

INTERNATIONAL WRITERS' WORKSHOP NZ INC.

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iww.co.nz

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The Kathleen Grattan Prize for a Sequence of Poems

2022 Winner Announced

Auckland poet Margaret Moores, is the winner of The Kathleen Grattan Prize for a Sequence of Poems in 2022 and Lincoln Jaques, also of Auckland, is runner-up.

This prestigious prize, enabled by a bequest from the Jocelyn Grattan Charitable Trust, has been organised by International Writers' Workshop NZ Inc (IWW) since 2009, and over the years has been won by both established and emerging poets.

This year, at the IWW prize giving held in November, judge Janet Charman, author of nine poetry collections, praised all the entries as being brave and imaginative.

She lauded Margaret's winning entry "Absences" for being a unified sequence with compelling narrative voice and evocative imagery that was satisfying to read while intriguing factual content contributed to a compassionate, evocative, and convincing realisation of past lives.

On receiving the award, Margaret said she was both delighted and honoured to be judged the winner of the 2022 competition.

She said, "This sequence was a kind of Covid lock-down project in many respects. My mother died just as Covid arrived and I spent many locked-down hours thinking about how to depict maternal absence in writing that would have the evocative power of a photograph."

The result was a sequence of prose poems—both literal and figurative—inspired by photographs and ideas surrounding photography and photograph albums. The idea of maternal absence is introduced by poems about Victorian "Hidden Mother" photographs, but more personal and poignant maternal absences are revealed in poems about the existence of a "hidden mother" in the poet's own family and the gradual deterioration in health of the poet's mother whose death is the subject of the final poems. The poems are placed on the page as dense squares of type surrounded by blank space as if they were photographs and the sequence they are part of is a photograph album.

Margaret holds a PhD in English and a Masters in Creative Writing from Massey University. Her poetry and Flash Fiction have been published in online journals in Australia and New Zealand and in anthologies including Landfall and The Poetry New Zealand Yearbook. She and her husband own Poppies Books, an Indie bookshop in Howick.

Runner-up Lincoln Jaques, whose sequence Janet described as a substantial offering both in range and depth, also belongs to Isthmus Poets, a group of Auckland-based active poets and writers who are alumni of AUT's Master of Creative Writing degree.



Margaret Moores (left), 2022 winner of the Kathleen Grattan Prize for a Sequence of Poems, with judge Janet Charman

About the Prize

The Kathleen Grattan Prize for a Sequence of Poems has been made possible by a bequest from the Jocelyn Grattan Charitable Trust. It was a specific request of the late Jocelyn Grattan that her mother be recognised through an annual competition in recognition of her love for poetry and that the competition be for a sequence or cycle of poems with no limit on the length of the poems.

This is the fourteenth year IWW has had the honour of organising the Prize. Previous winners are Robyn Maree Pickens (2021), Liz Breslin (2020), Siobhan Harvey (2019) Heather Bauchop (2018), Janet Newman (2017), Michael Giacon (2016) Maris O'Rourke (2015), Julie Ryan (2014), Belinda Diepenheim (2013), James Norcliffe (2012), Jillian Sullivan (2011) Janet Charman and Rosetta Allan (joint winners 2010) and Alice Hooton (2009).

The Kathleen Grattan Prize for a Sequence of Poems is sometimes referred to as the 'Little Grattan' as the Jocelyn Grattan Charitable Trust also funds the biennial *Kathleen Grattan Award*, run by *Landfall* / Otago University Press.

About the Judge

Janet Charman's poetry has been published in a range of journals and magazines, and several book-length collections. Her poetry is 'dense, elliptical or complex in expression', displaying a wide emotional range. She's received several residencies and awards and won Best Book of Poetry award at the 2008 Montana New Zealand Book Awards for her *Cold Snack*. Her latest book *The Pistils*, reviewed by renowned poet, Paula Green, in *NZ Poetry Shelf*, apparently "knocked her socks off" so be sure to look out for this beautiful edition.

About IWW and Contact Details

Formed in 1976, International Writers Workshop meets twice a month in Northcote from February through November. The group hosts workshops and holds writing competitions throughout the year covering a range of topics and themes. The group aims to encourage and inspire new writers as well as more experienced writers.

For further information about the Prize or about IWW in general, please visit the website at www.iww.co.nz or email iww-writers@outlook.com.