

CHILTERN
ARTS FESTIVAL
2020



Poetry Competition 2020
Winning Entries

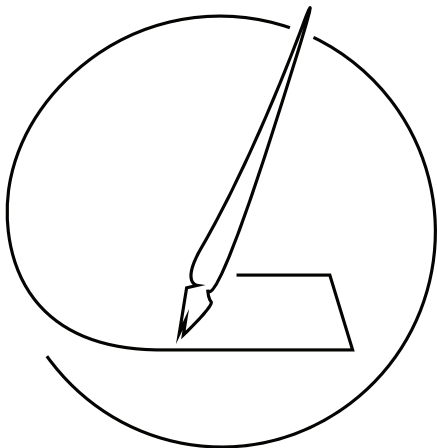


The **Chiltern Arts Festival 2020** marked the 250th anniversary of Beethoven's birth by celebrating artists, musicians and other creatives who have overcome adversity, inspired by Beethoven's own words: "Let your deafness no longer be a secret, even in art."

The **2020 Poetry Competition** invited writers to explore a situation in their own lives, or the life of someone who has inspired them, in which the phrase 'overcoming adversity' resonated

We were delighted to receive over 40 entries for the 2020 competition. The quality of poetry received was excellent, and for the panel of judges, picking winners was a difficult decision. Chiltern Arts are hugely grateful to **Gloria and John McGregor** for sitting alongside Creative Director Naomi Taylor on the judging panel for this competition.

The poems received were split into two categories: Under 16 and 16+. This booklet collates all winners, runners up and highly commended entries from the 2020 Poetry Competition. Congratulations to all!



UNDER 16 CATEGORY

WINNER:

Divya Maheshwari

RUNNERS UP:

Ben Ward

Ishaan Mishra

SPECIAL COMMENDATION FOR ORIGINALITY:

Erin Docherty

Isla Dewhurst

HIGHLY COMMENDED:

Gabi El Nagar

Amari Grewal

Mia Jappy

Rosie Ouston

Freddie Payne

Ishitha Shankar

Sahasi Upadhya

16+ CATEGORY

WINNER:

Georgia Ayew

RUNNER UP:

Pamela Esseen

HIGHLY COMMENDED:

**Anne Graham
Mary Mullett**



UNDER 16 CATEGORY
WINNING ENTRY

Overcome Adversity
Diva Maheshwari

Do you ever feel you've been trapped, you can't get through,

Looking for yourself, searching the blue.

You won't find that needle in the haystack,

There's a different method to get your hopes back.

Don't stop pedalling, you need to keep your balance

You won't fall,

You'll beat 'em all!

If you ever find a path with no obstacles, it's a dead end.

Be your own companion, be your own friend.

Remember that everything's hard before it's easy,

You might get those goosebumps, feeling queasy.

But you've got to step out there,

Break through, like ya just don't care.

The moment you're free,

You've overcome adversity!

16+ CATEGORY
WINNING ENTRY

Turn my Sadness into Beauty **Georgia Ayew**

Turn my sadness into beauty

Render my blue shades upon the canvas for Van Gogh's starry sky
and thus make his stars glow ever brighter.

Let the frantic eccentricities of an expressive mind be more than
madness and by doing so take those insatiable fires so passionate and
frustrated.

Let them flow effervescent in eclectic dreams Rushing, Racing,
pounding;

uncontrollably Mining valleys and cracks into the rocks of my
understandings.

Let the raging lava give you light give you clarity

Let my petals wither and fall in a moment's cold for from them stems
intangible desires and their tangible arts.

Never pity the fragility for the fruit of my mind changed with every crack

And let the glass of my box break, for I want my loss to be an
exploration.

So paint my desperation in passionate reds not mellow blues and think
not of me in solace.

For beauty can only best be distinguished from its ugliest friend,

And light amongst its darkest shadow.

