

PRESS RELEASE



The Royal Society
of Literature

Raynor Winn

wins

the £10,000

RSL Christopher Bland Prize

in its inaugural year

for

The Salt Path

(Michael Joseph)

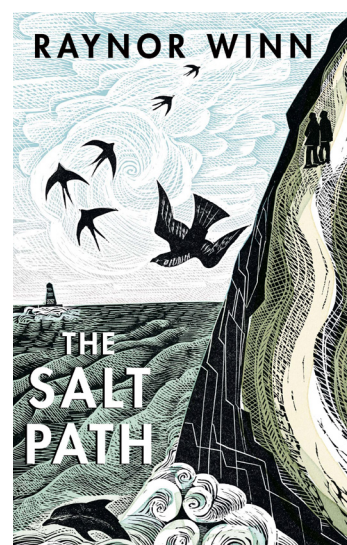
The 2019 judges are **Gillian Slovo** (Chair), **Sanjeev Bhaskar**,
Archie Bland and **Anne Chisholm**.

'The loss of a home and the threat of a mortal illness send Raynor Winn and her husband Moth onto the salt path. What follows is a quest vividly described of how to survive being outcast. *The Salt Path* is a book about a love that holds strong despite privations, and about the way we judge others. It uses a shifting landscape of feeling that says much about the power of nature, the stigma of homelessness, and the unexpected choices that can change lives.' **Gillian Slovo**

'A beautiful memoir whose sedate pace draws you into a journey that reveals that when one reaches the end of a path, another presents itself. It takes only the understanding that it is there and the determination to walk it. Raynor Winn draws on wonderful detail and an extraordinary relationship with her husband that compels you to turn every page.' **Sanjeev Bhaskar**

'Through an inimitable attention to the vagaries of place and personality, Winn brings us to a new consideration of the meaning of home and homelessness, and of how our relationship to the land can shift our perception of ourselves.' **Archie Bland**

'Raynor Winn's account of their journey is unsentimental, painful, funny and inspirational, a tribute to the resilience of the human body and spirit, the power of wild nature and the strength of married love.' **Anne Chisholm**



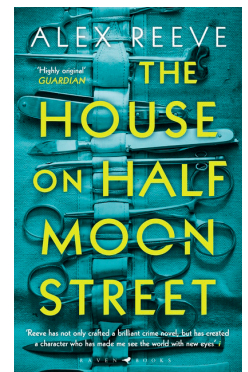
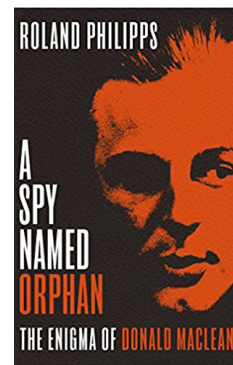
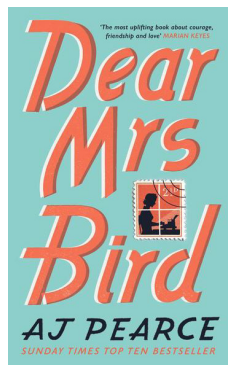
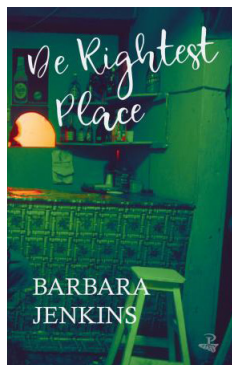
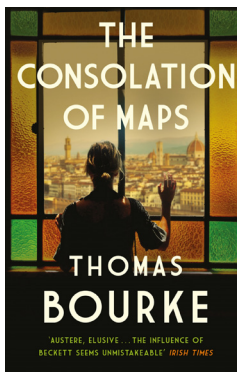
The RSL Christopher Bland Prize is an annual award of £10,000 to a debut novelist or non-fiction writer aged 50 or over.



Raynor Winn has become a regular long-distance walker since travelling the South West Coastal Path and writes about nature, homelessness and wild camping. *The Salt Path* was shortlisted for the 2018 Costa Biography Award. She lives in Cornwall.

All publicity enquiries for Raynor Winn should be directed to Olivia Thomas and Jenny Platt
OThomas@penguinrandomhouse.co.uk
JPlatt@penguinrandomhouse.co.uk

The other shortlisted books in 2019



Thomas Bourke

The Consolation of Maps (Riverrun)

'Speaks loudly about a passion that, by its end, the reader will also share.' - **Gillian Slovo**

Publicist: Corinna Zifko

Corinna.Zifko@quercusbooks.co.uk



Barbara Jenkins

De Rightest Place (Peepal Tree Press)

A warm, funny and unexpected book that makes the reader laugh.'

- **Gillian Slovo**

Publicist: Adam Lowe

adam@peepaltreepress.com



A J Pearce

Dear Mrs Bird (Picador)

'A funny, touching, skilfully constructed novel.' - **Anne Chisholm**

Publicist: Camilla Elworthy

c.elworthy@macmillan.co.uk



Roland Philipps

A Spy Named Orphan (The Bodley Head)

'A riveting account of how idealism can turn to treachery.'

- **Anne Chisholm**



Publicist: Alison Davies

ADavies1@penguinrandomhouse.co.uk

Alex Reeve

The House on Half Moon Street (Raven Books)

'A gothic tale of fabulous intricacy and ingenuity.' - **Archie Bland**



Publicist: Maud Davies

maud.davies@bloomsbury.com

This is the first year of the **RSL Christopher Bland Prize**. £10,000 will be awarded annually to a debut novelist or non-fiction writer whose first work is published when they are aged 50 or over. The 2019 Prize was open to authors writing in English from the United Kingdom and the Republic of Ireland, whose novel or popular non-fiction book had been published within the calendar year 2018. The winner will also be offered the choice of a two-week writing retreat in either the South West of France or County Sligo, Ireland.

The winner of the first year's Prize was announced on 29 May, which was Sir Christopher Bland's birthday.



Sir (Francis) Christopher Buchan Bland (1938 - 2017) was born in Japan and grew up in Northern Ireland. He held many prominent positions in big business, whilst also becoming a leading light in the arts and media worlds, cultivating a series of increasingly notable positions in important institutions. These included London Weekend Television (LWT), BBC and the Royal Shakespeare Company. He wrote two novels *Ashes in the Wind* (2014) and *Cathar* (2016) and the play *The Easter Rising and Thereafter*, which was staged by the Jermyn Street Theatre. Sir Christopher was a Member of the RSL for over 10 years and he and his wife Jennie sponsored the RSL's VS Pritchett Short Story Prize from 2011-2018. He was made an Honorary Fellow of the RSL in 2016.

Founded in 1820, the **Royal Society of Literature** is Britain's national charity for the advancement of literature. In addition to the RSL Christopher Bland Prize, the RSL runs the RSL Ondaatje Prize for writing that best evokes the spirit of a place, the Encore Award for best second novel of the year, the V. S. Pritchett Short Story Prize, RSL Literature Matters Awards and the RSL Giles St Aubyn Awards for Non-Fiction.

For further information about the RSL Christopher Bland Prize, please contact annette@rsliterature.org | 020 7845 4680 | [@RSLiterature](https://www.rsliterature.org) | [rsliterature.org](https://www.rsliterature.org)