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**MAYNOOTH UNIVERSITY LIBRARY KEN SARO-WIWA POETRY COMPETITION 2020**

Ken Saro-Wiwa was a social and environmental activist from the Niger Delta. To mark the 25th anniversary of the execution of Ken Saro-Wiwa and his eight colleagues (the Ogoni 9) Maynooth University Library is running a poetry competition.

Poems can be on any of the themes embodied by Ken Saro-Wiwa and the issues he and his colleagues campaigned for. These include: environmental destruction, social justice, land rights, power and control.

The competition has two categories:

Adult: Over 18 years of age  
Schools: Transition year and above

**Prizes are National Book Tokens worth €100 (first prize) and €50 (second prize) in each category.**

**Winners and shortlisted poems will be published in a winner’s anthology to be launched in Maynooth University Library on 12th November 2020.** **Closing date for entries is 29th May 2020**

**Background to the Award**

Ken Saro-Wiwa was an eco-hero to the Ogoni people, who live in the Niger Delta area of Nigeria. He fought against the pollution of his beloved homeland by the international petrochemical industry and gave his life for this cause. While in military detention, he wrote letters and poems full of hope, and sent them to his friend Sister Majella McCarron. Prisoners in Nigeria were not fed by the prison authorities and friends and family brought them food. Ken Saro-Wiwa’s letters to Sister Majella were smuggled out of military detention in breadbaskets and donated, by Sister Majella, to Maynooth University in 2011. You can read these letters and poems Saro-Wiwa wrote in the open access book *Silence Would be Treason:Last Writings of Ken Saro-Wiwa* edited by Íde Corley, Helen Fallon & Laurence Cox.

<http://mural.maynoothuniversity.ie/10161/>

When Saro-Wiwa and his colleagues (the Ogoni 9) were arrested on trumped-up charges, Sister Majella campaigned in Ireland and internationally to save their lives. Despite her efforts the Ogoni 9 were executed on 10th November 1994.

Now, because of Ken Saro-Wiwa’s passionate activism, Sister Majella’s dedication to sharing his message and the work of Maynooth University Library, people around the world know about the plight of the Ogoni people.

You can view images and other material, from the Ken Saro-Wiwa Archive at Maynooth University, from the following link.

<http://nuim.libguides.com/ken-saro-wiwa-collection>

**MAYNOOTH UNIVERSITY KEN SARO WIWA POETRY COMPETITION**

GUIDELINES

1. The competition is open to people based in Ireland.
2. There is an adult and a schools category.
3. Entries may be in either Irish or English.
4. Entries from students from new Irish communities are particularly welcome.
5. The closing date for entries is 29th May 2020
6. Entries are limited to three poems per person.
7. There is no entry fee.
8. Poems must have a title and not exceed 40 lines in length.
9. All entries must be accompanied by an entry form, which is below.
10. Electronic entries should be emailed to [helen.b.fallon@mu.ie](mailto:helen.b.fallon@mu.ie) by **5pm on** **Friday 29th May 2020.**
11. Poems must be the original work of the entrant.
12. Entries must not have been previously published or self-published, in print or online, nor have won a prize in another competition.
13. Winners and runners up will be invited to read their work at a prize giving at Maynooth University Library at a date in November 2020.
14. Entry to the competition implies permission to print winning or shortlisted poems in the winner’s anthology. All poets featured in the anthology will be invited to read at the launch and will receive a copy of the winner’s anthology, which will be published by Daraja Press.
15. All poems are judged anonymously, so please do not put your name on each page. Name, address, school (in the case of school-age entrants) and all other details should be on the entry form.
16. Entry implies acceptance of all the rules.
17. Entries cannot be returned – be sure to keep a copy for yourself.
18. Copyright of each poem remains with the author. However, authors of the winning poems, by entering the competition, grant Maynooth University Library the right to publish and/or broadcast their poem for two years from November 2020.
19. The judges’ decision is final. Maynooth University Library will not enter into any correspondence regarding the final decision or regarding individual entries.

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**MAYNOOTH UNIVERSITY LIBRARY KEN SARO-WIWA POETRY COMPETITION 2020**

**ENTRY FORM**

**ADULT CATEGORY**

WRITER’S NAME:

WRITER’S ADDRESS:

WRITER’S PHONE NUMBER:

WRITER’S EMAIL:

TITLES OF POEMS:  
  
1.

2.

3.

Please return this entry form along with your poems by email to [helen.b.fallon@mu.ie](mailto:helen.b.fallon@mu.ie) or in hard copy (marked Ken Saro-Wiwa Poetry Competition) to The John Paul II Library, Maynooth University, no later than **5pm on Friday the 29TH MAY 2020.**

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**MAYNOOTH UNIVERSITY LIBRARY KEN SARO-WIWA POETRY COMPETITION 2020**

**ENTRY FORM**

**SCHOOL CATEGORY**

WRITER’S NAME:

WRITER’S SCHOOL AND YEAR OF STUDY

CONTACT DETAILS:

TITLES OF POEMS:

1.

2.

3.

Please return this entry form along with your poems by email to [helen.b.fallon@mu.ie](mailto:helen.b.fallon@mu.ie) or in hard copy (marked Ken Saro-Wiwa Poetry Competition) to The John Paul II Library, Maynooth University, no later than **5pm on Friday the 29TH MAY 2020.**