UNDER 16 CATEGORY
ENTRY JOINT RUNNERS UP

Even Though
Ben Ward

Even though it all felt wrong,
Even though it took really long,
All the things I had to overcome,
Finally now I am done.

Even though it hurt a lot
But oh the amount of strength I got,
Pushing through all the pain,
All to get a little gain.

Even though I didn't make a vow,
I knew I could not turn back now.

For All my Life
Ishaan Mishra

For all my life I've had to weep,
For many a thing could give me a creep,

For all my life I've had to cry,
As though Grief and me have played eye-spy.

For all my life I've had to sing
A song of sadness, her bells still ring.

For all my life I've journeyed through,
The ups and downs of life, I'd do.

For all my life, my situation,
Gave me experience, a cause of elation.

For all my life, I sang a song,
A song of experience, I heard it for long.

16+ CATEGORY
RUNNER UP

The Ballad of a Postmenopausal Woman Pamela Esseen

I lost my way,
I heard me say,
I don't know who I am.
I'm Mum and Wife and Daughter-in-Law,
And they don't give a damn!

I'm bent and twisted into shapes
I never knew were there;
I've no control over my face,
And even less my hair!

Some is down to getting old –
My body's lost the plot;
But a lot is down to trying to be
Someone that I'm not!

I'm slowly trying to gain control,
And live my life my way,
I know that it will take a while
But I'll get there one day!

It's not that I don't love them all,
I'm blessed with what we've had.
But now's the time to take what's MINE,
Before I get too sad!

I'd like to think that in a year,
That I'll be more content.
SO CHANGE IS GOOD – RIGHT NOW, RIGHT HERE,
BEFORE MY LIFE IS SPENT!!!!!!

UNDER 16 CATEGORY
SPECIAL COMMENDATIONS FOR ORIGINALITY

Being Short
Erin Docherty

Being Short is always a challenge,
Especially for me
Because I can't even reach the lowest branch of a tree.
Now it may be a little hard,
But I won't give up, because it's quite the card
When it comes to hide and seek!
I always win, though my friends try to peek.
If I'm playing dodgeball my team will always win,
But when it comes to basketball I just can't get the ball in.
I never can buy the things on the top shelf,
But my ideal job would really be a little Christmas elf!

Adversity
Isla Dewhurst

I'm a seed drifting in the wind,
I'm only small but my ambitions are big,
I softly touch the ground,
And begin my growth.
Young children scream and shout,
And trample on my beautiful green leaves,
I squeal and cry,
But no-one comes to my rescue.
I find the courage to push past the past,
Hardworkingly and gradually I sprout into the air,
I become a resilient, grand old tree,
Big, bold and courageous.
And I'm proud of what I've become.

UNDER 16 CATEGORY
HIGHLY COMMENDED ENTRIES

Every Step I've Taken
Sahasi Upadhya

Every step I've taken
Has been trouble and strife
And even though I waken
It's a risk of losing my life

Every step I've taken
Is a lesson of adversity
An unpleasant situation
A joke which only you think is funny

Every step I've taken
Is just a mere setback
Though now happiness will shapen
With this, positivity you will not lack

Every step I've taken
Is a lesson being taught
If you feel uncomfortable
To a teacher you should talk.

Like a Maze
Freddie Payne

My life is like a maze
With twists and turns
But my friends and family
Are like signs to guide me
All through the way
I have one thing to say
You will achieve your goal
And win the day.

UNDER 16 CATEGORY
HIGHLY COMMENDED ENTRIES

Why, oh Why
Rosie Ouston

What has happened, I want to know.
Where has mum gone, I want to know.
Why are you sad and looking slow,
Please tell me, I want to know.

I'm scared and worried, I cry, you cry,
You soothe me but I still think. why
Still I am sad, I feel more shy,
I cry myself to sleep where I lie.

I wake up with butterflies in my tummy,
I am relieved I hear mummy.

They tell me,
I am scared, I want to flee.

