

GORDON BURN PRIZE

Shortlist announced for Gordon Burn Prize 2018

Press release: embargoed until 00.00 Friday 20 July 2018

The shortlist is announced today (20 July) for the Gordon Burn Prize 2018, as selected by the prize judges: journalist and critic Alex Clark, writer Kei Miller, artist Gillian Wearing and musician Andrew Weatherall.

The Gordon Burn Prize was founded in 2012 to celebrate the legacy of the late Gordon Burn and to champion work – fearless non-fiction and bold, genre-defying fiction – that follows in his footsteps.

Previous winners of the prize include *The Long Drop* by Denise Mina (2017); *All That Man Is* by David Szalay (2016) and *In Plain Sight: The Life and Lies of Jimmy Savile* by Dan Davies (2015).

The six-strong 2018 shortlist represents some of the most exciting fiction and non-fiction published in the UK and US today and showcases a rich variety of work by pioneering writers. Restrictive terms like true crime, auto fiction, science fiction and memoir are not sufficient when describing work that defies categorisation and transcends genre. Yet, for all their range of storytelling and diversity of perspectives, a thread runs through these six books, each of them recognised by the judges for demonstrating an affinity with the spirit, preoccupations and artistry of Gordon Burn's writing.

The shortlist for the Gordon Burn Prize 2018 is:

- *Census*, Jesse Ball (Granta Books)
- *H(a)ppy*, Nicola Barker (William Heinemann)
- *In Our Mad and Furious City*, Guy Gunaratne (Tinder Press, Headline)
- *Crudo*, Olivia Laing (Picador)
- *The Cost of Living*, Deborah Levy (Hamish Hamilton)
- *I'll Be Gone in the Dark*, Michelle McNamara (Faber & Faber)

On selecting the shortlist, **judge Andrew Weatherall said:** "In the way that they fuse fact and fiction, are more interested in narrative exploration than plot and investigate oblique connections, the books on the shortlist contain literary DNA traceable to Mr Burn. However, they use this to create identities and worlds very much their own."

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Alex Clark said: “I was delighted to join this year’s judging panel – not least because Gordon Burn’s work has been enormously important to me; indeed, I can hardly watch the current political and social turbulence without wondering what extraordinary and profound pieces of art he would have made out of it. As we talked through the books we had read, we often touched on how they reflected Burn’s legacy – and I think the result, a shortlist of real innovation, commitment and ingenuity – provides the answer.”

The Gordon Burn Prize is run in partnership by New Writing North, Durham Book Festival, Faber & Faber and the Gordon Burn Trust. The winner will be announced on Thursday 11 October 2018 at the Durham Book Festival, a Durham County Council festival.

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For all media enquiries, including interviews and high res images, please contact Laura Fraine laurafraine@newwritingnorth.com 0191 204 8850

About Gordon Burn

Gordon Burn was the author of four novels, *Alma Cogan* (winner of the Whitbread First Novel Prize), *Fullalove*, *The North of England Home Service* and *Born Yesterday*. He was also the author of the non-fiction titles *Somebody's Husband*, *Somebody's Son*, *Pocket Money*, *Happy Like Murderers*, *On The Way to Work* (with Damien Hirst) and *Best and Edwards*. His last book, *Sex & Violence, Death and Silence*, was a collection of his essays on art.

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