

NEW ZEALAND POET LAUREATE AWARD

National Library of New Zealand - Te Puna Mātauranga o Aotearoa

Background Information

Poet Laureate 1 July 2009 to 30 June 2011

In 2007, the Government established the New Zealand Poet Laureate Award, to raise the profile of poetry in New Zealand. A New Zealand Poet Laureate is selected every two years.

The New Zealand Poet Laureate will:

- have made an outstanding contribution to New Zealand poetry
- be an accomplished and highly regarded poet
- be able to adequately fulfil the public role required of a Poet Laureate
- be a strong advocate for poetry

Important criteria for the laureateship include an interest in digital publication and communication.

The role of the New Zealand Poet Laureate will be shaped by the skills and experience the appointed poet brings to the position.

The New Zealand Poet Laureate may create work in any or all of the official languages of New Zealand.

Key accountabilities include:

- producing a collection of poems of publishable quality
- participation, as required from time to time, in poetry-related functions/activities
- seeking to raise national awareness of the value of reading and writing poetry
- archiving creative/work processes with the Alexander Turnbull Library/National Library of New Zealand
- a working relationship with the National Library in Wellington during the laureateship, and this may include using the collections and facilities and/or hosting events

Eligibility

There is a nomination process every two years. In 2009, the term of the New Zealand New Zealand Poet Laureate Award will commence in July and conclude on 30 June 2011.

In order to be eligible, candidates must currently reside in New Zealand.

Administration

The National Library of New Zealand administers the New Zealand Poet Laureate Award. The total value of the award is \$100,000.

These monies will be applied to both the New Zealand Poet Laureate's stipend and implementation of the laureate's programme of events, associated travel within New Zealand, the laureate's tokotoko, promotional activities, and support for the laureate's publication.

Tokotoko

A distinctive element of the New Zealand Poet Laureate Award is the carved matua tokotoko, which is usually presented to the poet when his or her appointment is announced. The National Library cares for the tokotoko and, when not required for ceremonial occasions, will put the tokotoko on display in the National Library building in Wellington. A second stick that relates to the matua tokotoko symbolically will be given to the Laureate.

The matua tokotoko can be borrowed from the National Library for special events provided sufficient time is given to the Director, Māori, Pacific and International to consider requests. Each event will be considered on its own merit, taking into account where the event is being held, length of time involved and security arrangements.

New Zealand Poet Laureate Advisory Group

The New Zealand Poet Laureate Advisory Group provides advice to the Chief Executive/National Librarian of the National Library on the selection of the New Zealand Poet Laureate.

The New Zealand Poet Laureate Advisory Group is responsible for considering and formulating recommendations to the Chief Executive/National Librarian but understands the decision is ultimately that of the Chief Executive/National Librarian.

Current membership of this group is:

- John Buck, Executive Chairman of Te Mata Estate
- Bill Manhire, Director of the International Institute of Modern Letters at Victoria University
- John Mohi, Director, Māori, Pacific and International, National Library
- Michele Leggott, the first New Zealand Poet Laureate, has joined this group to select the Laureate for the 2009-2011 period

Members are appointed by the Chief Executive/National Librarian.

Archiving

Ideally, drafts, creative processes (i.e. interviews, podcasts, readings, web links and web pages) and published work of the New Zealand Poet Laureate created during the laureateship will be preserved in the National Library's National Digital Heritage Archive and in the collections of the Alexander Turnbull Library.

The intellectual property of all work published will remain with the New Zealand Poet Laureate, who is encouraged to use a Creative Commons licence. The Library is aware that there may be existing arrangements for publishing the Laureate's work, or the deposit of the Laureate's papers with other institutions, that need to be taken into account.

Responsibilities and Priorities

Each New Zealand Poet Laureate and the National Library will negotiate terms of reference that set out the specific details of the New Zealand Poet Laureate's responsibilities and priorities, and the responsibilities of the National Library.

This agreement will cover such things as:

- participation in an agreed number of laureate events per year
- publication of a poetry collection (with the possibility of a digital publication)
- archiving agreed material in the National Digital Heritage Archive and the Alexander Turnbull Library collections
- working with National Library staff to establish a web presence and other requirements to support the laureateship
- providing written reports on the laureate's programme annually to the National Library

The responsibilities of the National Library of New Zealand are to:

- provide a digital space to the New Zealand Poet Laureate (including the set up and maintenance of a New Zealand Poet Laureate web presence)
- preserve material (including that off the Library's website), as agreed with the Laureate, in the National Digital Heritage Archive and the Alexander Turnbull Library collections
- facilitate tokotoko ceremony
- ensure payments are made to an agreed schedule to the New Zealand Poet Laureate's bank account
- ensure the New Zealand Poet Laureate Award is managed in accordance with best financial practice
- provide assistance as required to the New Zealand Poet Laureate