

PRESS RELEASE: JUNE 2018

Entries now open to find St Pancras International's next Poet Laureate

- *The Betjeman Poetry Prize is now open to 10-13-year olds*
- *Winner will be announced as part of an exciting line-up of events at St Pancras International on National Poetry Day (4 October 2018)*
- *St Pancras International continues to support the poetry competition as part of its calendar of arts and cultural events*

6 June 2018: Just 7 weeks to go for entries to the prestigious, annual [Betjeman Poetry Prize](#) which offers 10-13-year-old budding poets the opportunity to win a national accolade for their work. Deadline for poems - 31 July 2018.

The poetic submissions can be written in any style, at any length and with or without rhyme, but they must capture the 2018 theme – 'place.' The winner will also become St Pancras International's next Poet Laureate.

Now in its 12th year, the prize continues to promote literacy, encourage creativity and offer young poets a platform to showcase their work. The competition's prize ceremony for finalists will be held on National Poetry Day (4 October), hosted at St Pancras International - the station saved from demolition by former Poet Laureate, John Betjeman in the 1960s.

Jackay Kay, Scottish Poet Laureate and 2018 Betjeman Poetry Prize judge comments, "Writing poetry - like painting, acting, dancing and making music - can reframe the future for a young person. Through practice, they learn how they relate to people and objects around them, discovering new ways of imagining their place in the world. The Betjeman Poetry Prize engages young people in the reading, writing and performing of poetry, and I am immensely excited about judging the 2018 Betjeman Prize entries with my co-judge and British poet Zaffar Kunial!"

Last year's winner, Amineh Abou Kerech, captured the judges' imagination with her poem 'Lament for Syria', which depicts a young girl's memories of fleeing from her home, whilst 2016's winner, Archita Sinha, not only received the accolade of prize winner but also received the honour of becoming the second St Pancras Laureate for her moving poem 'The Grave Of Ignor Prewett.'

Wendy Spinks, Commercial Director at HS1 Ltd (owners of St Pancras International) said, "We're delighted to help further promote this fantastic award in our 150th year. Hosting the Betjeman Poetry Prize awards ceremony at the station provides a platform for the finalists to read their work aloud in front of an audience with a passion for poetry, and we look forward to seeing the emerging talent unearthed by the competition this year."

New to this year, judges will also accept group poetry submissions from teachers entering their class, automatically putting them into a prize draw to win their school an exciting poetry workshop.

Imogen Lycett Green, Director of the Betjeman Poetry Prize said, "The Betjeman Poetry Prize is proud to call St Pancras International home. Saved from demolition by my

grandfather, John Betjeman, the station, is an inspirational platform for poetry and the prize proudly celebrates the station's ongoing commitment to the arts."

The competition is now open for entries until 31 July 2018. To submit an entry for the 2018 Betjeman Poetry Prize and to find out more, please visit www.betjemanpoetryprize.co.uk

All prizes

- The winner receives £500 and the English department of his or her school receives £5000 (donated by HS1)
- The two runners up receive £200 each
- The top three poets each receive four Eurostar tickets to Paris, Brussels or Lille
- Highly commended entrants receive £50
- All six finalists are invited on a [Betjeman Poetry Camp](#)
- The top 50 poems are printed in an anthology
- Every teacher who enters their class joins a prize draw to win a poet visit

For more information on the anniversary events, as well as the music, arts, culture, and retail events happening in the station throughout 2018, visit <http://stpancras.com> and follow @StPancrasInt.

-ENDS-

Notes to Editors

Contact the St Pancras International Press Office on 020 7479 0910 or email HS1@clarioncomms.co.uk.

About St Pancras International Station:

St Pancras International station is a unique Grade I listed building owned by HS1 Ltd. Offering a wealth of stylish and premium shops, bars and restaurants all under one iconic roof, the venue is a destination, in its own right, as well as a world-class station.

Known for its calendar of new and exciting arts and music experiences, there's always something new to discover.

From now until December 2018, visitors can appreciate the Terrace Wires public art installation by Tracey Emin. Depicting the words, 'I Want My Time With You' in Emin's signature handwriting, the 20m long light installation is the largest text piece ever made by the artist.

Visitors can also experience St Pancras International's free-to-play jukebox and station pianos, played by world famous stars including Elton John and John Legend, as well as the public day to day.

For more information about the station and its premium retailers, including Fortnum & Mason, Searcys, Whistles, kikki.K, plus recently launched Ted Baker, Chanel, and Calvin Klein visit <http://stpancras.com>.

150th anniversary

Celebrate St Pancras – the people, the place, the journey' – is a series of events, exhibitions and installations commissioned by HS1 Ltd for the anniversary year. It will showcase the transformation of



the station, the entry and role of women into the railway workforce, St Pancras' role in the trade of goods, food and beer into London, the station's wartime history and the people and journeys that have been shaped by it.

St Pancras International has launched the St Pancras IPA to mark the anniversary, on sale now at station pub, The Betjeman Arms.

About HS1 Ltd:

HS1 Ltd has the 30-year concession to own and operate High Speed 1, the UK's first section of high speed rail, as well as the stations along the route: St Pancras International, Stratford International, Ebbsfleet International and Ashford International.

About Betjeman Poetry Prize:

Founded in 2006 to mark the centenary of the former Poet Laureate John Betjeman's birth, the Betjeman Poetry Prize for young poets ages between 10-13 years attracts thousands of entries each year from across the UK. The competition aims to foster creativity in young people whilst discovering and encouraging the next generation of British poets.

About National Poetry Day:

National Poetry Day is an annual celebration, taking place this year on Thursday 4 October 2018, that inspires people throughout the UK to enjoy, discover and share poems. Everyone is invited to join in, whether by organising events, displays, competitions or by simply posting favourite lines of poetry on social media using #nationalpoetryday. Each year there is a new theme and this year it's 'Place' The initiative was founded in 1994 by the charity Forward Arts Foundation, whose mission is to celebrate excellence in poetry and increase its audience. The Day enjoys the support of the BBC, Arts Council England, the Royal Mail and leading literary and cultural organisations, alongside booksellers, publishers, libraries and schools.

For details, visit www.nationalpoetryday.co.uk.