



PRESS RELEASE

Under embargo until 9am GMT, December 13, 2022

Esi Edugyan announced as Booker Prize 2023 Chair of judges as prize opens for entries

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Images of the judges can be downloaded [here](#)

All hyperlinks in the release will be live at 9am, December 13

The [judges](#) for the Booker Prize 2023 are revealed today, December 13. Novelist [Esi Edugyan](#), twice-shortlisted for the Booker Prize, will chair the panel and will be joined by [Adjoa Andoh](#), actor, writer and director; [Mary Jean Chan](#), poet, lecturer and critic; [James Shapiro](#), Professor of English and Comparative Literature at Columbia University and author specialising in Shakespeare; and [Robert Webb](#), actor and writer.

Publishers are also now invited to [enter their books for the 2023 prize](#).

Gaby Wood, Director of the Booker Prize Foundation, says:

‘I am hugely looking forward to working with this lively and lovely panel of readers. They bring to the task of discovering next year’s best fiction a strikingly wide range of knowledge and a shared enthusiasm for storytelling in all its forms.

‘Esi Edugyan described herself, in her latest book of essays, as “a storyteller with an interest in overlooked narratives”. That’s clear from her two Booker-shortlisted novels, *Washington Black* and *Half Blood Blues*, which, though very different from each other, are both magnificent entertainments and subtle acts of reimagining. I have no doubt that her astuteness and calm will bring out the very best in this glorious group.’

Chair of judges, Esi Edugyan, adds:

‘Stendhal wrote: “A novel is a mirror carried along a high road.” Year after year the Booker Prize encourages us to take sight of ourselves in the lives of others, to slip for the length of a story into different skins, to grapple with unfamiliar worlds that allow us to see our own afresh. I’m deeply excited for the chance to immerse myself in great storytelling, in its enduring ability to shock, thrill,

devastate, and console. I am especially delighted to get to do so alongside this brilliant and accomplished panel of judges, whose breadth of experience, viewpoints and vocations will no doubt make for rich conversation.'

The judging panel will be looking for the best work of long-form fiction, selected from entries published in the UK and Ireland between October 1 2022 and September 30 2023.

The 'Booker Dozen' of 12 or 13 books will be announced in July 2023 with the shortlist of six books to follow in September. The winner of the £50,000 prize will be announced in late October.

Publishers should visit thebookerprizes.com/submissions for the 2023 rules and to enter their titles. Deadlines are staggered between January 30 and June 5 2023.

Readers can find out all they need to know about this year's prize [here](#).

The prize's impact

The Booker Prize is the leading literary award in the English-speaking world, and has brought recognition, reward and readership to outstanding fiction for over five decades. It is sponsored by Crankstart, a charitable foundation.

The 2022 winner, *The Seven Moons of Maali Almeida* by Shehan Karunatilaka - described by the *TLS* as 'a rollicking magic-realist take on a recent bloody period in Sri Lankan history', written with 'with tinder-dry wit', was hailed by booksellers, critics and readers. The book has experienced a huge global sales boost with the UK independent publisher Sort of Books reprinting 70,000 hardback copies, 30,000 trade paperbacks for export and airports, and 30,000 copies for the Australian market since the win on October 17. There have also been 70,000 reprints in the US and the same number again in India.

Translation rights have been sold by David Godwin and PFD in 26 languages, 24 of those since the Booker Prize win, with an audiobook released by Bolinda. *The Seven Moons of Maali Almeida* is released in paperback in March 2023.

In the UK, the hardback went to No 3 in the *Sunday Times* bestseller list and No 3 in the Amazon chart after the prize announcement, and has remained in the *Sunday Times* Top 20 hardback fiction charts since. It was chosen as a *Guardian*, *Times*, *Sunday Times*, *Telegraph* and *Financial Times* Book of the Year and a *New York Times* Notable Book of 2022.

The Booker Library

Readers can relive the [Booker Prize 2022](#) with a wealth of exclusive content, including [extracts](#) from each longlisted book and [interviews](#) with their authors, downloadable [reading guides](#) for each shortlisted book and [video Q&As](#) featuring readers' questions, as well as [video readings](#) by some of the world's best actors and performers, which have been viewed over a million times on social media.

