

PRESS RELEASE



**The Royal Society
of Literature**



**Ursula Brunetti
wins the £1,000
20th anniversary
V. S. Pritchett Short Story Prize
with
'Beetleboy'**

The 2019 judges of the Prize, which is awarded for the year's best unpublished short story, are **Candice Carty-Williams**, **Philip Hensher** and **Leone Ross**.

Candice Carty-Williams: "Beetleboy" was my winning story from the off. Beetleboy is a truly special character. Unique but one that we've known in our lives; that maltreated child who can't quite connect with the people around him so tries — and fails — to connect through everything else. Moving, uneasy and tautly written, 'Beetleboy' struck me in the heart and the gut.'

Leone Ross: 'What I loved about this story was the fluidity of language and the tremendous pull on the heart. It's hard to do both. It illuminates and honours the small and broken worlds that some children must endure.'

Philip Hensher: 'This is an expert piece of work. It knows just how much to bamboozle a reader, leading us into places we'd never anticipated, and all the time knowing what the characters want out of their own stories.'

Ursula Brunetti is a Faber Academy graduate from the Isle of Wight. Her work has been shortlisted for the Harper's Bazaar Short Story Competition 2019 and has been published by *Popshot*, *The Londonist*, *Fairlight Books*, *Liar's League* and *Cinnamon Press*. She is working on a novel and short story collection.

Press should contact Annette Brook, Communications Manager:
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K.M. ELKES, 'Alone, But Not Lost'

'A graceful and rounded account.' - Philip Hensher. K.M. Elkes is the author of the flash fiction collection *All That Is Between Us* (Ad Hoc Fiction, 2019). His short stories have won a number of competitions.



CATHERINE FINN, 'The Celt'

'A bold, naturalistic look at what it means to be a voyeur of the everyday when it spins slightly out of the ordinary.' - Candice Carty-Williams. Catherine Finn's short stories have been published in *The Dublin Review* and broadcast on RTE Radio One.



NAT LUURTSEMA, 'Howling Pack of Undesirables'

'This poked me in very uncomfortable places, which is one of the things great literature should do!' - Leone Ross. Nat Luurtsema is a BAFTA-nominated screenwriter of shorts and feature films. She also writes books for children.



DIANA MCCAULAY, 'Picking Crabs in Negril'

'It makes the reader want to pull up a chair and sit with these characters.' - Philip Hensher. Diana McCauley is a Jamaican writer and environmental activist. She was the 2012 Commonwealth Writers Short Story Prize regional winner.



STEPHEN WALSH, 'The Leash'

'The protagonist is so deftly handled, and the pacing so sure.' - Leone Ross. Stephen Walsh lives in Dublin and has been shortlisted in 2019 for The White Review Story Prize and the RTE Francis MacManus Story Competition

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 *Prospect* for publishing the winning entry and to ALCS for supporting the prize and Faber & Faber for hosting the prize event on Monday 11 November.

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.