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Writers shine at Portrush Showcase

PORTRUSH Town Hall provided the setting on Saturday night (11 October) for the Third Annual Showcase segment of the Soundwaves Writing Competition run by the Impspired Publishing Company based in Lincoln, and facilitated by Portstewart author Mary Farrell.

This competition, which invited entries earlier this year from May to August, is solely for writers in the North of Ireland.

Of the many excellent submissions received, 14 winners were picked by an International Panel of Judges, all Impspired Authors based outside Ireland, from the UK, United States and South Pacific regions.

These judges declared how extremely impressed they were with the very high standard of the entries.

The work of the 14 selected winners will appear in the November 1 edition of Impspired Online Magazine, and will also be included in an upcoming print issue.

At the Showcase section of the competition, held as part of the Swell Festival, the performance of 11 of these 14 were judged by a local panel of five judges - Sue Divin, the Derry/Londonderry-based author of the award-winning books 'Guard Your Heart' (2021) and 'Truth be Told' (2022), Paul Doran, a journalist for 27 years with the BBC and Co-Founder of Tenx9, the popular Storytelling Event, begun and based in Belfast and now worldwide, as well as Rosaline Callaghan, Michaela McDaid and Sarah McCaughan, the three Trophy Winners from last year's Competition.

Of the 2025 trophies presented on the night, two of them had been already chosen by the International Panel: one for The Best Written Poem, went to Colin Dardis for 'I have looked for Inspiration,' and another for the Best Written Prose Piece went to Catherine Kay for her entry 'Missing the 212.'

Meanwhile the Prize for The Best Performance Piece, chosen by the local Panel on the night, was presented to Gary Devenney for his poem 'Collarbone Thoughts.'

An enthusiastic audience was delighted to congratulate the 11 winning performers and three Trophy holders, and enjoyed listening to their work.

Another Annual Competition Event run by Impspired, 'Portrush Flash Fiction', will be held in Kiwis, Main Street, Portrush on Friday, 13 March next year.

To raise the funds to organise these competitions, there will be a Sponsored Dry January Event in 2026, run through Facebook.

Contact Mary Farrell in January at maryfarrell85@hotmail.com to arrange a donation, or contribute directly through her Facebook page.

Details of this Fundraiser, and about the two 2026 Impspired Competitions will also be available on Facebook on the North Coast Writers page.

The current Editor of Impspired Charlie Cawte, Mary Farrell, the Swell Committee, both panels of Judges and all the writers involved with this Competition extended grateful thanks to everyone for their continued support over the last three years.

Many congratulations again to this year's 14 Prize Winners, and the organisers are already looking forward to a new swathe of submissions next May for Soundwaves 2026.



Mary Farrell Sound Waves event organiser of Poetry and Prose held in association of Swell Portrush. WK42-25KC36



Gary Devenney, Winner of the Best Performance Category 2025 receiving his trophy from Michaela McDaid, the winner of this Trophy last year.



Poetry and Prose trophy winners Catherine Kay and Colin Dardis beside the words of judge, from Connecticut USA, Johnnie Stanizzi praising the quality of the Soundwaves Poetry and Prose presented at Portrush Town Hall. WK42-25KC40



Colin Dardis, Winner of the Best Poem in 2025 receiving his trophy from Paul Doran Divin, one of the local judges.



Performers at the Soundwaves Poetry and Prose competition - Heidi Edmondson, Avery Bowser, Gary Devenney, Paul Girvan and Betty Healy. WK42-25KC37



Performers at the Soundwaves Poetry and Prose event - Ronan O'Neill, Alice Hutchinson, Houdi McCabe, Angela Graham and Maureen Sheridan. WK42-25KC38



Judges Sarah McCaughan, Michaela McDaid, Paul Doran, Sue Divin and Rosaline Callaghan. WK42-25KC39



The audience at the Soundwaves Poetry and Prose competition hosted at Portrush Town Hall. WK42-25KC42