

# 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 2016**

**The winner** of the **2016 Kathleen Grattan Prize for a Sequence of Poems**, run by International Writers' Workshop NZ Inc (IWW), has been announced with the \$1000 prize awarded to **Michael Giacon** of Auckland for his sequence, *Argento in no man land*.

Giacon was born and raised in Ponsonby. He is from a large Pakeha-Italian-Samoan family, and has worked at tertiary level in English language teaching for quite some time. In 2016 he graduated with an AUT Masters in Creative Writing, producing a volume of poetry, *Beyond Retrieve*, which was all about a life of writing. *Argento in no man land* began as part of his Masters. A series of IWW poetry workshops helped him select and shape his winning sequence of 13 poems telling of spring-to-spring romance, love, lust, break-up, some sadness, hope, for Argento Q in the gay milieu.

This year's judge, **Gus Simonovic**, said of the winning sequence: "This seduces on the first read with its feel of 'ease'. You know when you read one of those poems that have just 'landed' as they are; the ones that look and sound as if they come directly from that eternal creative source; and where the poet is just the medium between the source and the reader. The structure of the poem is 'predictable', but the content itself is everything but. Its natural flow and the richness of the emotional landscape makes it readable and re-readable with endless incarnations of poetic surprise(s)."

**The Emerging Poet Award**, presented to an IWW member of at least three years standing who has not had poetry published previously, is **Caroline Carlyle** for her sequence *The Chongololo Therapy Sessions*. A chongololo is a giant African millipede and the seven poem sequence relates to her childhood growing up in Zimbabwe.

### **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. It is one of two poetry competitions funded by the Trust, the other being the prestigious **Kathleen Grattan Award** run by the publishers of *Landfall* magazine.

This is the 8<sup>th</sup> year the prize has been contested. Previous winners are:

2009: **Alice Hooton** for *America*.

2010: **Janet Charman** for *Mother won't come to us*, and **Rosetta Allan** for *Capricious Memory*.

2011: **Jillian Sullivan** for *how to live it*

2012: **James Norcliffe** for *What do you call your male parent?*

2013: **Belinda Diepenheim** for *Bittercress and Flax*.

2014: **Julie Ryan** for *On Visiting Old Ladies*.

2015: **Maris O'Rourke** for *Motherings*

## About IWW

**International Writers' Workshop NZ Inc** was founded in 1976 by poet Barbara B Whyte and meets twice a month from February to November at the Northcote Point Senior Citizens Villa in Northcote. IWW's main aim is to inspire writers by means of workshops and competitions across fiction, nonfiction and poetry.

**2016 is IWW's 40th anniversary year** and has culminated with the launch of *Those be Rubies*, a comprehensive and meticulously researched history from the workshop's conception to the end of 2016 including these results of *The Kathleen Grattan Prize for a Sequence of Poems*. More about the book at [iww.co.nz/book.htm](http://iww.co.nz/book.htm).

For further information about the Prize, contact Sue Courtney, President, International Writers' Workshop NZ Inc, [iww.co.nz](http://iww.co.nz), email [iww-writers@outlook.com](mailto:iww-writers@outlook.com), phone (09) 426 6687.

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Photo caption: Michael Giacon (winner), Gus Simonovic (judge) and Caroline Carlyle (emerging poet).

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