



The Royal Society  
of Literature



## RSL Ondaatje Prize 2019: The Longlist

The £10,000 RSL Ondaatje Prize is awarded annually to a book of the highest literary merit – fiction, non-fiction or poetry – which best evokes the spirit of a place. |

This year's judges are Sabrina Mahfouz, Michèle Roberts and Ian Thomson.



Rania Abouzeid  
Sam Byers  
Edward Carey  
Jonathan Coe  
Aida Edemariam  
Aminatta Forna  
Gaia Holmes  
Christopher Hope  
Emmanuel Iduma  
Alice Jolly  
Patrick Langley  
Jamal Mahjoub  
Sarah Moss  
S.K. Perry  
Donal Ryan  
Heidi Sopinka  
Guy Stagg  
Malachy Tallack  
Isabella Tree  
Adam Weymouth

**No Turning Back**  
**Perfidious Albion**  
**Little**  
**Middle England**  
**The Wife's Tale**  
**Happiness**  
**Where the road runs out**  
**The Café de Move-on Blues**  
**A Stranger's Pose**  
**Mary Ann Sate, Imbecile**  
**Arkady**  
**A Line in the River**  
**Ghost Wall**  
**Let Me Be Like Water**  
**From a Low and Quiet Sea**  
**The Dictionary of Animal Languages**  
**The Crossway**  
**The Valley at the Centre of the World**  
**Wilding**  
**Kings of the Yukon**

(Oneworld)  
(Faber & Faber)  
(Aardvark Bureau)  
(Viking)  
(4th Estate)  
(Bloomsbury Circus)  
(Comma Poetry)  
(Atlantic Books)  
(Cassava Republic)  
(Unbound)  
(Fitzcarraldo Editions)  
(Bloomsbury Publishing)  
(Granta Books)  
(Melville House UK)  
(Doubleday)  
(Scribe UK)  
(Picador)  
(Canongate Books)  
(Picador)  
(Particular Books)

The shortlist will be announced at our event  
'The Spirit of a Place' on Tuesday 16 April  
The winner will be announced on Monday 13 May

## Notes to editors

The **RSL Ondaatje Prize** is an annual award of £10,000 for a distinguished work of fiction, non-fiction or poetry, best evoking the spirit of a place. We are grateful to Sir Christopher Ondaatje for sponsoring the Prize.

Founded in 1820 the **Royal Society of Literature** is Britain's charity for the advancement of literature. In addition to the **RSL Ondaatje Prize**, the RSL runs the **RSL Christopher Bland Prize** for best debut from a writer over 50, 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**, as well as regular events, young people's outreach and research into literature in the UK today.

### RSL Ondaatje Prize winners

2018	Pascale Petit	<i>Mama Amazonica</i>
2017	Francis Spufford	<i>Golden Hill</i>
2016	Peter Pomerantsev	<i>Nothing Is True and Everything Is Possible</i>
2015	Justin Marozzi	<i>Baghdad: City of Peace, City of Blood</i>
2014	Alan Johnson	<i>This Boy</i>
2013	Philip Hensher	<i>Scenes from Early Life</i>
2012	Rahul Bhattacharya	<i>The Sly Company of People Who Care</i>
2011	Edmund de Waal	<i>The Hare with Amber Eyes</i>
2010	Ian Thomson	<i>The Dead Yard: Tales of Modern Jamaica</i>
2009	Adam Nicolson	<i>Sissinghurst: An Unfinished History</i>
2008	Graham Robb	<i>The Discovery of France</i>
2007	Hisham Matar	<i>In the Country of Men</i>
2006	James Meek	<i>The People's Act of Love</i>
2005	Rory Stewart	<i>The Places In Between</i>
2004	Louisa Waugh	<i>Hearing Birds Fly</i>

The RSL Ondaatje Prize shortlist will be announced on 16 April at our event celebrating 15 years of the prize.

### The Spirit of a Place

Tuesday 16 April, 7pm, British Library

Celebrating fifteen years of the RSL Ondaatje Prize, four past winners (Alan Johnson, Hisham Matar, Pascale Petit and Peter Pomerantsev) discuss the challenges and delights of writing to evoke the spirit of a place, chaired by presenter and broadcaster Eleanor Rosamund Barraclough. This event will be broadcast by BBC Radio 3's Free Thinking programme and available as an Arts & Ideas podcast. The shortlist will be announced first at this event.

Press wishing to attend the event  
or wanting more information on the Prize should contact:

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