



The Good Relations Awards 2023 build on the previous successes of the Community Relations Council Good Relations Awards. The Award categories have been extended to fully recognise the increasing level of outstanding community relations, intercultural and peacebuilding work that is taking place across all our communities.

This work is having a real impact, improving people's lives and their outlook for the future, while also strengthening the community spirit in the places and spaces where we live, work, and play.

The Awards highlight the vital role of good relations in peace building and community cohesion, recognising the individuals who unite and champion our local communities, and the projects that connect us and drive our communities forward in peace, understanding and cultural respect.

The Awards categories were designed to recognise the exceptional commitment to good relations work, while also providing opportunities for those who go above and beyond every day, to step forward and shine.

For 2023 we were delighted to be able to expanded the Awards programme. Working together with partners in NICVA, NI Youth Forum, Volunteer Now and The Community Foundation for Northern Ireland we had five Awards categories.



**“CHANGING FOR THE BETTER, TOGETHER”  
A SERIES OF HAIKU'S WERE DEVELOPED BY LOCAL POETS  
SUPPORTED BY THE COMMUNITY ARTS PARTNERSHIP  
TO CELEBRATE THE GOOD RELATIONS AWARDS 2023**

This years additional awards were created in partnership with the Community Arts Partnership (CAP). Community Art is the process of harnessing the transformative power of original artistic expression and producing a range of outcomes: artistic, social, cultural and environmental.

CAP is the lead agency for the promotion, development and delivery of community arts in Northern Ireland. Please visit [www.capartscentre.com](http://www.capartscentre.com) for further details of their work. Working with CAP, we created the awards for the four new 2023 Good Relations Awards categories, the sustainable awards are made from recycled glass and wood.

CAP also invited local writers to reflect on the values of Good Relations for the Good Relations Awards 2023.

The central values we invited writers to reflect upon through haiku included the overall theme of Good Relations & Together: Building a United Community' (T:BUC)  
“Changing for the better, together”:

**Respect Rights Sharing Tolerance Responsibilities Cohesion Diversity**

**Fairness Inclusion Integration Interdependence**

Haiku are a type of short form poetry originally from Japan. Traditionally, a haiku has three lines with five syllables in the first and third lines and seven syllables in the second line. Often set in nature, haiku focus on a brief moment in time, juxtaposing two images, and creating a sudden sense of enlightenment.

As part of the Good Relations Awards programme, two videos were created in partnership with CAP. The first provides the story behind the development and making of the awards, and the second, covers the development of the Haiku and poets who developed these.

### **Making the Good Relations Awards**



### **Good Relations Awards – Haiku Poets**



### **Composed by Anita Gracey**

Anita Gracey has been published in Poetry Ireland Review, Washing Windows – Irish Women Write Poetry (Ed. Eavan Boland), Abridged, The Honest Ulsterman, Poetry NI, The Poets' Republic, Fly on the Wall, The Blue Nib, Culture Matters, CAP Anthology, Bangor Literary Review, Corsham, Sonder, Utopia Project, Dream Well Writing, Corncrake Magazine, Woman's Aid Anthology, Smashing Times, Linen Hall Library, Waterways Story-making Festival, Pendemic, Monaghan County Museum, The Wing and Washing Windows Too – Irish Women Write Poetry (Ed Nuala O'Conner & Alan Hayes). Her work has featured in The Poetry Jukebox, a tattoo and a honourable mention in Chultúrlann Poetry Competition 2022.



Rights flow like a stream  
politicians steer the boat  
to a sea of change.

Guidelines are freckles  
always to be counted on  
sunbeams in dark days.

Jumping from the fence  
inclusion for everyone  
take to the dancefloor.

Tolerance isn't  
arms holding at a distance  
but around your waist.

In Winters cover  
we ask when will garden grow  
laughing Spring sun winks.

Swell of heavy clouds  
meet impatient parched dirt paths  
applaud thirsty lives.

Women on the hill  
shouting up diversity  
Pankhurst would be proud.

Voting in summer  
optimism on the breeze  
heralds cohesion.

## Composed by Patrick James McCurdie

Patrick McCurdie is a writer and poet from County Armagh. His writing is influenced by rural and urban environments, people and places and the interconnectedness of the material and spiritual worlds. With an interest in psychology and spiritual matters, his work draws on themes of consciousness as a vehicle to convey and understand human nature. Paddy has attended several writing and poetry workshops locally in the past several years and is currently writing a collection of poems and a novel. He has a love of Haiku and its power of bringing the inanimate to life.



### Respect

Can you see me now?  
I'm here, in front of you, look.  
You only need to look.

### Rights

Don't walk over me.  
This street is for both of us,  
Not just your shiny shoes.

### Sharing

My pocket is dry.  
But if I had cold water,  
I would quench your thirst.

### Tolerance

You bang your drum hard.  
My ears are sore and heavy  
Sitting quiet and still.

### Responsibilities

Do not stand frozen.  
March strong on melting dark snow,  
To the growing grass

### Cohesion

Knife through hard butter  
Slowly slides forward and back  
To a yellow cube.

### Diversity

Pupils glaze sideways  
Past rushing streams of people.  
Their eyes – blue, brown, green.

### Fairness

Rushing on gravel.  
A flash of pain in the back.  
A helping hand up.

### Inclusion

Look at that guy there,  
Staring at the setting sun.  
Hello, please come over!

### Integration

Water hurtling down  
Blending hard in deep blue sea,  
Fresh and salt water.

### Interdependence

Whipping waves whip round  
Giant slabs of trees and plants,  
While we watch and wave.

### “Changing for the better, together”

You've grown, long and tall.  
Crusted layers dropping off,  
Mixing and Sweeping.

## Composed by Marion Clarke

Marion Clarke, nominated Financial Times "Haiku Poet in the City", has been writing short form poetry since 2011. Inspired by the landscape surrounding her hometown of Warrenpoint, she combines poetry and visual art to create haiga and photo haiku. The Japanese programme NHK Haiku Masters has showcased her work, awarding her 'Master of the Month'. Last year, she received the Grand Prize in Setouchi Matsuyama's Photo Haiku Competition. Her poetry features in the first two collections of haiku from Ireland and is regularly published in international journals. Marion enjoys sharing her passion and knowledge through poetry facilitation in schools.



ravens and doves  
we celebrate  
our differences

incoming storm . . .  
a circle of redwoods  
their roots intertwined

multicultural calendar...  
more holidays  
to celebrate

office kitchen  
plastic fridge magnets  
of Jesus and Buddha

## Composed by Helena Stuart

Helena Stuart grew up in Collegeland, Co. Armagh. She has started writing poetry again, a love that began in childhood. Helena has recently retired, having worked for over 30 years as a Child Psychotherapist and in a trauma centre. This work has given her an intimate view of human nature in all its light and shade, instilling in her a great respect for the strength of the human spirit to overcome some of the harshest challenges that life can present. This looking below the surface to find the heart and soul of things shapes much of her writing.



The spaces between  
Define the shape of us  
The wind blows through anyway.

When we make our marks  
The birds sing songs of release  
We too take flight.

We endlessly close circles  
That were never really open  
The flower turns to the sun.

Together in the storm  
We stand as one  
The wind blows around us

I bow to the other  
Of my earthly tribe  
The moons sees us both.

Stepping back  
Stepping forward  
We weave a basket of oneness