

A close-up photograph of a person's hand cupped together, receiving water poured from a clear plastic bottle. The water is captured mid-pour, creating a dynamic splash. The background is a blurred, arid landscape with dry, orange-brown earth. The person's arm and part of a red and yellow patterned garment are visible on the right side of the frame.

# Feeling the Heat

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TRÓCAIRE AND POETRY IRELAND

POETRY COMPETITION 2015

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**P** Poetry  
Ireland  
Éigse  
Éireann

**trócaire**  
Working for a just world.

# Feeling the Heat

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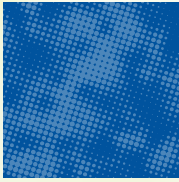
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# Adult Published Category



## 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-áitribhgh 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**

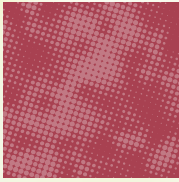
If I follow the carbon footpath  
to a future memory,  
I find you, lean and supple,  
though you blur a little.  
That's because I'm pushing  
my heart against you, and my eyes  
are mostly closed to the squinting,

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.

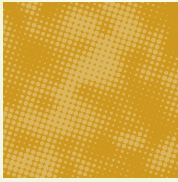
**Michael Ray**

## 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**

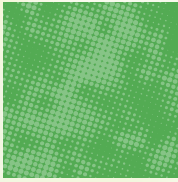






David Mwaniki (35) and Agnes Kagendi (35),  
Chuka town area, Meru, Kenya, 2013.

**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.

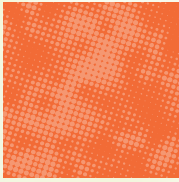
Environmental change is happening,  
It is something we can't outrun,  
Can we explain to our children  
Just what we have done?

**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

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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](http://www.africmcglinchey.com).

Tá seacht leabhar filíochta tagtha ó pheann DAIRENA NÍ CHINNÉIDE. I measc na gcnuasaigh 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](http://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](http://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](http://www.poetryireland.ie)