The Booker Prizes website is now a go-to destination for high-quality [features](#) on many of the books from the Booker Library. There are in-depth [interviews](#), [essays](#), [reading lists](#), [competitions](#), [quizzes](#) and more, which celebrate the 600+ books that have been nominated for the Booker and International Booker Prize since 1969.

The Booker Prizes' [YouTube channel](#) has a range of original video content including a [new documentary](#) about John Berger and the Booker's most controversial moment, plus a [revealing film](#) about what it's really like to be a Booker judge, as well as [exclusive video interviews](#) with Booker authors and archive footage from the prize ceremonies.

- ENDS -

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For all press enquiries please contact the Four Culture team:

Julie Holman | Julie.Holman@fourcommunications.com | +44 (0)7841 672 393

Truda Spruyt | Truda.Spruyt@fourcommunications.com | +44 (0)7740 725 206

The 2023 Booker Prize Judges

Assets

Photos of the 2023 Booker Prize judges and the Booker Prize 2023 logo are available to download via this [link](#).

Judges' bios

Esi Edugyan (Chair) is the internationally bestselling author of *Washington Black*, which was shortlisted for the 2018 Booker Prize, the Los Angeles Times Book Prize, and the Carnegie Medal for Literary Excellence, among others - and won the Scotiabank Giller Prize. It was chosen by both the *New York Times* and Barack Obama as one of the best books of 2018. The epic Hulu/Disney TV series of *Washington Black*, starring Sterling K Brown and co-produced by Edugyan, is slated for release in Spring 2023.

Edugyan's other novels include *The Second Life of Samuel Tyne* and *Half-Blood Blues*, shortlisted for the Booker Prize in 2011, as well as for the Women's Prize for Fiction and the Governor General's Literary Award. *Half-Blood Blues* won the Scotiabank Giller Prize and the Anisfield-Wolf Book Award.

Edugyan is also the author of *Dreaming of Elsewhere: Observations on Home* and more recently *Out of the Sun: Essays at the Crossroads of Race*, delivered in Canada as the Massey Lectures. Her first children's book, *Garden of Lost Socks*, will be published next year by HarperCollins Canada.

Born and raised in Calgary, Alberta, Edugyan is a graduate of Johns Hopkins University and the University of Victoria, where she now lives. She has held fellowships in the US, Scotland, Iceland, Germany, Hungary, Finland, Spain, and Belgium, and judged prizes including the Giller Prize with Margaret Atwood and Jonathan Lethem.

Adjoa Andoh is one of Britain's leading actors, who won global acclaim as Lady Danbury in the hit Netflix series *Bridgerton* - a role that saw her nominated for Outstanding Supporting Actress at the 2021 NAACP Image Awards. Elsewhere on the small screen in 2020 she played Dr Isaacs in the psychological thriller *Fractured*, as well as DI Nina Rosen in BBC1's *Silent Witness*. In 2021 she starred as Nenneke in the Netflix blockbuster fantasy drama, *The Witcher*. Her many other television appearances include regulars in *Dr Who*, *Casualty* and *Law & Order UK*.

A renowned stage actor, Andoh has been celebrated for lead roles at the National Theatre - including Condoleezza Rice in *Stuff Happens* and Serafina Pekkala in *His Dark Materials* - and the Royal Shakespeare Company, where she played Portia in *Julius Caesar*, Ulysses in *Troilus & Cressida* and Helen of Troy in *The Odyssey*. In 2019 she conceived, co-directed, and played *Richard II* at Shakespeare's Globe Theatre, in the UK's first all women-of-colour production.

She made her Hollywood debut in 2009, starring alongside Morgan Freeman and Matt Damon in Clint Eastwood's biographical sports film *Invictus*. Other film appearances include *Adulthood*, *Brotherhood*, and *I Is A Long Memored Woman*.

She has been a BBC radio actor for over 30 years and is an award-winning narrator of over 150 audiobooks, including *Americanah* by Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie, Naomi Alderman's *The Power* and all of the *No. 1 Ladies Detectives Agency* series by Alexander McCall Smith. She judged the AKO Caine Prize for African Writing in 2016 and was elected an Honorary Fellow of the Royal Society of Literature earlier this year.

