

New Angle Prize for Literature

Short List Announced

Press Release: 8th June, 2009

The Ipswich Institute is delighted to announce the shortlist of books chosen by judges for the first New Angle Prize for Literature, worth £2,500. The books demonstrate the appeal of the region to a great variety of authors.

The finalists are, in alphabetical order of author:

- “Suffolk Boy” by Alasdair Eoin Aston. *Orphean Press 2009*
Twenty poems reflecting the author’s childhood in a naturalist’s paradise.
- “Scapegallows”, by Carol Birch. *Virago Press 2007*
Novel based on the real-life story of Margaret Catchpole, C18th deportee from Suffolk.
- “Story of the Southwold-Walberswick Ferry “ by Dani Church with Ann Gander. *Holm Oak publishing 2009*
The history of the popular River Blyth crossing from C13th told through anecdotes from its ferrymen and women.
- “Crow Country” by Mark Cocker. *Jonathan Cape 2007*
Prose poem in a tradition of English pastoral writing and a celebration of the Norfolk countryside.
- “Notes from Walnut Tree Farm” by Roger Deakin (edited Alison Hastie & Terence Blacker). *Penguin Books 2008*
Discursive writings from the author’s last notebooks with his personal observations on the natural and human worlds.
- “Constable in Love” by Martin Gayford. *Fig Tree 2009*
The story of the artist’s long courtship and ultimate marriage to his neighbour’s granddaughter, Maria Bicknell
- “What I Was” by Meg Rosoff. *Penguin Books 2008*
‘Coming of age’ novel set in a 1960s Suffolk coastal boarding school, seen through now grown-up eyes.
- “Coke of Norfolk (1754-1842)” by Susanna Wade Martins. *Boydell & Brewer Ltd 2009*
Biography of one of a small circle of landed grandees who were of major influence during a period of agricultural change.

This new biennial competition, organised by the Ipswich Institute, is being sponsored by law firm Gotelee & Goldsmith and accountants Scrutton Bland, with support from the Ganzoni Charitable Trust. Entry was open to ‘recently published books of literary merit, associated with or influenced by East Anglia’. Competition judges Ronald Blythe, Anne Parry and D J Taylor distilled the shortlist from a field of over 40 entries.

“The entries reflect the wide variety of types of writing influenced by the people and landscapes of the region. The shortlist reflects this great diversity” Anne Parry, New Angle judge.

“For an award in its inaugural year this is a great position to be in. So many very strong candidates is evidence of a lively East Anglian literary heritage” Hugh Pierce, New Angle organiser.

Shortlist Showcase: Wednesday 8th July, 7.30pm

A showcase event is to be held during the Ip-art Arts Festival in Ipswich. Over a glass of wine in the elegant Victorian Reading Room of the Ipswich Institute, at 15 Tavern St, Ipswich IP1 3AA, book-lovers will be able to enjoy an eclectic mix of readings from the shortlisted books and join in conversation with the authors, while speculating on the ultimate prize-winner.

This free entry public event will be hosted by Brian Morron, chairman of the Suffolk Book League. Details can be found in the Ip-Art programme of events at

http://www.ip-art.com/search_events.php

Advanced notice of press members attending the Showcase on Weds 8th July would be welcome.

Award Dinner: Tuesday 22nd September, 7.00pm

The final prize winner and runner up will be announced at a special awards event hosted by Paul Heiney at The West Wing, Ickworth, Bury St Edmunds, Suffolk IP29 5QE. The evening will include an address from the judges, Ronald Blythe, Anne Parry and DJ Taylor. Group or individual tickets for the dinner will be available from the beginning of July.

For enquiries about this event, or any other aspects of the competition, contact Hugh Pierce on 01473 236160 or library@ipswichinstitute.org.uk.

Notes for editor:

Further information and images of the books are available from Hugh Pierce at the Ipswich Institute.

The Ipswich Institute Reading Room & Library is an independent charity which offers educational courses, talks and visits as well as a well-stocked lending library. Membership is open to all who live or work in Ipswich and the surrounding area, for a moderate annual subscription. The Institute is a member of the Association of Independent Libraries. See www.ipswichinstitute.org.uk

Judges' Biographical Details:

- Ronald Blythe - writer and editor, best known for "Akenfield: Portrait of an English Village" (1969), former Booker Prize judge and editor of Penguin Classics for more than 20 years.
- Anne Parry - spent all of her working life as a publishing editor and was Chairman of the Suffolk Book League, recently researching and writing "Literary Suffolk" for their 25th anniversary.
- D J Taylor - Norwich-based writer and critic, author of six novels and two acclaimed biographies, "Thackeray", and "Orwell: The Life", which won the 2003 Whitbread Biography Prize.

Awards Host:

- Paul Heiney, Suffolk-based broadcaster and presenter, writer, farmer, and enthusiastic sailor