

**Sunday 19 August 2012
FOR IMMEDIATE USE**

International Poetry Competition Winners Revealed At the Edinburgh International Book Festival

The winners of the fifth Edwin Morgan International Poetry Competition were announced at a ceremony at the Edinburgh International Book Festival last night. The first prize of £5,000 has been awarded to Jen Hadfield for her poem *The Kids*, which was judged to be the best of an initial field of more than 1,100 entries from around the world.

The competition, sponsored by the University of Strathclyde and hosted by the Book Festival, offers one of the UK's largest poetry prizes, with awards worth a total of £6,600. Award-winning Scottish poets Don Paterson and Gillian Ferguson were the judges in this year's competition.

The competition had the support of, and is held in honour of, Edwin Morgan, who was Scotland's Makar (national poet) and who died in 2010, aged 90.

Commenting on the winning poem's atmospheric qualities, Gillian Ferguson said: "Really, really creepy – but in a good way... *'The Kids'* sounds like a nice sappy poem, but it would be pretty disturbing if these freaky offspring showed up at nursery. Personally, I've never noted that cats hunt rabbits by looking for steam escaping a warren, but it's the kind of hyper-observed, unsettling detail that really makes this super-shivery poem."

Dr David Kinloch, a Reader in the University of Strathclyde's Faculty of Humanities & Social Sciences and co-founder of the competition, chaired the event at the Book Festival. He said: "The entries in this year's competition have again been of exceptional quality, with submissions from an encouraging blend of established and emerging poets.

"The competition continues to be a fitting tribute to Edwin Morgan, his influence and the esteem in which he is held around the world."

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Born in Cheshire, Jen Hadfield has lived in Shetland for several years and has had two award-winning collections of poems published by Bloodaxe. The first, *Almanacs*, won an Eric Gregory Award in 2003 and the second, *Nigh-No-Place*, won the TS Eliot Prize for poetry in 2008, as well as being shortlisted for the Forward Prize the previous year.

Other winners in the competition were:

- second prize (£1,000) *Look Hamewards, Now* by Mike Valley
- third prize (£500)- *The Perils of Surgery* by Malcolm Watson
- runners-up (£50)- *Peach* by Daisy Behagg; *forest glass* by Katherine Sowerby
- commended poems- *Talking To Myself* by Jo Bell; *When a Voice Moved Upon the Waters* by Jennifer Copley; *The Antihero* by Megan Fernandes; Nioclas Beanon of *Ross Mhic Thrium* and the *Wire Immaterial* by Nuala Keating; *Antony Gormley in the Water of Leith* by Nick McKinnon; *Valentine* by Derek Mcluckie; *Slow* by Wayne Price; *The First Yins* by Sylvia Telfer.

Look Hamewards, Now and *The First Yins* are written in Scots, which for the first time this year was eligible for entries alongside English.

All the shortlisted and commended poems can be read at

<http://edwinmorganpoetrycompetition.co.uk/index.php/shortlist-2012>

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