

P O E T R Y



F O U N D A T I O N

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**Fanny Howe and Ange Mlinko Receive Major Literary Awards
from Poetry Foundation**

Howe to receive \$100,000 Ruth Lilly Poetry Prize

CHICAGO — The Poetry Foundation, publisher of *Poetry* magazine, is pleased to announce that poets Fanny Howe and Ange Mlinko are the winners of its sixth annual Pegasus Awards.

Howe is the recipient of the 2009 Ruth Lilly Poetry Prize. Established in 1986 and presented annually by the Poetry Foundation to a living U.S. poet whose lifetime accomplishments warrant extraordinary recognition, the Ruth Lilly Prize is one of the most prestigious awards given to American poets, and at \$100,000 it is one of the nation's largest literary prizes. Poet and critic Ange Mlinko is the winner of the Randall Jarrell Award in Poetry Criticism. The prizes will be presented at the Pegasus Awards ceremony at the Arts Club of Chicago on Tuesday, May 19.

In announcing the Lilly Prize, Christian Wiman, editor of *Poetry* magazine, said: "Fanny Howe is a religious writer whose work makes you more alert and alive to the earth, an experimental writer who can break your heart. Live in her world for a while, and it can change the way you think of yours."

"The selection of Fanny Howe as this year's winner of the Lilly Prize does honor to the traditions—of excellence, importance, and discovery—that the prize has stood for since it was established over 20 years ago," said John Barr, president of the Poetry Foundation.

The Poetry Foundation issued the following statement in making the award: "Reading Fanny Howe—both the poetry and the prose—one has the sense of a life that has been inhabited so intensely and lovingly that even her smallest fragments seem steeped in that experience. Her poetry can be elusive and hermetic, and then abruptly and devastatingly candid; it is marked by the pressures of history and culture, yet defiantly, transcendently lyrical. She is a demanding and deeply rewarding artist, and her body of work seems larger, stranger, and more permanent with each new book she publishes."

Fanny Howe, 68, has written many books of poetry, including *Gone* (University of California Press, 2003), *Selected Poems* (UC Press, 2000), *On the Ground* (Graywolf Press, 2004), and *The Lyrics* (Graywolf, 2007). She has also written novels, five of which have been collected in one volume called *Radical Love*. At age 17 Howe left her home in Boston for California and has since spent her life there and in England, Ireland, and Massachusetts. In recent years she has won

the Lenore Marshall Poetry Prize, a fellowship from the Guggenheim Foundation, and an award from the American Academy of Arts and Letters. She has written two collections of essays, *The Wedding Dress* (UC Press, 2003) and *The Winter Sun* (Graywolf, 2009). Howe has three grown children and six little grandchildren; she currently lives on Martha's Vineyard.

Ange Mlinko is the third recipient of the Randall Jarrell Award in Poetry Criticism. The \$10,000 prize is awarded for poetry criticism that is intelligent and learned as well as lively and enjoyable to read. Mlinko, 39, is the author of two books, *Matinees* (Zoland Books, 1999) and *Starred Wire* (Coffee House Press, 2005), which was a National Poetry Series winner in 2004 and a finalist for the James Laughlin Award the following year.

The Poetry Foundation issued the following statement in announcing Mlinko's award: "From Sappho to the Language poets, from Nicolas of Cusa to *The Brady Bunch*, Ange Mlinko's criticism is brilliantly wide-ranging; it is eclectic and astringent yet always lucid and generous. We are pleased to recognize a young critic whose distinctive sharp wit and formidable power have helped revitalize the art of writing about poetry."

Mlinko was born in Philadelphia and currently lives in the lower Hudson Valley, where she raises her two sons. She has an undergraduate degree in philosophy and mathematics from St. John's College and an MFA from the Creative Writing Program at Brown University. Her poetry and criticism have appeared or are forthcoming in *Poetry* and the Poetry Foundation website, the *London Review of Books*, *The New Yorker*, *Bookforum*, and *The Nation*, where she also writes an occasional column on language called Lingo.

About the Ruth Lilly Poetry Prize

American poetry has no greater friend than Ruth Lilly. Over many years and in many ways, it has been blessed by her personal generosity. In 1985 she endowed the Ruth Lilly Professorship in Poetry at Indiana University. In 1989 she created Ruth Lilly Poetry Fellowships, for \$15,000 each, given annually by the Poetry Foundation to undergraduate or graduate students selected through a national competition. In 2002 her lifetime engagement with poetry culminated in a magnificent bequest that will enable the Poetry Foundation to promote, in perpetuity, a vigorous presence for poetry in our culture.

The Ruth Lilly Poetry Prize honors a living U.S. poet whose lifetime accomplishments warrant extraordinary recognition. Established in 1986 by Ruth Lilly, the annual prize is sponsored and administered by the Poetry Foundation, publisher of *Poetry* magazine. Over the last 20 years, the Lilly Prize has awarded more than \$1,000,000. The previous recipients are Adrienne Rich, Philip Levine, Anthony Hecht, Mona Van Duyn, Hayden Carruth, David Wagoner, John Ashbery, Charles Wright, Donald Hall, A.R. Ammons, Gerald Stern, William Matthews, W.S. Merwin, Maxine Kumin, Carl Dennis, Yusef Komunyakaa, Lisel Mueller, Linda Pastan, Kay Ryan, C.K. Williams, Richard Wilbur, Lucille Clifton, and Gary Snyder.

About the Pegasus Awards

The Poetry Foundation has established a family of prizes with an emphasis on new awards to under-recognized poets and types of poetry. Inaugurated in 2004, the Pegasus Awards are announced annually in the spring. The Poetry Foundation believes that targeted prizes can help redress underappreciated accomplishments, diversify the kinds of poetry being written, and

widen the audience for the art form. With this in mind, it may create additional prizes in the years ahead.

About the Poetry Foundation

The Poetry Foundation, publisher of *Poetry* magazine and one of the largest literary organizations in the world, exists to discover and celebrate the best poetry and to place it before the largest possible audience. The Poetry Foundation seeks to be a leader in shaping a receptive climate for poetry by developing new audiences, creating new avenues for delivery, and encouraging new kinds of poetry through innovative literary prizes and programs. For more information, please visit www.poetryfoundation.org.

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