lorg ár n-easpa trócaire ar lár.

Dairena Ní Chinnéide

SLOW DANCING IN A BURNING ROOM

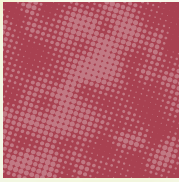
If I follow the carbon footpath
to a future memory,
I find you, lean and supple,
though you blur a little.
That's because I'm pushing
my heart against you, and my eyes
are mostly closed to the squinting,

bouncing dark. It's the unknown
of the known that attracts us.
We move blindly around the room,
among the uninvited ones,
and I drink you in as though
through a straw,
slowly, sucking deeply.

The others have departed
to be Martians, low gravity
a safer bet than burning.
The doors, back and front,
are still open, and the yellowwood
floor is glowing. Do we dim
or brighten, before the sirens blare?

Afric McGlinchey





Adult Non-Published Category



INUIT

His parents told him stories of the moon,
how in summer it would be starved by the sun,
grow skinny, until only a crescent survived

but, in winter, the sprightly moon could run rings
around the sun and, as the sky darkened,
the snow would forget to melt.

This was how it was when he was young,
and now, every year, he builds
his igloo closer to the Pole, tip-toes

in snow-shoes across the tightening
cling-film of ice, hunts for seal
with a lighter sled and heavier mind,

wonders what stories he can tell
his children, that even he could believe.

Maurice Devitt





WARMING

You might think in a particular way about rock pools of the intertidal zone; rich for those who live life on the edge.

But where the seabed falls away and light expires in beds of brown sway kelp, there's a primal knowledge working with the pull of moon.

Underside pale, topside dark and receptors to help me know which way up things are. I float ghost-grey in the gloom, enormously unblinking.

Some days I bloom sienna red, thought-spot strobes cross my body as I open and close like a tentacled sunshade.

Sometimes on the surface there's a low vibration – you are up there diving from your vessel. I fire-storm, send out a cloud of ink-smoke.

We shared this world four hundred million years ago, you, some body fish who crawled through mud, claimed land-rights and air-space.

You're warm now, joints crab-like, I send out a rasp of toxic beak as you swim weightless, net conspicuous.

Do you suppose our ancient mind doesn't know about aquariums, fishmongers and slippery deaths; have you forgotten

what your tears are made from? Your heart still flutters but you don't feel the humming stars dance with water.

Soon my world will flood the rooms of sand and stone that you have bound together and my tentacles will seek you out.

Michael Ray

RULE THE WORLD 2015

fill me up, hose me down,
fill me up, hose me down,
turn on the lights, turn up the sound,
fill me up, hose me down,
pile it high, pump it loud,
slick the ocean, sludge the sky,
pile it high, pump it loud,
churn it up, push it over,
line my wallet, lay my table,
churn it up, push it over,
pack it in, squeeze it out,
make a mountain, top up a lake,
pack it in, squeeze it out,
swill it back, chase the max,
impose no rule, it's on my terms,
swill it back, chase the max,
crank it up, need it now,
stretch the boundary, cross the line,
crank it up, need it now,
take my fill, excess is less,
get creative, evade the tax,
take my fill, excess is less,
see the world, see it fast,
accept no blame, have no regret,
see the world, see it fast,
fan the flames, feel the heat,
just a consumer, I'm no user,
fan the flames, feel the heat,
fill me up, hose me down,
fill me up, hose me down.

Therese Kieran





Post-Primary Senior Category

Transition Year, 5th and 6th Year





THE SINS OF THE CHILDREN

The mute, mothball shrieks of children dying
under mother's hands
And the fractal bursts of fractured light that hit
As the world tumbles over itself, leaving vague moments
Like fingernails between the stones.

While we, like disapproving books on dusty shelves
Clasp coffee cups against the precious beating of our hearts
Toss cynicism between one another, each drop of sweat a privilege
Each breath a human right.

Stuffed straw mouths and shining hair
Religious freedom weighs more than dead children
Leaving corpses littered like cigarettes
Colours in a twisted dream of heaven.

Matchstick ribs jutting, but we stood on the moon
How fragile have we made our one,
short and common life? How easily
our complacency is bought.