Andoh is an Associate Artist at the Royal Shakespeare Company and Senior Associate Artist at The Bush Theatre. She was recently appointed as the Cameron Mackintosh Visiting Professor of Contemporary Theatre at the University of Oxford, joining a distinguished list of past professors that includes Stephen Sondheim, Arthur Miller and Sir Ian McKellen. In 2023 she will direct and star in a production of *Richard III* at the Liverpool Playhouse and Rose Theatre Kingston.

Mary Jean Chan is one of British poetry's fastest rising stars. *Flèche*, a debut collection ingeniously organised around the sport of fencing, was published by Faber & Faber in 2019 and Faber USA in 2020. It won the Costa Book Award for Poetry and was shortlisted for numerous awards, including the International Dylan Thomas Prize, the John Pollard Foundation International Poetry Prize, the Jhalak Prize, the Seamus Heaney Centre First Collection Poetry Prize and a Lambda Literary Award. In 2018, Chan's title poem from *Flèche* won the Geoffrey Dearmer Prize, awarded annually by the Poetry Society. Chan has twice been shortlisted for the Forward Prize for Best Single Poem and received a

Society of Authors Eric Gregory Award for a collection by a poet under the age of 30 in 2019. That year, Chan was chosen by Jackie Kay as one of Kay's ten best BAME writers in Britain.

In 2022, Chan co-edited with Andrew McMillan the landmark Vintage anthology *100 Queer Poems*, which was recently selected as a *Guardian* Best Poetry Book of the Year and shortlisted for the Books Are My Bag Readers Awards. Chan's poetry, essays and reviews have been featured in or are forthcoming from *The New Republic*, *The New Statesman*, *The London Review of Books*, *Granta*, *The Poetry Review* and *The White Review*, with their reviews appearing regularly in *the Guardian*. As an early career academic, Chan has written for *The Review of English Studies*, *The Journal of American Studies* and *The Journal of British and Irish Innovative Poetry*.

Born and raised in Hong Kong, Chan currently lives in Oxford and is Senior Lecturer in Creative Writing (Poetry) at Oxford Brookes University while also serving as a supervisor on the MSt in Creative Writing at the University of Oxford. In 2022, Chan was a Visiting Writer at the NTU Asia Creative Writing Programme in Singapore. Chan is a Rathbones Folio Prize Academy member, having judged the 2019 and 2020 Stephen Spender Prize for Poetry in Translation, the 2022 Jhalak Prize and the 2022 Queen Mary *Wasafiri* New Writing Prize. Chan's second book, *Bright Fear*, is forthcoming from Faber in August 2023.

James Shapiro is Professor of English at Columbia University, where he has taught since 1985. Among his books are: *1599: A Year in the Life of William Shakespeare* (2005), which was awarded the Samuel Johnson Prize; *1606: The Year of Lear* (2015), awarded the James Tait Black Prize for Biography; and most recently *Shakespeare in a Divided America* (2020), selected as one of the ten best books of the year by the *New York Times*. He is currently at work on two books: *Playbook: Politics, Theatre, and the Origins of America's Culture Wars* and *Othello: An American Life*.

His writing has appeared in the *London Review of Books*, *the Guardian*, *the Telegraph*, *the New Statesman*, *the Financial Times*, *the Times Literary Supplement*, *the New York Times*, *the New Yorker*, *the New York Review of Books*, *the Los Angeles Times*, *the Wall Street Journal* and *the Atlantic*. He has also co-written and presented a pair of BBC documentaries: *The King and the Playwright: A Jacobean History* (2012) and *The Mysterious Mr. Webster* (2014).

He has been awarded fellowships from the Guggenheim Foundation, the Cullman Center of the New York Public Library, the National Endowment for the Humanities, and the Bogliasco Foundation, and in 2011 was inducted into the American Academy of Arts and Sciences. He has served on the Board of Directors of the Royal Shakespeare Company, the Folger Shakespeare Library, and the Authors Guild. He works with several theatre companies and is currently Shakespeare Scholar in Residence at New York's Public Theater.

