



Brownsbank International Open Poetry Competition

Prizes: 1st £250
2nd £100
3rd £50

Plus 10 “commended” prizes.

All 13 winners will receive special certificates, selected books, and display of poems in the Biggar Poetry Garden and Brownsbank Cottage, with the possibility of both publication and broadcast.

Launch: 9th September 2006 (MacDiarmid’s death)

Deadline: 25th January 2007 (Burns’ Birthday)

Judging and Awards: Spring 2007

Brownsbank Cottage



For fifty years this man's hot and angry integrity radiated through Scotland...There is very little written, acted, composed, surmised or demanded in Scotland which does not in some strand descend from the new beginning he made.

The Scotsman

He writes in the faith without which there can be no conquest: the belief that Scotland still has something to say to the imagination of mankind...and can say only in her native tongue.

T.S.Eliot

He spent more time in all there [Brownsbank] than anywhere else - as a place, it is filled with his personality.

John MacQueen

He aims at a bird, and brings a landscape down. He dynamites a building, and when the dust has settled, what structures shine in the sun.

Norman MacCaig

Few people would question the key role of Christopher Murray Grieve ('Hugh MacDiarmid') in the Scottish Literary Renaissance of the 1920s. His rebelliously controversial statements about Scottish culture and identity gave a dynamic new perspective on the nation's arts, politics, education and philosophy. Frequently accused of egotism and eccentricity, he had a galvanising impact on Scottish cultural life.

*The rose of all the world is not for me
I want for my part
Only the little white rose of Scotland
That smells sharp and sweet and breaks the heart*

Hugh MacDiarmid



In 1951, MacDiarmid's publisher, William MacLellan, introduced the poet to Thomas Tweedie, the owner of Brownsbank Farm. Thanks to the Tweedie family, the Gieves lived rent-free at Brownsbank for the rest of their lives.

While most of the great writing had been done before they moved to Brownsbank, many works, including 'In Memoriam James Joyce' and his 'Collected Poems' were published while he and his wife Valda stayed there.

From Brownsbank, he went on many world-wide journeys and the world also came to visit him. While his friends, the poets Norman MacCaig, Sorley MacLean, Duncan Glen, the composer Ronald Stevenson and others were regular visitors, he also entertained many visitors from furth of Scotland, including Yevgeny Yevtushenko, composer Alan Bush and concert pianist John Ogdon.



He was there for a quarter of a century and hundreds of people from pretty well all over the world made their pilgrimage to that little home.

Norman MacCaig

The Brownsbank Committee continues to be responsible for the maintenance of the cottage. All the contents have been catalogued and the cottage, its gardens and outbuildings are all maintained by Biggar Museum Trust volunteers. Visitors are welcome by appointment.

The Brownsbank Committee is also charged with ensuring Brownsbank Cottage remains a centre of literary activity, and has since 1993 maintained a writing residency – the Brownsbank Fellowship – in association with the Scottish Arts Council and South Lanarkshire Council. The Brownsbank International Open Poetry Competition is the Fellowship's latest initiative to promote the legacy of Hugh MacDiarmid and to encourage creative writing in the widest community.

Competition Rules

General

The Competition will be called the “Brownsbank International Open Poetry Competition.” The purpose of the competition is to promote an appreciation of the work and life of Christopher Murray Grieve 1892-1978 (“Hugh MacDiarmid”), as well as to encourage creative writing in the widest community. Any funds raised will be used to continue Biggar Museum Trust’s work at Brownsbank Cottage.

- ❖ There will be no set theme but it is hoped that the poets will address at least some of the concerns central to MacDiarmid’s work.
- ❖ The Competition is open internationally to any adult aged 18 or over and is not restricted by gender, nationality or ethnicity. Entry fee will be £3 for one poem, £4 for two poems and £5 for three poems, £2 for each additional poem. There is no limit to the number of poems submitted. Cheques or postal orders must be payable in Pounds Sterling (£) and made out to “**Biggar Museum Trust Brownsbank Committee.**” It is not advised to send money through the post but cash is also acceptable.
- ❖ A panel appointed by the Brownsbank Committee, in consultation with any sponsors, will adjudicate the Competition and appoint a judge to award the final short-leet entries.
- ❖ Competition Deadline: the Competition will launch on the anniversary of MacDiarmid’s death on 9th September 2006, with a deadline of 25th January 2007. Judging will take place in January/February 2007, with an awards ceremony to be held sometime in March.
- ❖ Please send entries clearly marked to: “**Attention: Poetry Competition**” **Biggar Museums Trust, Moat Park Heritage Centre, Biggar, South Lanarkshire ML12 6DT.**
- ❖ Entries may also be sent as RTF attachments to: tbrownsbank@hotmail.co.uk Entry fee must still be posted.

Entries

- ❖ There is no entry form. Poems must be anonymous and not contain the name of the author. The entrant shall send a separate sheet with name, address, phone number and email if possible along with the titles of the poems.
- ❖ Length limit: 50 lines per poem
- ❖ Entrants requiring an acknowledgement of receipt of entry should send a stamped self-addressed envelope (SAE) marked “Receipt.”
- ❖ Entrants wishing to know the results should send a self-addressed envelope (SAE) marked “Results.”
- ❖ Entries cannot be returned and discussions about individual entries cannot be entered into. No competitor will be eligible for more than one cash prize.
- ❖ Copyright remains with the author but entrants are deemed to have given permission to have their entry published in conjunction with the competition. Further publication or broadcast or website use will be only with the permission of individual writers.
- ❖ The poems may be in English (any variety or dialect) or Scots (any variety or dialect). The work must be submitted on white A4 paper, preferably typed or written legibly.
- ❖ Members of the Brownsbank Committee or any employees or volunteers of the Biggar Museums Trust may not enter the competition.
- ❖ The judging will be final and if in the opinion of the judging panel there is neither sufficient quality nor quantity of submissions, the competition will be cancelled and entry fees returned. The judges also reserve the right to extend the deadline should that be deemed necessary.