And in the dull light of big-mooned skies
Ragged lines of blood stutter down, rough
touches underneath a fluorescent fire. Severed
heads belching, toddlers left for flies.

In empty houses seashells wait for pudgy fingers
now bludgeoned shades of navy blue. And
our tots writhe on the warehouse floor, unable
to comprehend a world without Lego.

These shells will not creak in a gruff wind
Stretched lopsided over an imagined territory
An imagined safety, an imagined,
tender world.

Emma Tobin



FEVERED, STUMBLING

The street seems so very alive
as it heaves with bodies,
sweaty and hot. A smoky haze,
draped beneath reams of red fabric.
Blood-red, nailed to every brick
and hitched to every pole.

Hemmed in by decrepit shacks,
fragile and crumbling, children
hide in doorways. Leaning out
by the crooks of their elbows,
they pick pockets and laugh,
crafty, dark eyes and ribcages.

A ramshackle church has fallen
into disrepair, stone and seashells.
A murder of crows, greedy, big
as cats, lurks on the gable. Grinning
crook-toothed gravestones feathered
by the claws of time. Overgrown.

We'll not linger. It's a strange place,
It haunts your eyes. Siren songs
and fire-breathers beckon.
Cloaked in the effervescent ruby blue
of humid night, the crowd roars,
a distant heartbeat spiking.

We follow the lanterns back.

Arianne Dunne

AN TOBAR

Tá sean-tobar tréigthe i lár an gharraí,
Nach bhfeiceann aonduine níos mó
Uisce úr na ndaoine fadó.
Tá screamhóg ramhar ag snámh ar barr,
mar bheadh an t-uisce marbh
ar nós na ndaoine a bhíodh ag tarraingt as.
B'fhéidir go mbeadh meas ar an uisce seo fós.

Pádraic de Bhailis



FEELING THE HEAT

While you feel the heat of your fresh roast coffee
I feel the heat of the burning sun,
While you feel the heat of your radiators and fires
I feel the heat of the burning sun,
While you feel the heat of your car's engine
I feel the heat of the burning sun,
While you feel the heat of your laptops and smartphones
I feel the heat of the burning sun.
I feel the heat of the burning sun,
While you add to this with the injustice of climate
change.
I feel the heat of the burning sun,
While you sit back and feel nothing.

Owen O'Sullivan





David Mwaniki (35) and Agnes Kagendi (35),
Chuka town area, Meru, Kenya, 2013.

Photographer: Clare McEvoy/Trócaire



Post-Primary Junior Category

1st–3rd Year



FEELING THE HEAT

When the tall pine trees on the hill,
letting in diamond shards of light
on the forest floor,
are gone,
When the trickling streams of your country,
wearing away the black rocks
and perfect pebbles,
are still,
When the only sound of life
is the rumbling of cars,
coughing smoky grey fumes
into the city,
When the crisp ground burns your feet
and the frowns are etched so deep
into the burnt paper skin,
then you will understand –
Because I know these sights,
I know them all too well.
Because of you, my country now is hell.
When will you feel the heat?

Ruby Thomas



THIRST

My dry heart belongs to the desert sand
and I cough up my childhood memories,
scattering through air like dust

I have been bone dry since birth,
since the beginning of this journey,
that never ends

Dry and crackling like the desert soil,
no hope of rain and no sign of life

My dry heart hides behind my bleached desert bones
and I drown in the sand.

Bobina P. Bovachan





SACRAMENTS OF SHADE

I watched the shadows grow and twist.
They were things set between us and the sun,
hopeful hopeless shade, something to share,
when there was nothing left.

I remembered – I think I did –
(It could have been a mirage, shimmering
And deceitful in the splashes of heat)
when we were lying on the grass that now sleeps
parched and insignificant, yellow and withered.
And I was happy.

I remembered when heat meant summer, and not skeletons.
When water was a river and not a few dusty drops
that slid down raw throats and almost made the thirst worsen.
I remember when food was food, and not the last bones snarled over
After a meal, the heat making us animals again,
Under the burning watchful sun.

