

INTERNATIONAL WRITERS' WORKSHOP NZ INC.

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Media Release

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Announcing the 2023 winner of The Kathleen Grattan Prize for a Sequence of Poems

International Writers' Workshop NZ is delighted to announce that Caroline Masters from Tāmaki Makarau / Auckland is the 2023 winner of **The Kathleen Grattan Prize for a Sequence of Poems**, and Sarah Scott from Te Whanganui-a-Tara / Wellington, is runner-up. The competition was judged by Emma Neale from Ōtepoti / Dunedin.

Caroline (image attached), who receives a \$1000 prize, is a writing coach/education facilitator from Laingholm. She has a MA in English Literature and is the editor of Poetry Fridays, an online journal of children's poetry: <https://poetry-fridays.com/>. Her work has appeared in *Flash Frontier*, *Takahe*, *Contemporary Haibun*, *Light Journal*, and several New Zealand poetry anthologies. Her sequence, *The Mountain Above, The Mountains Below*, was written for her father who lives at Lake Tarawera. "He often says that the lake and the mountain are his church. I wanted to honour his deep respect for the mountain." She adds, "The area, which has experienced five eruptions in the last 18,000 years, has an immense history and the poems are a tribute to the people connected to Mount Tarawera, especially those who were there during the 1886 eruption."



Sarah Scott's poems have appeared in *Ōrongohau | Best New Zealand Poems*, *Landfall*, *NZ Poetry Shelf* and elsewhere. She has an MA in Creative Writing from the IIML and recently curated the Poetry Lightbox Series in Te Whanganui-a-Tara where she lives with her husband and sons. Sarah says of her sequence, *Sun Goddess: The Paintings of Rita Angus*, "I was inspired to write about the paintings of Rita Angus after walking past the giant mural of her self-portrait in Wellington so often and always turning to look at it against the sky. I love Rita's self-reliance, mysticism and love of the natural world. She was someone utterly devoted to her chosen craft, and I admire that about her, as well as how the paintings make me *feel* – especially the ones set in Wellington, creating a connection across the years."

Emma Neale described the judging as happily hellacious for the appeal and merit of her short-listed contenders that made her task both delicious and difficult. She was on the look-out for vivid, sensory writing that called on any number of poetic techniques, with evidence that the sequence as a whole was its own well-sculpted identity where the poems were in clear and essential relation to each other, and no matter how strong the feeling was that seeded the writing, the sequence also showed an interest in and love of poetic technique and language.

She also awarded Highly Commended to Michelle Elvy (Dunedin) and Kerrin P. Sharpe (Christchurch); and Commended to Raewyn Alexander (Auckland), Lyndsey Knight (Auckland) and Karen Zelas (Christchurch).

The Kathleen Grattan Prize of a Sequence of Poems was established by the late Jocelyn Grattan in memory of her mother. International Writers Workshop (IWW) has had the honour of running the

competition since its inception in 2009. The prize is the smaller of the two poetry competitions funded by the Jocelyn Grattan Charitable Trust, the other being the biennial Kathleen Grattan Award, run by Landfall / Otago University Press.

IWW, which formed in 1976, aims to encourage new writers and inspire more experienced writers with workshops and writing competitions covering a range of genres, as well as poetry, throughout the year. Workshops are held twice monthly from February to November and alternate between rooms at St Aidans Church in Auckland's Northcote, and Zoom.

For further information about the Prize, or how to contact the winner for interviews, or about IWW in general, please email jww-writers@outlook.com.

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