

### 1<sup>st</sup> Prize

'Planting the Snow Queen' by Denise Bennett

For the pillar of white satin bark,  
torn layers of parchment;

for the oval, dark green leaves  
scorched to yellow and gold in autumn;

for the grace of silver-slender branches,  
sifting pale moonbeams;

for the drip of yellow catkin tassels,  
peeling boughs revealing cinnamon skin;

for the willowy loveliness,  
winter tracery of black lace;

but mostly, on that clear March day  
lifting the weight of black earth,

he planted the beautiful birch  
to celebrate thirty years of love.

### 2<sup>nd</sup> Prize

'Poem for a Final Anniversary' by Deborah Harvey

We arrived the day before Yom Kippur.  
Men in black on the shoreline  
were watching the setting sun.  
The moon was ours alone.

I'd carried it carefully with me,  
wrapped in lingerie  
and blessings of confetti,  
and I hung it over the painted sea

that lipped the peripheries  
of our Promised Land,  
its pale face as perfect  
as a virgin honey jar.

We saw the Wailing Wall,  
the Garden of Gethsemane,  
we walked the Stations of the Cross  
to crowded Calvary,

our Passion printed on the linen  
of our trashed and tumbled bed.  
When the time came to fly home  
I bound our moon up in its folds,

but its sweetness seeped into your blood,  
turning you to water,  
till you dragged our souring moon beneath,  
drowned it in your deeps.

On the beach the men in black  
still await the setting sun,  
forever fixed like broken insects  
trapped in amber.

### 3<sup>rd</sup> Prize

'Poppy Day' by Ellis Lloyd

This street could be his last post  
Standing to halt the village traffic  
With stoic gaze. He stiffens his spine  
Veteran of four chemo campaigns  
And three creeping barrages of x-rays.  
A war of winds is rattling the plane trees  
To clatter dead leaves down among  
Dipped flags and broken bugle notes.  
His wife knots her hands hard  
Aching for an armistice in his flesh.

### Young Poet Prize

'All That Was' by Amy O'Farrell

Young beauty,  
captured in a stolen glance,  
like a snapshot of time.  
Imprinted on my mind.

Every breath,  
a moment wasted as we rush,  
ignoring the peace, the ease,  
of the world in which we live.

Now we age. The mirror,  
claiming inconvenient truth,  
reflects our deepest fears.  
We sigh, we grow, we die.

And all comes fast,  
faster than we ever dreamed,  
we see all our moments lost,  
obscured beyond recognition.

Memories fading,  
Lives changing,  
and all that is left of us  
are the anniversaries.  
Of the days we lived.