Oh God, you've been so careless with your toys.

And I couldn't help but notice
The absence of shade
Where dead trees spread their withered hands
Over the scorched earth –
So it was almost a blessing when the night came.

Niamh O'Farrell-Tyler

MY JOURNEY TO A RIVER

I walk along the hot sand
to the river near the trees
It isn't far, not far at all
with a bucket on my head
The hot desert sun burns into my skin.

I walk along the river bank
to see if the water is fair.
I take the bucket off my head
and pour the water into my nice yellow bucket.

I hear the water whoosh across the stream.
I put my hands into the water one hand then two.
I close my eyes and taste the cold refreshing water.

I put one foot then another and get my skirt all wet but that doesn't matter.
I put the bucket on my head and I walk, I walk along the hot sand.

Souraya Abdoulaye





Jedida Ngithi (28), Ishiara, Kenya, 2013.

Photographer: Clare McEvoy/Trócaire



Primary Senior Category

5th–6th Class



FEELING THE HEAT

Days have been spent sowing
barley, wheat, and oats
in hand prepared ground.
Food is scarce, so at break
we have little or nothing.

Thunderous rain comes
and drenches for weeks.
The clay turns to muck
and all our work is gone.

I was taken out of school.
Mother said we had no
money. Dad is searching
for work and a new home
as ours is disappearing.

Shémie Caomhánach



ENVIRONMENTAL CHANGE

Temperatures are rising,
Sea levels are rising too,
I don't own a canoe,
So what do you suggest I do?

I could move to Scandinavia,
And live amongst the ice and snow,
But if the temperatures keep rising,
All of that too will go.

I suppose I could recycle,
Turn the lights off as I go,
Maybe plant a tree or two
It might help, you never know.

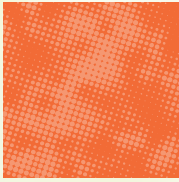
Environmental change is happening,
It is something we can't outrun,
Can we explain to our children
Just what we have done?

Patrick Barrett





Kanee Mutie (39), Ngiluni, Kitui, Kenya, 2013.
Photographer: Clare McEvoy/Trócaire



Primary Junior Category

3rd–4th Class



DEVASTATION

Devastation had come upon the land.
The sea raging, wave upon wave of foamy teeth
racked the shore.
The tsunami had come.

The wind howled, ripping houses from the earth,
demolishing everything in its path.
There was no mercy.

The sea conquered, water coursing through the town,
strangled screams as the waves slowly enveloped the people.
Then there was silence.

Bronagh O'Meara



OUR MISTAKE

Splendid trees sway in a tropical breeze
Birds like rainbows squawk their warnings
High on branches, gathering like a flower garden
Their noisy beaks talk of global warming.

Burnt grass lines the crusty fields
Wrens and robins seek out hedgerows
Sheltering from the sweltering heat
One by one drop the weakened crows.

Oil spills leaving layers on the ocean
A cormorant's wings no use anymore
His ebony feathers blue and green
As he slowly drifts away on the disgraced shore.

Elise Carey-McGibney



DEAD EARTH

Ice caps melting,
People dying,
People crying,
Trying to survive,
No longer have food to eat,
Fields too bare,
Not even one crop will grow,
The earth cannot take this any more,
'I've had enough,
I cannot stand this destruction any longer,
You humans need to look after me,
Without me, you cannot live.'

Dylan Doyle



NOTES ON CONTRIBUTORS

SOURAYA ABDOULAYE is a fourteen-year-old second-year student in St Wolstan's Community School in Celbridge. Souroya was born in Cork but her parents are natives of Chad. She has a keen interest in issues that affect the developing world. This inspired her to enter Feeling the Heat, the Trócaire and Poetry Ireland competition. Souroya enjoys listening to music and loves to read. Her favourite subject is English.

PATRICK BARRETT is the eldest of four children. He is a Mayo fan; he regularly visits Croke Park with his dad and brother. To pass the time he either reads or plays Gaelic. He plays for a Gaelic club called Shamrock Gaels. His favourite food is mussels. He and his dad sometimes catch them off the coastline of Belmullett.

