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QMS STUDENT EARNS NATIONAL POETRY HONOUR

The Power of Words on a National Stage

April 24, 2023 – Duncan, BC, Canada – Poetry has a super power—it enables humans to capture and express our emotions through art, connecting us to each other in unique ways. For one QMS student, poetry recitation has been an outlet of personal expression that elevated her to the national mic to showcase her talents and earned her the title of Canadian Champion.

Maia Cassie (Grade 11) of Salt Spring Island was one of nine students from across Canada invited to the National Finals in Calgary on April 20. She earned her place at the prestigious [Poetry in Voice](#) event through a series of qualifications that started with 20,000 entries. Making the final cut ensured Maia’s ticket to participate in a week of poetry-related workshops, panels and activities leading up to the National Finals.

The experience was also a moving one for QMS Humanities teacher, Katie Colosimo, who accompanied Maia to the competition. “After spending the week with incredible student poets and reciters, as well as engaging in activities led by professional poets, I have made professional connections across the country and discovered a renewed enthusiasm for the power of poetry,” she states. “I am excited to bring the Poetry in Voice program into QMS classrooms in the future, and to share at least a bit of the inspiration I feel after this week.”

Judged by a discerning panel of poets that included Richard Harrison, Micheline Maylor and Titilope Sonuga, Maia and her English recitation finalists had to memorize and perform three poems in front of both live and online audiences. The student with the best combined score after all three recitations would be named the winner. Maia’s beautiful and heartfelt performances of: *These Poems*, *She Said* by Robert Bringhurst; *Regardless* by Aisha Sasha John; and *The Ghosts of Women Once Girls* by Aja Monet earned her the glass trophy and a \$3,000 cash prize during the online broadcast.

“The Poetry in Voice National Finals were an absolutely unforgettable experience, and I’m so honoured to have had the opportunity to go,” shares Cassie. “My time in Calgary was packed with fascinating workshops on everything from changing the world through poetry to making paper by hand, and I got to meet so many talented, passionate poets and performers. I could’ve never anticipated what a welcoming and inspiring community I would discover through this competition!”

About Queen Margaret's School

QMS is a university-preparatory, all gender day and boarding school located in Duncan, BC. Our purpose is to prepare young trailblazers, as no two journeys are the same. With an educational emphasis on experiential learning, innovative thinking, environmental stewardship and sustainability, we live by the value statement: *Be curious. Be kind. Be brave. Be you.*

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Photo caption: Maia Cassie of QMS placed first at the Poetry in Voice finals in Calgary to become National Champion of the English Recitation category.

Photo by Katie Colosimo

