

GORDON BURN PRIZE

For release 13 June 2024

Judges announced as Gordon Burn Prize 2025 opens for entry

The Gordon Burn Prize 2025 is now open for entry to both fiction and non-fiction books that are fearless in their ambition and execution. The prize was founded in 2012 and has become one of literature's most sought-after honours for books that often find their readers outside the mainstream.

The Gordon Burn Prize is run in partnership by New Writing North, Faber & Faber and the Gordon Burn Trust, with sponsorship from Newcastle University. It remembers Gordon Burn, the journalist and author of novels including *Alma Cogan* and *Born Yesterday: The News as a Novel*, and non-fiction including *Happy Like Murderers: The Story of Fred and Rosemary West* and *Best and Edwards: Football, Fame and Oblivion*, and celebrates the work of those who follow in his footsteps.

Like Gordon's own work, the books recognised by the Gordon Burn Prize often push boundaries, cross genres, or otherwise challenge readers' expectations.

In 2023-24, the American writer Kathryn Scanlan won the prize for her novel *Kick the Latch*, described by chair of the judges Terri White as "a thundering achievement, liberated from hard lines of genre and form by a laser-focus on not just excavation, but building of voice...It's the novel in a state of metempsychosis. Scanlan hammering it into submission, bending it under heat, skill, and force."

Other recent winners have included *Aftermath* by Preti Taneja (2022); *A Little Devil in America: Notes in Praise of Black Performance*, by Hanif Abdurraqib (2021); and *This Is Not Propaganda* by Peter Pomerantsev (2020).

In 2025, five writers will judge the prize, representing a broad range of interests and specialisms. **Terri White** will chair the judges for her second year. Terri is a journalist, editor, screenwriter and author. She was editor-in-chief of *Empire* magazine and is author of the memoir *Coming Undone*. In May 2024, her radio documentary *Finding Britain's Ghost Children* won Gold at the Audio and Radio Industry Awards.

Terri is joined on the panel by:

- **Carl Anka**, a journalist, author, and broadcaster who specialises in pop culture, video games, films, and football. Carl currently writes for *The Athletic* and co-authored Marcus Rashford's children's books including *You Are a Champion*.

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- **Angela Hui**, a journalist, editor and author of *Takeaway: A Childhood from Behind the Counter*.
- **Sarah Phelps**, a television screenwriter, radio writer, playwright and television producer, whose work ranges from *Eastenders* to the RTS and BAFTA-award-winning *The Sixth Commandment*.
- **David Whitehouse**, a novelist, non-fiction writer and writer for film and television, whose four books include *About A Son*, which was shortlisted for the Gordon Burn Prize in 2022. His book *Saltwater Mansions* is due out in 2025.

Terri White said: "Round two as Chair of the Gordon Burn Prize, and I am gagging to get stuck into this year's batch of bold, brilliant, categorise-at-your-own-risk books. Those like reigning-winner *Kick the Latch*, that are pressed from trusted hand to trusted hand, leaving the reader, the written word - and sometimes yes, I'm not too cool to say it, *the world* - changed. This year, I'm joined by a clutch of brilliant judges whose work I both deeply (*deeply*) envy and admire: the current master of Gordon's beloved New Journalism, author David Whitehouse; journalist and memoirist Angela Hui, a vital voice at the intersection of life writing, culture and identity; leading northern sports journalist (and Marcus Rashford collaborator) Carl Anka, plus – as a special treat – we've recruited an extra judge. One of the country's finest – and, as of last month, BAFTA-winning – screenwriters. Sarah Phelps' writing for television has long given new, blazing life to traditional stories and well-worn genres, but most recently, with *The Sixth Commandment*, she has single-handedly shifted contemporary screen culture (what a woman), offering a radical new blueprint for writing drama from true crime stories (seriously, what a woman!). Collectively, the judges summon the spirit of Gordon Burn, and ensure we continue engaging with his rich legacy through eyes trained on contemporary life. The Gordon Burn Prize 2024-2025 really does promise to be something dead special."

Carl Anka said: "I'm really excited to be on the judging panel for the Gordon Burn Prize. Last year's winner, *Kick the Latch* was the sort of thought-provoking and entertaining read that sticks with you and makes you get an extra copy to a friend. I'm excited to see what sort of challenging books are among this year's selections and hope to encounter interesting worlds, nuanced characters, and genre-bending prose. The Gordon Book Prize is an important reminder that there's more than one way to make a brilliant book, and that brilliant books can touch you in ways other mediums still struggle to match."

Angela Hui said: "What an immense privilege and pleasure to be one of the judges. I'm excited to read a broad range of stories from different voices that capture Gordon Burn's fearless writing."



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Sarah Phelps said: “Gordon Burn’s writing has electrified me and tilted my horizons since I first read *Alma Cogan* and *Happy Like Murderers* decades ago. I’m thrilled to have been asked to be on the jury for the Gordon Burn Prize. I can’t wait to get started and read the work by astonishing writers on the longlist. What an absolute honour.”

David Whitehouse said: “Seems silly to be a fan of a prize really, but I’m a fan of the Gordon Burn Prize. It always turns up some of the best and most stupidly overlooked books published in Britain. I want to read books with something in them that might have made Gordon Burn think ‘I wish I’d thought of that’. It could mean a book that is as hard to look at as it is to look away from, but it definitely means a writer is on to something.”