BOBINA P. BOVACHAN is originally from India and now lives in Ballymahon. She likes to write poems. Sometimes when she gets bored she will write down a few lines. Most of the time she reads. She likes to read fiction books.

SHÉMIE CAOMHÁNACH resides in Kilrush, Co. Wexford, with his parents and sister Anna. Shémie is presently in fifth class in Gaelscoil Inis Córthaidh and is a member of the school's chess club. When Shémie is not helping his dad on the farm he writes poetry, plays the piano and runs with his local athletic club, the Sliabh Buí Rovers. He is also a member of the Wexford lifesaving team. Shémie is a keen reader and a talented writer.

ELISE CAREY-MCGIBNEY is eight years of age and is in third class in St Brendan's National School. She lives in Fenit – a picturesque fishing village in Co. Kerry. She loves art and writing poetry.

Is scoláire Idirbhliana é PÁDRAIC DE BHAILIS i Scoil Chuimsitheach Chiaráin. Tá sé 15 bli. déag. Is breá leis peil ghaelach agus imrín sé ar fhoireann mionúr agus foireann faoi 16 An Cheathrú Rua. Is maith leis stair agus a bheith ag léamh agus ag foghlaim faoi an dá Chogadh Domhanda.

MAURICE DEVITT completed the Poetry Studies MA at Mater Dei in Dublin, focusing on the poetry of James Wright, John Berryman, Charles Bernstein and others. During 2014 he was runner-up in the Over the Edge New Writer Award, short-listed for Poets Meet Painters, Cúirt New Writing Award, The Listowel Writers' Week Collection Competition and selected for The Cork Spring Poetry Festival. Over the past four years he has had about one hundred poems accepted by journals in Ireland, England, Scotland, the US, India, Australia and Mexico. He is a founder member and chairperson of the Hibernian Writers' Group.

DYLAN DOYLE is a ten-year-old boy who attends Our Lady Queen of the Apostles National School in Clondalkin. 'He is without a doubt one of the hardest working boys in the class,' his teacher says. 'He has pots of potential and never fails to make us laugh. We are so proud of him.'

ARIANNE DUNNE is a reader, writer, poet, book blogger and a student with an undying love for young adult literature. When not studying or spending time with friends, she works with horses and watches more films than she technically has time for. She lives with her family and, if her true calling as a professional BBC drama fan doesn't work out, hopes to pursue a career in publishing or writing.

ANN JOYCE'S poetry collection *Watching for Signs* was published by Dedalus Press in 2005. One of the poems in this collection has been set to music and performed by Crazy Dog Audio Theatre, Dublin, as part of The Bee Loud Glade project with Dedalus Press. A CD of poetry, music and song, *Meadbh – The Crimson Path*, in collaboration with composer and traditional musician John Carty, was released in 2011. This work was performed in Hawks Well Theatre, Sligo, in conjunction with Yeats Society and Yeats International Summer School 2013.

THERESE KIERAN lives in Belfast. She is a design graduate. Four years ago, she began to write and continues to attend classes in Belfast's Crescent Arts Centre. Her achievements include publication in CAP's *Moments* anthology, Shalom's recent *Between Light and The Half Light* anthology, and in 2013 she won the Belfast Zoo's poetry competition. In March 2015 she was long-listed for the Seamus Heaney Award for New Writing in CAP's *Making Memories* anthology. In 2015 she wants to build a room of her own in her garden.

AFRIC MCGLINCHEY'S poetry collection, *The Lucky Star of Hidden Things*, was published by Salmon in 2012. She won the 40th Hennessy Emerging Poetry Award and the Northern Liberties Poetry Prize (USA) in 2012. She won the Poets Meet Politics competition in 2015. Her work has been translated and published in Irish, Polish, Spanish and Italian. She has received a Cork County Council Arts Bursary to work towards her second collection, forthcoming in 2016, and is currently Poet in Residence at the West Cork Arts Centre, Uillinn. www.africmcglinchey.com.

