

Junior Division (16-20), Poetry  
Arielle Connors, Conception Bay South  
**Dust Upon the Mantel (Saudade)**

Rain yields little rivers in the trenches of the ditch.  
The emanating sun spreads across the wooden cabin enveloped by trees.  
Preadolescence finds peace and death in a smile long forgotten.  
Dust piles.

The church stands tall on an incline by the harbour.  
The rains of heaven cascade against the walls of the chapel.  
Tears build on the waterline, threatening to spill over.  
The bell tolls.  
I do not cry.

Nostalgia found in smoke billowing from a cigarette;  
A quaint blue house sat by the harbour, stripped of memorabilia;  
A small convenience store down the road, long since closed;  
Paw prints moulded into clay, preserving a love lying dormant.  
Dust piles.

My heart burns, aggravating the neglected grief that weighs on me like an anchor.  
Its chain tightens against my throat, choking off the oncoming anguish.  
I do not cry.

Memories pile like dust upon the mantel of my heart.  
Trembling fingers hover over the fireplace, ghosting against its surface.  
Past fingerprints emboss the mantel like a ledger.  
My hand retreats as grief threatens to cling to its fingertips.  
I leave my heart to burn, and the anchor pulls me deeper, its chain tightening.  
Dust piles, and I do not cry.