The Gordon Burn Prize 2025 is now open for entry until 1 August 2024 at gordonburnprize.com. It is open to works in English published between 1 December 2023 and 30 November 2024 by writers of any nationality. The prize will be awarded in March 2025 in Gordon Burn’s home city, Newcastle upon Tyne, with support from Newcastle University.

The winner of the Gordon Burn Prize 2025 will receive £10,000 and the chance to undertake a writing retreat at Gordon Burn’s cottage in Berwickshire.

Notes to Editor

For all media enquiries, contact Laura Fraine laurafraine@newwritingnorth.com
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Timeline for the Gordon Burn Prize 2025:

Open for entry 13 June – 1 August 2024

Longlist announced December 2024

Shortlist announced January 2025

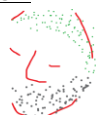
Winner announced March 2025

Previous winners of the Gordon Burn Prize:

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- 2023-24: *Kick the Latch*, by Kathryn Scanlan
- 2022: *Aftermath*, by Preti Taneja
- 2021: *A Little Devil in America: Notes in Praise of Black Performance*, by Hanif Abdurraqib
- 2020: *This Is Not Propaganda*, by Peter Pomerantsev
- 2019: *For the Good Times*, by David Keenan
- 2018: *Census*, by Jesse Ball
- 2017: *The Long Drop*, by Denise Mina
- 2016: *All That Man Is*, by David Szalay
- 2015: *In Plain Sight: The Life and Lies of Jimmy Savile*, by Dan Davies
- 2014: *The Wake*, by Paul Kingsnorth
- 2013: *Pig Iron*, by Benjamin Myers

Judges' bios:

Terri White is a journalist, author, screenwriter, and playwright based in the northwest, whose work is at the intersection of life writing, culture, and social affairs (class, poverty, child welfare, and VAWG). Her book, *Coming Undone: A Memoir* (Canongate, 2020) was chosen as 'memoir of the year' by *The i Paper*, and a book of the year by *The Guardian*, and *The Big Issue*. Terri is currently in development on the screen adaptation, alongside other screen projects, and is also developing *Body Count*, the short play she was commissioned to write and stage at Liverpool's Playhouse Theatre in the summer of 2023, into a full stageplay. Terri is a columnist for *The Sunday Times* and writes for the likes of *The Guardian*, *New Statesman*, *ELLE UK*, *British Vogue*, *EMPIRE*, *The Big Issue*, *Stylist*, *The Observer magazine*, *Sight & Sound*, *Grazia* and northern literary journal, *Lunate*. Her BBC Sounds audio documentary series on school absence and vulnerable children, *Terri White: Finding Britain's Ghost Children*, recently won Gold at the ARIAs (Best Factual Series), Silver at the New York Radio Festival Awards (Best Narrative Documentary) and a Social Work Journalism Award for Best In-depth Feature (Broadcast). Prior to this, Terri worked in publishing for two decades: she was EIC of the world's biggest film magazine, *EMPIRE* and previously, *Time Out New York*. Terri was named Editor of the Year three times by the British Society of Magazine Editors (BSME); one of the 150 Female Leaders redefining the creative industries and a Folio Top Woman in US Media. She received the BSME's lifetime achievement award, the Mark Boxer Award, in 2022, and was made a Fellow of the RSA (The Royal Society for Arts, Manufactures and Commerce), in recognition of her work in journalism and magazine publishing. Terri is also a childhood campaigner for the NSPCC. She is currently working on her first novel, second non-fiction book and debut short film.



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Carl Anka is a journalist, author, and broadcaster who specialises in pop culture, video games, films, and football. Currently a reporter for The Athletic, he appears in far too many podcasts for someone who is fearful of phone calls.

Carl co-authored Marcus Rashford's book *You Are a Champion* (Macmillan Children's Books), winner of Best Overall Book at the 2022 British Book Awards. This was followed by *You Can Do It: How to Find Your Team and Make a Difference, You Are A Champion: Action Planner* and *Heroes* (Macmillan Children's Books, 2023).

Angela Hui is a journalist, editor and author of *Takeaway: A Childhood from Behind the Counter*.

Sarah Phelps is a writer for stage, radio and tv. Her credits range from EastEnders, No Angels, Being Human through Charles Dickens (Oliver Twist, Great Expectations) Agatha Christie (And There Were None, The Witness for the Prosecution, Ordeal By Innocence, The ABC Murders, Pale Horse) to Dublin Murders, A Very British Scandal and RTS and BAFTA-award-winning The Sixth Commandment.

David Whitehouse is the author of three novels: *Bed* (winner of the Betty Trask Prize 2012), *Mobile Library* (winner of the Jerwood Fiction Prize 2015) and *The Long Forgotten* (2018). His debut non-fiction book *About A Son* was published in April 2022 and shortlisted for The Gordon Burn Prize and the CWA Gold Dagger for Non-Fiction. His next non-fiction book, *Saltwater Mansions*, will be published in 2025. He has written TV scripts for FX, Channel 4, ITV and Sky, and has a number of film and television projects in development.

