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Press Release

SHORTLIST ANNOUNCED FOR GORDON BURN PRIZE

This evening the shortlist will be announced for the second annual Gordon Burn Prize at the official launch of the Durham Book Festival programme.

The Gordon Burn Prize, run in partnership by New Writing North, Faber & Faber, and the Gordon Burn Trust, was conceived to pay tribute to the legacy of the late author. An incisive, undaunted writer, Newcastle-born Burn was a literary polymath, writing forensically on subjects ranging from celebrity to serial killers, politics to contemporary art, sport to the media. The Gordon Burn Prize seeks to recognise writers whose work follows in his fearless footsteps: authors whose novels enter history to interrogate the past, and non-fiction writers brave enough to recast characters to create a new and vivid reality.

The judges for the 2014 prize are the comedian, actor and musician Julian Barratt, the poet John Burnside, the artist Sarah Lucas, and novelist Benjamin Myers, winner of the 2013 Gordon Burn Prize.

The shortlist is:

- *The Valley* by Richard Benson (Bloomsbury)
- *The Kills* by Richard House (Picador)
- *The Wake* by Paul Kingsnorth (Unbound)
- *The Trip to Echo Spring* by Olivia Laing (Canongate)
- *American Interior* by Gruff Rhys (Hamish Hamilton)
- *The Free* by Willy Vlautin (Faber & Faber)

The winner will be announced on 10 October at a special event at Durham Book Festival at 6.30 p.m. in Durham Town Hall, with the shortlisted authors reading from their work.

For further information, please contact Kate McQuaid, Publicity Manager at Faber & Faber, on 020 7927 3886 or kate.mcquaid@faber.co.uk.

Notes to Editors:

- The Gordon Burn Prize is run in partnership with the Gordon Burn Trust, New Writing North and Faber & Faber.
- The winning writer will receive a cheque for £5,000 and be offered the opportunity to undertake a writing retreat of up to three months at Gordon Burn's cottage in Berwickshire.
- The submission period for the 2014 prize is 01 July 2013 to 01 June 2014.
- Publishers are permitted to submit up to 6 titles per imprint, in print or digital format.
- The prize is open to work written in World English by writers of any nationality or descent who at the time of entering are permanently resident in the United Kingdom or United States of America.
- Works of translation, books for children, and poetry are not eligible for the prize.

- Please consult the New Writing North website (www.newwritingnorth.com) for full terms and conditions as well as submission guidelines.
- Please visit the Gordon Burn website (www.gordonburntrust.com) for further details on The Gordon Burn Prize as well as information on Gordon's work.

Shortlisted author biographies:

Richard Benson is the author of the number one bestseller, *The Farm*, shortlisted for the *Guardian* First Book Award 2005, and a 2006 Richard and Judy book club choice. Richard Benson lives in London.

Richard House is an author, film maker, artist and university teacher. He has written two previous novels (*Bruiser* and *Uninvited*) which were published by Serpent's Tail in the 1990s. He is a member of the Chicago-based collaborative, Haha. He is the editor of a digital magazine, *Fatboy Review*: www.fatboyreview.net

Paul Kingsnorth is the author of two non-fiction books, *One No, Many Yeses* (2003) and the highly acclaimed *Real England* (2008), as well as a collection of poetry, *Kidland* (2011). A former journalist and deputy editor of *The Ecologist* magazine, he has won several awards for his poetry and essays. In 2009, he co-founded the Dark Mountain Project, an international network of writers, artists and thinkers in search of new stories for troubled times. Much of his writing can be found online at www.paulkingsnorth.net. *The Wake* is his first novel.

Olivia Laing's first book, *To the River*, was described as 'sublime' by *The Times*, 'magical' by the *Telegraph* and 'deeply intelligent' by the *Literary Review*. It was a book of the year in the *Evening Standard*, *Independent* and *Financial Times* and was shortlisted for the Royal Society of Literature Ondaatje Prize and the Dolman Travel Book of the Year. *The Trip to Echo Spring* has been shortlisted for the 2013 Costa Biography Award and the 2014 Transmission Prize, was widely reviewed and was also a book of the year in *The Times*, *The Observer*, *Metro*, *Economist* and *Times Literary Supplement*. Olivia is the former Deputy Books Editor of *The Observer* and writes for a variety of publications, including *The Observer*, *New Statesman*, *Guardian* and *Times Literary Supplement*. She is a 2011 MacDowell Fellow and has received awards from the Arts Council and the Authors' Foundation. She was also awarded the 2014 Eccles Foundation Writer in Residence at the British Library.

Gruff Rhys is known around the world for his work as a solo artist as well as singer and songwriter with Super Furry Animals and Neon Neon, and for his collaborations with Gorillaz, Mogwai, Dangermouse and Sparklehorse amongst others. The latest album by Neon Neon, *Praxis Makes Perfect*, based on the life of radical Italian publisher Giangiacomo Feltrinelli, was recently performed as an immersive live concert with National Theatre Wales.

Born and raised in Reno, Nevada, Willy Vlautin started playing guitar and writing songs as a teenager and quickly became immersed in music. It was a Paul Kelly song, based on Raymond Carver's *Too Much Water So Close to Home* that inspired him to start writing stories. Vlautin has published three novels, *The Motel Life* (2006), which was made into a film starring Stephen Dorff and Dakota Fanning, *Northline* (2008) and *Lean on Pete* (2010), which was shortlisted for the IMPAC Dublin Literary Award.

Vlautin founded the band Richmond Fontaine in 1994. The band has produced nine studio albums to date, plus a handful of live recordings and EPs. Driven by Vlautin's dark, story-like songwriting, the band has achieved critical acclaim at home and across Europe. 2014 saw the debut album from Vlautin's new band, The Delines, featuring vocalist Amy Boone (The Damnations). Vlautin currently resides in Scappoose, Oregon.