

McLellan Poetry Competition 2021. The Results are in!

Due to the continuing Covid uncertainty this year, the McLellan Arts Festival Committee sadly had to make the decision to postpone the 2021 Festival, which is normally held at this time of year, until 2022. However, the annual McLellan Poetry Competition went ahead, and culminated in a great evening of poetry and spoken word on Thursday 26th August via good old Zoom. We had 575 entries to the Competition, from every corner of the planet on a diverse range of subjects and in many different styles and formats, which made wonderful reading. The McLellan Festival would like to thank the many talented poets who sent in contributions to this year's Competition. We felt very honoured and humbled to be trusted with so many beautiful works. These were all read and re-read, over several months and a "shortlist" of 128 poems was then put (anonymously) before this year's judge, the poet Luke Wright.

The three winning and seven commended entries were announced by Luke Wright at the on-line Winners' Presentation evening last Thursday.

As announced at the Winners' Presentation Night by our judge Luke Wright, the winning and commended entries are as follows:-

First Prize:-

"Poem in Which Dudley Moore bumps into my Grandmother" by Jeanette Burton

Jeanette Burton is a poet and English teacher from Belper in Derbyshire. She has an MA in Creative Writing from Nottingham Trent University and has taught A level Creative Writing to students at a Sixth Form College in Nottingham.

Her first published poem was with The Emma Press and more recently she had poems published in *Poetry Wales*. She was a runner up in the 2018 *Msllexia* & PBS Women's Poetry Competition, longlisted in the 2020 Paper Swans Press Single-Poem Competition, selected in the 2021 Ver Poets Open Competition and commended in the 2021 Ware Poets Open Competition. In 2020, she won first prize in the Welshpool Open Poetry Competition.

She is currently working on her first collection about her East Midlands family.

Second Prize:-

"The Mum Man" by Tim Relf

Tim Relf's poems have appeared in *The Rialto* and *Ink Sweat & Tears*, and are forthcoming in *The Friday Poem*, *One Hand Clapping* and *Snakeskin*. He was longlisted in the *Plough Poetry Prize 2021* and the *AUB International Poetry Prize 2021*. His most recent novel was published by Penguin.

Third Prize:-

“Young Woman Powdering Herself” by Scott Waters

Scott Waters lives in Oakland, California with his wife and son. He graduated with a Master's Degree in Creative Writing from San Francisco State University. Scott has published previously in Main Street Rag, Better Than Starbucks, The Blue Nib, The Pacific Review, Loch Raven Review, Adelaide, A New Ulster, The Courtship of Winds, and many other journals. Scott's first chapbook, *Arks*, was published in 2021 by Selcouth Station, and his poem "I Could Be Anybody" was nominated for the Pushcart Prize.

The seven commended poems are:-

“The Polski Sklep has closed its doors” by Steve Pottinger

Steve Pottinger is a poet, author, and workshop facilitator, and a founding member of Wolverhampton arts collective Poets, Prattlers, and Pandemonialists. He's an engaging and accomplished performer who has performed the length and breadth of the country. His sixth volume of poems, **‘thirty-one small acts of love and resistance’** published by Ignite Books, is out now.

“Swift (*Apus apus*)” by Emilie Jelinek

Emilie Jelinek is a former UN political affairs officer and researcher. She grew up in France and Belgium, and has lived and worked in Latin America, Russia, Haiti, Afghanistan, Myanmar and West Africa, as well as the UK. Through all this, she has kept a record of life around her: memories of cooking dumplings in her Czech grandmother's farmhouse kitchen, dawn swimming in Moscow, talking with tribal elders in remote Afghan outposts. She was shortlisted for the Martin Crawford Award for Poetry in 2021.

“Red Light” by Natalie Whittaker

Natalie Whittaker has published two poetry pamphlets: *Shadow Dogs* (Ignition Press, 2018) and *Tree* (Verve Poetry Press, 2021). She works as a secondary school teacher in South East London.

“When the Dark Dives Deep” by Magi Gibson

Magi has six poetry collections, including *Wild Women of a Certain Age*, and most recently *I Like Your Hat*. She has held 3 Scottish Arts Council Creative Writing Fellowships and one Royal Literary Fund Fellowship. She has been Writer in Residence in the Gallery of Modern

Art in Glasgow, and Reader in Residence at Glasgow Women's Library. Her poetry is published widely in many magazines and anthologies, including in *Modern Scottish Women Poets (Canongate)* and *The Edinburgh Book of Twentieth Century Book of Scottish Poetry (EUP)*.

“Hutchie C, The Gorbals” by Sharon Black

Sharon Black is from Glasgow and lives in a remote valley of the Cévennes mountains in France. Her poetry is published widely and she has won many prizes for her work including the Guernsey International Poetry Competition 2019 and *The London Magazine* Poetry Prizes 2019 and 2018. Her collections are *To Know Bedrock* (Pindrop, 2011) and *The Art of Egg* (Two Ravens, 2015; Pindrop, 2019). A pamphlet, *Rib*, is out now (Wayleave Press, 2021), and her third and fourth full collections will appear in 2022 with Vagabond Voices and with Drunk Muse Press respectively. www.sharonblack.co.uk

“t reynolds” by Hugh McMillan

Hugh McMillan is from Dumfries and Galloway. His latest book ‘Haphazardly in the Starless Night’ is published by Luath in 2021. He was a Poetry Ambassador for the Scottish Poetry Library in 2020, and in 2021 will edit the anthology ‘Best Scottish Poems’ . Website here:

<https://www.hughmcmillanwriter.co.uk/>

“Butcher Baker Candlestick Maker” by James Appleby

James Appleby is an author and translator. Born in 1993, his writing has been featured in Litro Magazine, Marble Poetry and others. He is the co-founder and English editor of Interpret Magazine, a multilingual review.

www.jamesapplebywriting.co.uk

Congratulations to all of the winning and commended poets and thanks again for the wonderful entries. Copies of the above ten are published below for you to read and enjoy at your leisure.