As weeks go by,
I think of how his life flid by.
He had a good one though and was not shy,
I still think why, oh why.
No matter what happens I know to be brave.
I will carry on though life is a still a big wave!

UNDER 16 CATEGORY
HIGHLY COMMENDED ENTRIES

Votes for Women

Mia Jappy

A girl, a lady. A daughter, a mother.
A woman as strong as fire.
All women looking after each other.
Never stopping, never to tire.

Until, one day, they arose, they arose!
Fighting, for their glory.
Not scared of their foes,
Not afraid to make a story.

Emily Pankhurst, the queen of votes,
Alas, she was caught, thrown in chains
Fighting, fortunately, not in vain.

Adversity

Ishitha Shankar

I can see light miles away.
What can I say.
I've tried and tried again.
I am filled with pain.
I am ready to give up once again.

But then I can hear a voice saying:
Keep going, keep going.
I am gonna fly to the top
If I fall I won't stop.
I'm gonna try and try again.

I'm gonna reach for my goal
I've strengthened my soul
For not giving up helped me to succeed.

UNDER 16 CATEGORY
HIGHLY COMMENDED ENTRIES

Take my Spirit
Gabi El Nagar

I will jump,
I will leap,
I will sprint if I can
But it's not cheap

I will climb the highest mountain
I will jump over the wall
I will drink all the water in the fountain
And my confidence will be as big as a sports hall

I will follow my goal
No matter what
I will never fall
Even if I look like a dot
But I will try my best

Always looking forwards
Knowing I am as precious as a chest
But I am I

UNDER 16 CATEGORY
HIGHLY COMMENDED ENTRIES

Stepping out of your Comfort Zone
Amari Grewal

My sister was so brave,
She did something that I can not,
She stayed strong,
She stepped out of her comfort zone.

She opened an envelope,
She found out that she was going to a school,
That her friends were not,
She took a step forward.

She knew that she had failed and had to work harder,
And so she did,
She didn't take no for an answer,
And I would do anything to be in the place she's in today.

She got in all of the top sets,
She was invited to all of the celebrations of excellences,
She even got the confidence to perform a play in front of all the parents,
She's proud of who she is and wouldn't change a thing.

16+ CATEGORY
HIGHLY COMMENDED ENTRIES

My Diamond Anne Graham

Dedicated to George Graham, my son, who has taught me how to live...

First born twin,
Held with inexpressible love.....

Frozen in time,
Oct 16th 2018
Acute Lymphoblastic Leukaemia.
Diagnosis.
17 years old.
3 year journey.

Soft, sympathetic smiles,
Sobbing sorrow.
You calm. logical , pragmatic..

Hours of hospital bed watch,
Netflix comfort,
Blood transfusions,
Platelet transfusions.
Disturbed nights,
Interrupting machines.

Unable to protect

Broken

Skeletal body,
Large blue eyes like pools,
Agony,
Pale,

Bald,
Unrecognisable.

Lost souls on journeys cross paths and touch each other's lives in
hospital corridors,
No words necessary.
Natural Understanding.
Surprising friendships.

Powerful passionate prayers said daily,
Like candles lighting up the darkness.

You are SO brave,
You are still travelling
You are my Diamond.

16+ CATEGORY
HIGHLY COMMENDED ENTRIES

Spitfire Eyes
Mary Mullett

My father told me of the Spitfires
Flying, dark, into the night.
Bombs, red fires,
He remembered these before he lost his sight.

My father told me of the Spitfires,
One landed near the jetty
Where I played with my paper plane,
Ducking, diving,
Between a sea salt morning,
In spitting rain.

My father told me of the Spitfires
Men rushing to war,
Never fearing what they saw,
Crimson blood, shattered bullets
Cutting young minds, skin raw.

My father told me of the Spitfires
One day I thought I heard their sound,
Triumphant, distant,
Dancing between the morning cloud.



Supported using public funding by

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Registered Charity Number 1171596