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TALYA RUBIN TAKES TOP PRIZE AT POETRY NOW: 7th ANNUAL BATTLE OF THE BARDS

TORONTO, March 26, 2015 --- After a well-fought battle of words, **IFOA** has named **Talya Rubin** as the winner of the **7th annual Battle of the Bards**. Last night, IFOA, in partnership with **NOW Magazine**, welcomed 20 upcoming and established poets to the stage. A jury comprising IFOA's Director, **Geoffrey E. Taylor**, Artistic Associate **Jen Tindall** and **Catherine Graham**, the 2014 Poetry NOW champion, selected Rubin following her captivating performance. As the winner, she receives **an invitation to read at the 36th edition of the International Festival of Authors (October 22 to November 1, 2015)** and **an ad for her book in NOW Magazine**.

Poet, playwright and theatre creator/performer, Rubin's poetry has won the Bronwen Wallace Award for Emerging Writers. In 2011, she was shortlisted for the Winston Collins/Descant Prize for Best Canadian Poem and was a finalist for the Montreal International Poetry Prize. She lives in Montreal with her husband and son. Last night, she presented work from her new collection, ***Leaving the Island***, which is forthcoming from **Véhicule Press**.

IFOA has invited five additional Poetry NOW participants to read at the IFOA, which this year will feature a special focus on the work of upcoming and established poets from around the world: **Claire Caldwell, Kate Hargreaves, Zachariah Wells, Liz Worth** and **Deanna Young**.

In February, IFOA and *NOW Magazine* invited submissions from poets with collections published within the past five years and currently in print with a trade publisher. IFOA selected 20 readers via a random draw of all eligible submissions following the deadline for submissions on February 27. Those poets selected read last night in Harbourfront Centre's Brigantine Room.

IFOA Weekly events continue through til the end of June 2015. For more information and to purchase tickets, the public may visit ifoa.org or call the **Harbourfront Centre Box Office at 416-973-4000**.

About IFOA

Since its inception in 1974, IFOA has hosted over 8,500 authors from more than 100 countries, including over 20 Nobel Laureates. Our season runs from September to June and includes the annual International Festival of Authors (October 22–November 1, 2015), including YoungIFOA and IFOA Ontario, and the annual ALOUD: a Celebration for Young Readers with Forest of Reading® Festival of Trees™ (May 12–13, 2015).

About NOW Magazine

Toronto's independent weekly, *NOW Magazine* was launched in 1981 as the city's alternative voice. Since then, it has become the largest alternative news and entertainment weekly in North America, and is considered one of Toronto's most influential taste-making publications both in print weekly and online every day of the week. *NOW Magazine* is available free every Thursday at all 65 Gateway newsstand locations throughout the TTC, at over 3,310 racks, boxes and newsstands across the GTA and daily on nowtoronto.com, mobile and iPad.

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