

WEDNESDAY 24 NOVEMBER 2021



The Royal Society
of Literature



Authors'
Licensing and
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Society

Prospect

V. S. Pritchett Short Story Prize 2021: The Shortlist

This Prize of £1,000 goes to the best unpublished short story of the year. The winning entry is published in *Prospect* magazine online and in the *RSL Review*.

The judges, **Rowan Hisayo Buchanan**, **Paul McVeigh** and **Emma Jane Unsworth** have selected:

Owen Booth 'Middle-Aged Sex Object'

'What a great story. Clever and funny. A writer with a great voice.' – **Paul McVeigh** Owen Booth is the author of *What We're Teaching Our Sons* (2018) and *The All-True Adventures (and Rare Education) of the Daredevil Daniel Bones* (2020). His short stories have been published in *Best British Short Stories 2018*, *Gorse Magazine*, *Hotel Magazine*, *3AM Magazine*, *The White Review* and *The Moth Magazine*, among others. He won the 2020 Moth Short Story Prize and the 2015 White Review Short Story Prize.

Maureen Cullen 'The Cailleach of Redgauntlet Close'

'This story's voice is strong—it establishes its own rhythm and song. It captures an urgent moment in the protagonist's life with skill.' – **Rowan Hisayo Buchanan** Maureen has an MA in Creative Writing from Lancaster University. She has been shortlisted in various writing competitions and has had poems and short stories published in magazines and anthologies. Her current project is a collection of linked short stories based in a fictional town in the West of Scotland.

B Johnson 'Idolatry'

'This musical story captures childhood's beauty and heady desires. It's hard to succeed at lyricism without becoming overwrought and this story succeeds admirably.' – **Rowan Hisayo Buchanan** Bonnie Lander Johnson teaches English Literature at Cambridge University. She has published academic books on Renaissance science and religion. She's now writing an agricultural novel, a collection of short stories about mixed-race love and a cultural history of Shakespeare's passion for botany.

Amanda Mason 'Three Times, Lefthandwise'

'Accomplished and elegant, this story displayed all the hallmarks of a gifted and insightful writer.' – **Emma Jane Unsworth** Amanda Mason lives in North Yorkshire. Her short fiction has appeared in various anthologies, including *New Ghost Stories* (The Fiction Desk) and *Unthology 8* (Unthank Books). Her first novel, *The Wayward Girls*, was published by Zaffre in 2019 and her second, *The Hiding Place*, was published in October of this year.

Maeve Mulrennan 'Known To The Gardaí'

'A powerful story with a deep, dark heart. I loved the way this tale twisted around and sent my moral compass spinning.' – **Emma Jane Unsworth** Maeve Mulrennan lives in Cork, Ireland. She was the 2018 winner of the Over the Edge New Writing Prize. Some of her short stories have been published online and in *The Galway Review*. She works in the arts and studied visual art and English literature at university (a long time ago).

Leeor Ohayon 'Gahnun on Shabbat'

'A tender, moving piece I enjoyed from start to finish. This story has stayed with me.' – **Paul McVeigh** Leeor Ohayon is a writer from London based in Norwich. He is currently enrolled on the MA Prose Fiction Creative Writing at the University of East Anglia, where he is working on a collection of short stories. Leeor's short story 'Bedbugs' took first place in the Leicester Writes Short Story Prize 2021 and his short story 'Details' was shortlisted for the Brick Lane Bookshop Prize 2021.

Notes to Editors

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. Stories are judged anonymously by a panel of writers. Previous winners have included Emily Ruth Ford, Jonathan Tel, Martina Devlin, Carys Davies and Kate Lockwood Jefford.

The RSL is grateful to the Authors' Licensing and Collecting Society (ALCS) for supporting this Prize. The RSL is also grateful to *Prospect* for publishing the winning story online.

The 2021 winner will be announced on 15 December

Royal Society of Literature

Founded in 1820, the RSL is the UK's charity for the advancement of literature. We act as a voice for the value of literature, encourage and honour writers and engage people in appreciating literature. In addition to the V.S. Pritchett Short Story Prize, the RSL awards annually the RSL Christopher Bland Prize for debut writers aged 50 and over, 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 first commissioned works of Non-Fiction and the RSL Literature Matters Awards to reward and enable literary excellence and innovation.

Past Winners

2020	Kate Lockwood Jefford	Picasso's Face
2019	Ursula Brunetti	Beetleboy
2018	Emily Ruth Ford	Please Be Good to Me
2017	Emily Ruth Ford	The Hikers
2016	Fiona Marshall	The Street of Baths
2015	Jonathan Tel	The Seduction of a Provincial Accountant
2014	Alice Jolly	Ray the Rottweiler
2013	Peter Adamson	Sahel
2012	Martina Devlin	Singing Dumb
2011	Carys Davies	The Redemption of Galen Pike
2010	Michael Newton	The Premises
2009	Kate Clanchy	The Not-Dead and the Saved
2008	Cynthia Rogerson	A Dangerous Place
2007	Gabriela Blandy	The Buck
2006	Henry Peplow	Master Sunny
2005	Jonathan Haylett	Bendera Beach
2004	Ed Siegle	Nine Lives, One Life
2003	Cherise Saywell	Beef Queen
2001	Simon Korner	Falling
2000	Emma Barklamb	No and Yes
1999	John Arden	The Stealing Steps

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