



The Royal Society
of Literature

RSL Ondaatje Prize 2020: The Longlist



The **£10,000 RSL Ondaatje Prize** is awarded annually to a book of the highest literary merit – fiction, non-fiction or poetry – which best evokes the spirit of a place.

This year's judges are Peter Frankopan (Chair), Pascale Petit and Evie Wyld.

Jay Bernard	Surge	(Chatto & Windus)
Jane Clarke	When the Tree Falls	(Bloodaxe Books)
Laura Cumming	On Chapel Sands	(Chatto & Windus)
Tishani Doshi	Small Days and Nights	(Bloomsbury Circus)
Lucy Ellmann	Ducks, Newburyport	(Galley Beggar Press)
Luan Goldie	Nightingale Point	(HQ Fiction)
Adam Higginbotham	Midnight in Chernobyl	(Bantam Press)
Kathleen Jamie	Surfacing	(Sort of Books)
Robert Macfarlane	Underland	(Hamish Hamilton)
Tim Mackintosh-Smith	Arabs: A 3,000-Year History of Peoples, Tribes, and Empires	(Yale University Press London)
Philip Marsden	The Summer Isles	(Granta Books)
Robert Minhinnick	Nia	(Seren)
Anita Mir	The Inside City	(Unbound Digital)
Max Porter	Lanny	(Faber & Faber)
Roger Robinson	A Portable Paradise	(Peepal Tree Press)
Elif Shafak	10 Minutes 38 Seconds in This Strange World	(Viking)
Anna Sherman	The Bells of Old Tokyo: Travels in Japanese Time	(Picador)
Jumoke Verissimo	A Small Silence	(Cassava Republic)

**The shortlist will be announced on Monday 20 April
and the winner on Monday 4 May**

Notes to editors

The RSL Ondaatje Prize is an annual award of £10,000 for a distinguished work of fiction, non-fiction or poetry, best evoking the spirit of a place. We are grateful to Sir Christopher Ondaatje for sponsoring the Prize.

200 years young in 2020, the **Royal Society of Literature** is Britain's charity for the advancement of literature. In addition to the RSL Ondaatje Prize, the RSL runs the RSL Christopher Bland Prize for best debut from a writer over 50, the Encore Award for best second novel of the year, the V. S. Pritchett Short Story Prize, RSL Literature Matters Awards and the RSL Giles St Aubyn Awards for Non-Fiction, as well as regular events, young people's outreach and research into literature in the UK today.

RSL Ondaatje Prize winners

2019	Aida Edemariam	<i>The Wife's Tale: A Personal History</i>
2018	Pascale Petit	<i>Mama Amazonica</i>
2017	Francis Spufford	<i>Golden Hill</i>
2016	Peter Pomerantsev	<i>Nothing Is True and Everything Is Possible</i>
2015	Justin Marozzi	<i>Baghdad: City of Peace, City of Blood</i>
2014	Alan Johnson	<i>This Boy</i>
2013	Philip Hensher	<i>Scenes from Early Life</i>
2012	Rahul Bhattacharya	<i>The Sly Company of People Who Care</i>
2011	Edmund de Waal	<i>The Hare with Amber Eyes</i>
2010	Ian Thomson	<i>The Dead Yard: Tales of Modern Jamaica</i>
2009	Adam Nicolson	<i>Sissinghurst: An Unfinished History</i>
2008	Graham Robb	<i>The Discovery of France</i>
2007	Hisham Matar	<i>In the Country of Men</i>
2006	James Meek	<i>The People's Act of Love</i>
2005	Rory Stewart	<i>The Places In Between</i>
2004	Louisa Waugh	<i>Hearing Birds Fly</i>

Press wanting more information on the Prize should contact:

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