

GORDON BURN PRIZE

Press release

For release Thursday 1 February 2018

Judges announced for the Gordon Burn Prize 2018

Prize open for entries until Thursday 15 March

The journalist and critic **Alex Clark**, novelist and poet **Kei Miller**, artist **Gillian Wearing**, and musician and producer **Andrew Weatherall** will judge the Gordon Burn Prize 2018, which opens for entry today.

Now in its sixth year, the Gordon Burn Prize has set a standard for recognising and rewarding some of the boldest and most fearless contemporary writing. Denise Mina won the prize in 2017 for her novel *The Long Drop*, a darkly exhilarating read that crosses between literary thriller and true crime, and which resets the limits of both genres. Past winners of the prize are:

Denise Mina *The Long Drop* (2017)

David Szalay *All That Man Is* (2016)

Dan Davies *In Plain Sight: The Life and Lies of Jimmy Savile* (2015)

Paul Kingsnorth *The Wake* (2014)

Benjamin Myers *Pig Iron* (2013)

The Gordon Burn Prize was launched in 2012 to remember the late author of novels including *Fullalove* and *Born Yesterday: The News as Novel*, and non-fiction including *Happy Like Murderers: The Story of Fred and Rosemary West*; *Best and Edwards: Football, Fame and Oblivion* and *Sex & Violence, Death & Silence: Encounters with recent art*.

A literary polymath, Gordon Burn wrote about subjects as seemingly disparate as serial killers, celebrity, sport and art, often blurring the line between fact and fiction. His approach was bold, applying a journalistic tenacity and rigour to the fictional process, while using fictional narrative techniques in his factual reporting. His writing remains as fresh and extraordinary today as when his debut novel, the Whitbread Prize-winning *Alma Cogan*, was published in 1991.

The Gordon Burn Prize, run in partnership by the Gordon Burn Trust, New Writing North, Faber & Faber and Durham Book Festival, seeks to celebrate the writing of those whose work follows in his footsteps.

Carol Gerner of the Gordon Burn Trust said:

“The Gordon Burn Prize has established itself as an opportunity for writers who have something new, and perhaps challenging, to bring to a larger

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audience. I am very excited to see what the submissions are, and confident that there will be some unexpected and intriguing work, following on from the high standard already set.”

Claire Malcolm, Chief Executive of New Writing North said:

“It’s a thrill to open the prize for submissions again. It attracts such interesting and exceptional entries from writers who are mining fact, fiction and all of the interesting places in-between to bring us such unique and often surprising work. The prize goes from strength to strength and continues to support a wide range of writers whose work chimes with the ideas and approaches that Gordon Burn used in his work.”

Cllr Simon Henig, Leader of Durham County Council, said: “The announcement of the Gordon Burn Prize is always a highlight of the Durham Book Festival, and we look forward to congratulating the winner in October. The Durham Book Festival is full of new and innovative approaches to storytelling and the Gordon Burn Prize encapsulates this perfectly. In the meantime, we wish the entrants the best of luck.”

The Gordon Burn Prize is now open for entry for published books written in the English language. The winner will be announced on Thursday 11 October 2018 at Durham Book Festival, a Durham County Council festival produced by New Writing North. The winning writer will receive a cheque for £5,000 and the opportunity to undertake a writing retreat of up to three months at Gordon Burn’s cottage in the Scottish borders.

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Notes to Editors:

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

The Gordon Burn Prize seeks to reward a published title (fiction or non-fiction) written in the English language, which in the opinion of the judges most successfully represents the spirit and sensibility of Gordon’s literary methods: novels which dare to enter history and interrogate the past; writers of non-fiction brave enough to recast characters and historical events to create a new

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and vivid reality; literature that challenges perceived notions of genre and makes us think again about just what it is that we are reading.

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 the United States of America. The prize is open to books published between 1 July 2017 and 1 July 2018. Publishers are permitted to submit up to six titles per imprint. Works of translation, books for children and poetry are not eligible for the prize.

Full entry guidelines are available on the Gordon Burn Prize website <http://gordonburnprize.com>

Judges' biographies

Alex Clark is a critic, journalist and broadcaster who lives in London, and the current Artistic Director for Words and Literature at the Bath Festival. She writes on a wide range of subjects for the *Guardian*, the *Observer*, the *Spectator* and the *Times Literary Supplement*. She has judged many literary awards, including the 2008 Man Booker Prize. She regularly chairs live events, appears on radio and is the host of a monthly podcast for Vintage publishing.

Kei Miller is a poet, novelist, essayist, short story writer, broadcaster and blogger. His many books include the novel *Augustown* (W&N, 2016) and poetry collection *The Cartographer Tries to Map a Way to Zion* (Carcenet, 2014) which won the Forward Prize (Best Collection, 2014). In 2010, the Institute of Jamaica awarded him the Silver Musgrave medal for his contributions to Literature. He has been an International Writing Fellow at the University of Iowa and a Vera Rubin Fellow at Yaddo. He has a PhD in English Literature from the University of Glasgow and is currently a Professor of English and Creative Writing at the University of Exeter.

Gillian Wearing was born in 1963 in Birmingham and now lives in London. She won the Turner Prize in 1997 and was awarded an OBE in 2011. An overall theme in her work for the last two decades has been documenting the everyday, portraiture and the line between reality and fiction. She recently had a solo show opening at The National Gallery of Denmark, Copenhagen, 2017/18 and has been commissioned to create the statue of suffragist leader Millicent Fawcett in Parliament Square for 2018. Her solo exhibitions include *Behind the mask, another mask: Gillian Wearing and Claude Cahun* at National Portrait Gallery, London, 2017; *A Real Birmingham Family*, Centenary Square, Library of Birmingham, Birmingham, 2014; *A Real*

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Birmingham Family, Ikon Gallery, Birmingham, 2011; *Confessions: Portraits, vidéos*, Musée Rodin, Paris, 2009; *Living Proof*, ACCA, Australian Centre for Contemporary Art, Melbourne, 2006.

Andrew Weatherall's extraordinary twenty-five-year career in music has been characterised by a series of unique partnerships, with twenty albums, thirty or so EPs and singles, plus more than two hundred and fifty remixes under his belt. Bastion of the underground, Andrew has set up record labels, remixed in collaboration with artists including Paul Oakenfold on Happy Mondays' *Hallelujah* and has brought a distinctive flavour to hundreds of other artists. Remixes led to a smattering of production duties. Andrew only rarely wears the producer hat but on each occasion, from Primal Scream's 1991 *Screamadelica* to 2009's *Tarot Sport* by Fuck Buttons, the results are outstanding.

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