

PRESS RELEASE



The Royal Society of Literature

Emily Ruth Ford
becomes the first writer to win
the £1,000



**V. S. Pritchett Short Story Prize twice
with her 2018 entry
'Please Be Good To Me'**

The 2018 judges of the Prize, which is awarded for the year's best unpublished short story, are **Tibor Fischer**, **Irenosen Okojie** and **Leone Ross**.

Leone Ross: 'it sneaks up on you; what seems a simple meeting between strangers builds and builds into a tender, almost painful tale about vulnerability and what humans can and should do for each other. The writer asks us to slow down, to see each other's smallness, to ask important questions about community. Restrained, timely and dare I say, important.'

Tibor Fischer: 'a simple, but clever story about London and us. An everyday incident at a busy London station that forces the reader to be there.'

Irenosen Okojie: 'a tender, heart warming tale on the complexities of ageing, the perils of finding your way and the perseverance of the human spirit.'

Emily Ruth Ford is a writer and translator living in London. She studied English at Oxford University and Creative Writing at the University of East Anglia, and spent ten years as a journalist for *The Times* and Agence France-Presse, with postings in China and India. She speaks Italian and Mandarin. She is the first writer to win the V.S. Pritchett Prize twice - she came first last year with her story 'The Hikers'.

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VIRGINIA BAILY, 'A Flying Visit'

'A timely tale honouring all the different kinds of sacrifices women make.' - Leone Ross. Virginia Baily is the author of three novels including *Africa Junction*, which won the McKitterick Prize. She co-edits *Riptide* journal.



JUNO BAKER, 'Uncertain Terms'

'A French grandmother shows how entente is not always that cordiale.' - Tibor Fischer. Juno Baker is a freelance writer, and editor of the University of Cambridge's Leading Change website.



FLORA CARR, 'An English Farm'

'This ironic tale is such a confident take on class, sibling rivalry and privilege.' - Leone Ross. Flora Carr has been published in *TIME*, the *Observer* and *The Telegraph*. She won the Vogue Talent Contest for young writers in 2015.



AOIFE INMAN, 'In the Mountain Lives a Woman'

'A tremendously well paced, tender, uncompromising look at a very intimate kind of pain.' - Leone Ross. Aoife Inman is a bookseller who recently completed a Masters in History. She is currently working on her first short story collection.



MICHELLE WRIGHT, 'All We Need to See'

'A luminous, beautifully constructed story. Full of humour, magic.' - Irenosen Okojie. Michelle Wright's short story collection, *Fine*, was published by Allen and Unwin in 2016. She lives in Australia.

History of the Prize

The V.S. Pritchett Short Story Prize was founded by the RSL in 1999 to commemorate the centenary of an author widely regarded as the finest English short story writer of the 20th century. The Prize seeks to preserve a tradition encompassing Pritchett's mastery of narrative. Each story is anonymous when read, by a different panel of judges each year. The RSL is grateful to Jennie Bland for sponsoring the prize, to *Prospect* for publishing the winning entry and to ALCS for supporting the event.

The Royal Society of Literature

Founded in 1820, the RSL is Britain's national charity for the advancement of literature. We act as a national voice for the value of literature, engage people in appreciating literature, and encourage and honour writers. In addition to the V.S. Pritchett Short Story Prize, the RSL awards annually the new RSL Christopher Bland Prize for debut writers over 50, the RSL Ondaatje Prize for books best evoking the spirit of a place, the Encore Award for best second novel of the year, the RSL Giles St Aubyn Awards for Non-Fiction (first major commissioned works) and the RSL Literature Matters Awards to reward and enable literary excellence and innovation.