Black Infinity: Adele V. Holden Prize for New African-American Poets

Poets & Writers Ad

Black Infinity Poetry Prize honors of Adele Holden, born on Maryland’s segregated Eastern Shore, educated at Johns Hopkins, devoted English teacher. Through her art and life, she promoted equal rights while shaping the minds of young people. Prize recognizes African-American poets under 40 not previously published in book-length form. Send $20 entry fee, contact information, and manuscript not more than 400 pages to Black Infinity, CityLit Project, 120 S. Curley Street, Baltimore, MD 21224. Postmark deadline February 1. Winner receives publication, $250, 25 copies. Reginald Harris of Poets House will judge. Guidelines at www.citylitproject.org click CityLit Press.

Submission Guidelines

1. This chapbook competition is open to any African-American writer who has not had either a chapbook or full-length book of poetry published by a professional press. CityLit Project staff, interns, board members, and their immediate family are ineligible.

2. Contestants must be under the age of forty (40) at the time they submit the manuscript to the competition.

3. Send one (1) copy of a single manuscript, one (1) submission per poet. Manuscripts must be typed and available in electronic format. Submit no fewer than thirty (30) and no more than forty (40) pages of poetry. All poems must be original (translations are not accepted).

4. Manuscripts must be unbound. Use binder or paper clips (no staples).

5. Include on separate pages
   a. A cover sheet listing poet’s name, date of birth, mailing, contact telephone number, email address, and collection title. Author’s name should not appear on any pages within the manuscript.
   b. List of acknowledgments of previously published poems (if applicable).
   c. Brief one paragraph brief bio not to exceed 200 words.
   d. Separate page with title of collection only (to be forwarded to the final judge).

6. Manuscripts will not be returned; after the winner has been selected, all other manuscripts will be recycled. Please do not send your only copy.

7. Simultaneous submission to other awards should be noted. Immediate notice upon winning an award is required.

8. Acknowledgment of material received and announcement of the prize winner will be done via e-mail.
9. Entry Fee: $20 (made payable to CityLit Project) along with submission to:

   Black Infinity Prize
c/o CityLit Project
120 S. Curley Street
Baltimore, MD 21224

**FINALIST MANUSCRIPTS WILL BE JUDGED ANONYMOUSLY.**

**Postmark Deadline:** February 1 (annually).

**Notification:** Winner will be notified in May, with the winning chapbook published in the Fall.

**Prize Winner:** The winner of the Black Infinity: Adele V. Holden Prize for New African-American Poets receives $250, publication by CityLit Press, and 25 copies of the winning chapbook.

**Prize Honoree:** Adele V. Holden (1919-2005)

Through her art, career, and life, Adele V. Holden promoted equal rights while shaping the minds of young people.

Born on the racially segregated Eastern Shore in 1919, Adele grew up in Pocomoke City, Maryland, during the Great Depression, a time when the state’s final lynchings were taking place in nearby towns. She attended Morgan State College and Johns Hopkins University, where she was an early student of Writing Seminars founder Elliott Coleman. Adele dedicated her energy to educating young people as a devoted English teacher at Dunbar High School and the Community College of Baltimore. She published a collection of poetry in 1961, and forty years later her second book, the memoir Down on the Shore: The Family and Place that Forged a Poet’s Voice.

Nikki Giovanni called Down on the Shore “a moving testament to the human spirit.”

Adele and her editor criss-crossed the region promoting the widely-praised book, forming a relationship that lasted until her death in 2005. She willed the car in which they traveled—an otherwise barely-used black Infiniti—to that editor, who donated it to CityLit Project to establish a prize in her honor. While Black Infinity references that car, it also represents Adele V. Holden’s belief in young people, poetry, education, and equal rights for all.

**Confirmed Judges:** Kwame Alexander and Nikki Giovanni, Ethelbert Miller, Afaa Michael Weaver

**Series Editor:** Reginald Harris

Reginald Harris is recipient of Individual Artist Awards for both poetry and fiction from the Maryland State Arts Council. His first book, 10 Tongues: Poems (Three Conditions

**Prize Sponsor:** CityLit Project

CityLit Project nurtures the culture of literature in Baltimore and throughout Maryland. CityLit builds and connects a community of avid readers and writers through public events, workshops, web resources, and publishing. Its signature event—CityLit Festival—was selected “Best of Baltimore” by Baltimore magazine in 2005 and 2009, and is now a “can’t miss event on the city’s cultural scene.” In 2010, the magazine noted that CityLit Project “has blossomed into a local treasure on a variety of fronts—especially its public programming and workshops—and it recently added a publishing imprint {CityLit Press} to its list of minor miracles.”