

# Canterbury Festival

15-29 OCTOBER 2011

Kent's International Arts Festival

[www.canterburyfestival.co.uk](http://www.canterburyfestival.co.uk)



NEWS RELEASE

3 March 2011

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

## Spring is in the air for local poets

There are lots of ways to get involved with Canterbury Festival, and poetry is one of its many facets. Now an established highlight in the Festival calendar, this month sees the launch of the 2011 Poet of the Year Competition and the Schools' Poetry Competition.

For the Schools' Poetry Competition all schools across East Kent are invited to enter pupils aged 5-18 years with their original poems on this year's theme 'Worth fighting for'. Judge and local performance poet Dan Simpson, who chose the thought provoking theme, is looking forward to finding out what the aspiring young poets consider worth fighting for, a dream, a friend, love, truth, justice...? Kindly sponsored by Stagecoach Buses, the competition is very popular and there are prizes for all age groups and selected poems will be displayed on the buses. The best in each age group will also have their work published in an anthology.

**The deadline for entries is Friday, 8 July.**

The Festival is also on the lookout for today's best grown up writers, and is encouraging them to submit a poem or series of poems to the 2011 Poet of the Year competition. With over 150 entries last year budding poets are encouraged to **send in their poem by Monday, 16 May**. Poems can be on any subject and previous entrants have written poems inspired by a variety of topics, conjuring images, evoking strong emotions and recalling experiences or creating new narratives with imaginative and compelling use of language. Poet of the Year 2010 Moyra Tourlamain commented 'It is always a bit nerve wracking to take your work out into a public forum, so it was a huge boost to know that the winning poem worked. The Canterbury Festival Poet of the Year competition has given me my first audiences, both through the publication and the readings which I have been invited to give. I'm enormously grateful for the encouragement of the judges - and to the people who put so much into making the competition happen.'

In 2011 the esteemed panel of judges will be chaired by Maggie Harris, a widely published poet and tutor. She will be joined by Moyra Tourlamain and Nick Hunt, member of the Canterbury Festival Friends

Committee who founded the competition in 2007. Together they will choose a long list of entries, which will be included in a published booklet available to entrants and the general public.

Coinciding with National Poetry Day, the finale of both competitions will be held **on Thursday 6 October at the Dominican Priory, Canterbury**, where the shortlisted poems will be read in front of a discerning audience and the winners crowned.

Application forms and terms and conditions are available at [www.canterburyfestival.co.uk](http://www.canterburyfestival.co.uk) (go to Youth and Community for the Schools' Poetry Competition; Friends' events for 2011 Poet of the Year competition). Alternatively, please contact Sylviane Martell (Poet of the Year competition) [sylvianemartell@canterburyfestival.co.uk](mailto:sylvianemartell@canterburyfestival.co.uk) or Sarah Passfield (Schools' Poetry Competition) [SPassfield@canterburyfestival.co.uk](mailto:SPassfield@canterburyfestival.co.uk) or call 01227 452 853 for more information.

Ends.

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**For information on the Schools' Poetry Competition contact:**

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**For information on the Poet of the Year competition contact:**

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**Notes to Editors:**

- Canterbury Festival 2011 runs from 15-29 October in and around Canterbury, Kent.
- Full details of the programme of events will be announced in July and will be available in the Festival brochure online at [www.canterburyfestival.co.uk](http://www.canterburyfestival.co.uk) and from the Festival Office.
- Booking for the general public opens on Monday 8 August, with a priority booking period for Friends of the Festival prior to that. Tickets will be available online at [www.canterburyfestival.co.uk](http://www.canterburyfestival.co.uk) or from the Festival Box Office in the Canterbury Visitor Information Centre in person or by phone 01227 787787.