Tá seacht leabhar filíochta tagtha ó pheann DAIRENA NÍ CHINNÉIDE. I measc na gcuasaigh tá *An Trodaí & Dánta Eile* (The Warrior & Other Poems), *Cló Iar Chonnacht*, 2005 agus *Cloithear Aistear Anama Coiscéim*, 2014. Maireann sí i gCorca Dhuibhne lena mac Jeaic. A former broadcaster, television producer and interpreter, she has been writing full-time since 2005. She lives and works in her native Corca Dhuibhne.

NIAMH O'FARRELL-TYLER is fourteen years old. She has loved writing since she was eight, as it is something she enjoys over everything else. She gets inspiration from the people around her and her surroundings. Writing has always been and will always be very important to her. She'd love to be an author one day.

BRONAGH O'MEARA is ten years old. She lives in Ardagh village, Co. Longford. Her favourite hobby is reading.

OWEN O'SULLIVAN is a transition year student in Causeway Comprehensive School, Tralee, Co. Kerry. He is committed to his studies and always wants to get involved in school activities. When the book club started in the school as part of the literacy programme, Owen was the first to offer his help and give up his lunch break. He is an honours English student, and brings his love of reading and creative flair to the book club.

MICHAEL RAY is a visual artist living in West Cork. His poems have appeared in a number of journals including *The Moth*, the *Irish Independent*, *THE SHOP*, *Abridged*, *Cyphers*, *The Penny Dreadful*, *Burning Bush*, *Ambit*, *Magma* and *One*.

RUBY THOMAS was born in Cape Town, South Africa, and moved to Ireland when she was three. She loves reading, acting and anything to do with Sherlock Holmes and Doctor Who. She lives in Celbridge, Co. Kildare, and has never been stung by a bee.

EMMA TOBIN is eighteen and from Newbridge, Co. Kildare, Ireland, where she lives with her parents and brother and where she is currently studying for her Leaving Certificate in the Holy Family Secondary School. Emma writes prose, poetry and fiction. She has completed two novels and is working on her third, which is a YA contemporary novel with the title *Paperweight Soldiers*. Emma blogs at abcofbeingateenager.blogspot.ie and her hobbies are reading, writing, swimming and music.

Climate change is the greatest injustice of our time; those who are doing the least to cause it are suffering the most from its impacts. It is already affecting food production, water supply, health and many other aspects of people's lives, in Ireland and around the world.

This booklet of poetry, the fourth in our annual series, explores climate change – and climate justice – through the theme **Feeling the Heat**.

Trócaire and Poetry Ireland have worked in partnership for many years, exploring global justice through poetry and creative writing, mostly through schools. Since our first joint poetry competition **Imagining a Just and Free World** was launched on All Ireland Poetry Day in 2011, we have reached new audiences at festivals and readings across Ireland.

To encourage emerging and experienced voices alike, the competition is open to all writers, ranging from published poets to primary school students, and there is no entry fee. This all-inclusive format is what makes the Trócaire and Poetry Ireland competition unique.

The judges for this year's competition were **Theo Dorgan**, poet, prose writer, editor and translator, and member of Aosdána; **Mary Shine Thompson**, former chair of Poetry Ireland and former Dean at St Patrick's College, Drumcondra (Dublin City University); and **Trish Groves**, Campaigns Officer with Trócaire.

We hope you enjoy this booklet of winning entries from poets across the island of Ireland.

Éamonn Meehan, Executive Director of Trócaire

Maureen Kennelly, Director of Poetry Ireland



TRÓCAIRE

Trócaire envisages a just and peaceful world where people's dignity is ensured and rights are respected; where basic needs are met and resources are shared equitably; where people have control over their own lives and those in power act for the common good.

www.trocaire.org



POETRY IRELAND

Poetry Ireland/Éigse Éireann is the national organisation for poetry in Ireland and also runs the Writers in Schools Scheme, the mission of which is 'to empower the participant by facilitating a magical and memorable experience through the imaginative, emotional and intellectual energy and belief in language that the writer brings to the classroom'. We serve all thirty-two counties and receive support from **The Arts Council of Ireland/An Chomhairle Ealaíon** and **The Arts Council of Northern Ireland**.

www.poetryireland.ie