

# GORDON BURN PRIZE

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## Longlist announced for Gordon Burn Prize 2020

The twelve-strong longlist for the Gordon Burn Prize 2020 is announced today (Wednesday 17 June).

Now in its eighth year, the literary prize celebrates both fiction and non-fiction, rewarding works that stand out in the scale of their endeavour, often challenging readers' expectations or pushing perceived boundaries of genre, sensibility or even the role of literature itself. A place on the longlist is reserved for the year's boldest and most fearless works.

The Gordon Burn Prize was founded in 2012 and is run in partnership by the Gordon Burn Trust, New Writing North, Faber & Faber and Durham Book Festival. The prize seeks to celebrate those who follow in the footsteps of the groundbreaking author Gordon Burn, who died in 2009 and whose work includes the novels *Alma Cogan* and *Born Yesterday: The News as a Novel* and non-fiction *Happy Like Murderers: The True Story of Fred and Rosemary West* and *Somebody's Husband, Somebody's Son: The Story of the Yorkshire Ripper*, all of which were reissued by Faber & Faber in 2019.

David Keenan won the Gordon Burn Prize in 2019 for his novel *For the Good Times*, set during the height of the Troubles in 1970s Belfast, where Sammy and his friends love sharp clothes and the songs of Perry Como – and are uncompromising in their dream of a Free State. Previous winners have included *Census* (2018), Jesse Ball's fable inspired by his late brother; Denise Mina's true crime novel *The Long Drop* (2017); and David Szalay's linked collection of short stories, *All That Man Is* (2016).

The prize is open to works in English by writers of any nationality or descent who are resident in the United Kingdom, Ireland or the United States of America.

### The longlist for the Gordon Burn Prize 2020 is:

Jenn Ashworth, *Notes Made While Falling* (Goldsmiths Press)

Luke Brown, *Theft* (And Other Stories)

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Garth Greenwell, *Cleanness* (Picador)

Kirstin Innes, *Scabby Queen* (4th Estate)

Mark Lanegan, *Sing Backwards and Weep* (White Rabbit)

Casey Legler, *Godspeed* (Scribe)

Paul Mendez, *Rainbow Milk* (Dialogue)

Jenny Offill, *Weather* (Granta)

Deborah Orr, *Motherwell* (W&N)

Peter Pomerantsev, *This Is Not Propaganda* (Faber)

Lemn Sissay, *My Name Is Why* (Canongate)

Lisa Taddeo, *Three Women* (Bloomsbury)

The judges for the Gordon Burn Prize 2020 are writer **Anthony Anaxagorou**, artist **Rachel Howard**, journalist and broadcaster **Sali Hughes** and author **Richard T. Kelly**. The shortlist will be announced later in the summer, before the prize itself is presented in a digital ceremony hosted by Durham Book Festival, a Durham County Council festival, on Thursday 15 October 2020.

**Carol Gerner, on behalf of the Gordon Burn Trust, said:** “This is an extraordinary year, and more than ever it is important to examine the times we live in. The prize is managing to go ahead, and the long list is relevant and insightful about the current situation.

I’m very pleased that there is a platform for this work, and excited to see which of these books will eventually go forward to the short list.”

**Claire Malcolm, Chief Executive of New Writing North, said:** “Real life has been pretty unreal and a deeply weird mix of boring and alarming recently. The prize focuses on books that take on the big fault lines that run through and shape our culture and on fiction that isn’t afraid to dig deep to find the real truths of our lives. Our longlist this year also features books that are very hard to put down once you start reading; they are all exciting writers who deserve to be

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read. As bookshops reopen and take centre stage in our reading lives, I hope that readers will embrace these bold and timely books.”

-- ENDS --

**For all media enquiries, including high-res images and interview requests, please contact Laura Fraine, Senior Marketing and Communications Manager, New Writing North: [laurafraine@newwritingnorth.com](mailto:laurafraine@newwritingnorth.com) or 07411 164 837.**

## **NOTES TO EDITORS**

### **Previous winners of the Gordon Burn Prize**

2019 *For the Good Times*, David Keenan  
2018 *Census*, Jesse Ball  
2017 *The Long Drop*, Denise Mina  
2016 *All That Man Is*, David Szalay  
2015 *In Plain Sight: The Life and Lies of Jimmy Savile*, Dan Davies  
2014 *The Wake*, Paul Kingsnorth  
2013 *Pig Iron*, Benjamin Myers