Robert Webb was born in Lincolnshire in 1972 and attended Queen Elizabeth's Grammar School in Horncastle. He studied English at Cambridge, where he joined Footlights and met David Mitchell, forming the comedy partnership Mitchell and Webb. They went on to make five series of their Sony Award-winning BBC Radio 4 sketch show, *That Mitchell and Webb Sound*, and for television, four series of the Bafta-winning *That Mitchell and Webb Look* for BBC2.

As an actor, Webb is best known for playing Jeremy Usborne in *Peep Show*, which ran for nine series, making it Channel 4's longest-running sitcom. The programme won another two Baftas, two British Comedy awards and in 2004 was awarded the prestigious Rose D'Or for Best Comedy. In the theatre, Webb has played numerous roles in London's West End, most notably in the Olivier Award-winning *Jeeves and Wooster: Perfect Nonsense*, in which he gave a performance described by the critic Frank Cottrell-Boyce as 'the definitive Bertie Wooster of his generation'.

In 2009 he won the BBC1 charity dance competition, *Let's Dance for Comic Relief*, giving a memorable interpretation of the audition scene from the movie *Flashdance*. In 2021 he competed for three weeks in BBC1's *Strictly Come Dancing* before having to withdraw due to health issues (from which he has now fully recovered).

Webb's documentary *My Life In Verse* focussed on the work of T S Eliot and featured Andrew Motion and Clive James among others. His 2017 memoir *How Not To Be a Boy* entered The Sunday Times non-fiction chart at number one, was serialised in *the Guardian* and was abridged for Radio 4's Book of the Week. The audiobook, narrated by Webb himself, was Audible's bestselling memoir of 2017. His debut novel *Come Again* was published in 2020, with the audiobook read by Olivia Colman.

He has written a weekly column for *The Daily Telegraph*, been an occasional contributor to *The New Statesman* and judged the BBC Young Writers' Award. He holds an honorary doctorate from the University of Lincoln.

Notes to Editors

- The Booker Prize - awarded annually in the autumn - is for the best work of long-form fiction written in English and published in the UK and Ireland, irrespective of the nationality or citizenship of the author. It was first awarded in 1969. It was called the Man Booker Prize for Fiction when sponsored by Man Group from 2002-2018. The winner receives £50,000 as well as the £2,500 awarded to each of the six shortlisted authors. Both the winner and the shortlisted authors are guaranteed a global readership and can expect a dramatic increase in book sales.
- The International Booker Prize - awarded annually in spring - is for the best single work of fiction translated into English and published in the UK and Ireland. It was known until 2019 as the Man Booker International Prize when sponsored by Man Group. The winner's prize purse is £50,000; £25,000 for the author and £25,000 for the translator (or divided equally between multiple translators). There will be a prize of £5,000 for each of the shortlisted titles: £2,500 for the author and £2,500 for the translator (or divided equally between multiple translators). The winner of the International Booker Prize 2022 was *Tomb of Sand*, written by Geetanjali Shree and translated by Daisy Rockwell. The International Booker Prize 2023 judging panel is chaired by Leïla Slimani and includes Uilleam Blacker, Tan Twan Eng, Parul Sehgal and Frederick Studemann. The longlist will be announced on Tuesday March 14 2023.
- The Booker Prize Foundation is a registered charity (no 1090049) established in 2002. Its purpose is to promote the art and value of literature for the public benefit and its mission is to inspire people to read the world's best fiction. It is driven by a simple belief - great fiction

not only brings joy to millions, it has the power to change the way we think about the world we live in. It is responsible for awarding the Booker Prize for Fiction and the International Booker Prize. Other aspects of the Foundation's work include reading initiatives in prisons, writers' visits to universities, the distribution of books to disadvantaged readers, the funding of Braille and audio editions of Booker Prize books through the RNIB, and awarding the annual UEA Booker Prize Foundation Scholarship.

- Please visit the new [Notes to Editors](#) page on the Booker Prizes website to find out more about the Booker Prize, the International Booker Prize, and the Booker Prize Foundation, including its trustees, advisory committee, partners and beneficiaries.

Four Culture,
December 2022