

## Lucy Caldwell Wins 2011 Dylan Thomas Prize

Lucy Caldwell was tonight (09/11/11) named the winner of this year's £30,000 University of Wales Dylan Thomas Prize for her novel, *The Meeting Point*.

Lucy Caldwell, who is Belfast-born and London based, is the fourth recipient of the global award which was founded in 2006 to encourage creative talent in writers under the age of 30, from any genre which has been published in the English language. She was presented with a cheque for £30,000 along with a specially commissioned bronze bust of Dylan Thomas at an exclusive awards dinner in Dylan Thomas' hometown of Swansea. The ceremony, which was hosted by BBC broadcaster, Jamie Owen, was attended by Dylan Thomas' granddaughter, Hannah Ellis.

Lucy Caldwell fought off stiff competition from shortlisted authors from around the globe to win the Prize: New Yorkers, Benjamin Hale and Tea Obreht, who also won this year's Orange Prize for Fiction; Yorkshire-based first time novelist, Annabel Pitcher and Jacob McArthur Mooney, an accomplished poet from Canada.

Peter Stead, founder of the Dylan Thomas Prize, said: "We are delighted to announce Lucy Caldwell as the winner of the 2011 University of Wales Dylan Thomas Prize. *The Meeting Point* is a lyrical modern day parable set in Bahrain depicting the crises in the faith and marriage of an Irish woman and her relationship with a troubled Muslim teenager. It is a beautifully written and mature reflection on identity, loyalty and belief in a complex world. We have no doubt that this is yet another significant step in what will undoubtedly be a striking career."

Marc Clement, President of the University of Wales, said: "On behalf of the University of Wales, I would like to offer my wholehearted congratulations to Lucy Caldwell on this remarkable achievement. I hope that winning the £30,000 Prize will allow her to develop her immense talent without the financial pressures faced by so many of today's young writers. The University of Wales Dylan Thomas Prize is intended not only to celebrate Dylan himself, but also to encourage, support and nurture talent in young

writers worldwide, and it is this unique benefit that makes the Prize one of today's most important literary awards.”

Lucy Caldwell was born in Belfast in 1981. She read English at Queen's College, Cambridge and is a graduate of Goldsmith's MA in Creative and Life Writing. *The Meeting Point* is her second novel, and she is also an award-winning playwright, currently under commission to write for the main stage of the Royal Court Theatre.

*The Meeting Point* is the story of a Christian minister and his wife moving to Bahrain and becoming caught up in emotional and religious complexities. It was described by the judges as a beautifully written book which moves to an exciting resolution. When Euan and Ruth set off with their young daughter to live in Bahrain, it is meant to be an experience and adventure they will cherish. But on the night they arrive, Ruth discovers the truth behind the missionary work Euan has planned and feels her world start to crumble. Far from home, and with events spiralling towards war in nearby Iraq, she starts to question her faith - in Euan, in their marriage and in all she has held dear. With Euan so often away, she is confined to their guarded compound with her neighbours and, in particular, Noor, a troubled teenager recently returned to Bahrain to live with her father. Confronted by temptations and doubt, each must make choices that could change lives forever.

**Ends.**

**To arrange interviews with Lucy or the judges please call Natasha Fulford or Lara Hallett at MGB PR on 01792 460200.**

Notes to Editors:

The Shortlist

The University of Wales Dylan Thomas Prize Shortlist for 2011 was:

- ◆ The Meeting Point by Lucy Caldwell, Faber
- ◆ The Evolution of Bruno Littlemore by Benjamin Hale, Atlantic Books
- ◆ Folk by Jacob McArthur Mooney, McClelland & Stewart
- ◆ The Tiger's Wife by Tea Obreht, Orion
- ◆ My Sister Lives on the Mantelpiece, Annabel Pitcher, Orion