



British Embassy
Paris



PRESS RELEASE

ENTENTE LITTÉRAIRE PRIZE / PRIX DE L'ENTENTE LITTÉRAIRE SHORTLIST REVEALED

The judging panel for the inaugural Entente Littéraire Prize (Prix de l'Entente Littéraire), a new UK-France literary prize for writers of young adult literature, has revealed its shortlist.

Announced in September 2023 by Her Majesty The Queen and Madame Brigitte Macron during the King and Queen's State Visit to France, the Entente Littéraire Prize (Prix de l'Entente Littéraire) is inspired by the Entente Cordiale, the 1904 agreement between the UK and French governments that improved bilateral relations. The prize looks to encourage and celebrate the joy of reading and shared literary experiences between France and the UK.

The judging panel – acclaimed YA writers Marie-Aude Murail and Timothée de Fombelle from France and Patrice Lawrence and Joseph Coelho from the UK, with bilingual president of judges Joanne Harris – have selected the following shortlist:

Thieves, **Lucie Bryon**, translated by **Lucie Bryon** (Flying Eye Books)

Men Don't Cry, **Faïza Guène**, translated by **Sarah Ardizzone** (Cassava Republic Press)

Jefferson, **Jean-Claude Mourlevat**, translated by **Ros Schwartz** (Anderson Press)

Par Le Feu (After The Fire), **Will Hill**, translated by **Anne Guitton** (Casterman)

Les Etincelles Invisibles (A Kind of Spark), **Elle McNicoll**, translated by **Dominique Kugler** (Ecole des loisirs)

Le Livre Bleu De Nebo (The Blue Book of Nebo), **Manon Steffan Ros**, translated by **Lise Garond** (Actes Sud Jeunesse)

'It was a very strong shortlist, with a pleasing variety of different media and approaches,' says Joanne Harris. 'The list combined some very challenging themes with some insightful comments on the joys and problems of adolescence'.

French judge Timothée de Fombelle says: 'For me, literature for teenagers has long been about discovery, crossing boundaries, and exploring the unknown. Participating in the Entente Littéraire Prize suddenly became an observation post, allowing me to immerse myself in the creation of the United-Kingdom and the miracles of translation. I loved this journey.'

Marie-Aude Murail adds: 'When I am part of a jury, I ask myself two questions: one, do I like the novel I am reading? And two, would I want to recommend it? It was by answering yes to these two questions that my choice was made, without much hesitation.'

The UK judges offered the following comments on their three shortlisted books:

Thieves: 'A delightful, tender and funny romance between two flawed, but lovable teenagers. The artwork is soft and beautiful; the tone uplifting and upbeat. I loved it' – Joanne Harris

Thieves: 'A love story with a melancholic edge that perfectly captures, in words and illustrations, teenage friendships, anxieties and yearning' – Patrice Lawrence

Thieves: 'An immediately relatable tale of teen hood, friends, relationships, parties and... theft. These are real teens with complex and complicated personalities navigating an emotional landscape that has you racing through cover to cover. The illustrations are beautiful and engaging, it was a world I was delighted to inhabit' – Joseph Coelho

Men Don't Cry: 'A funny, wry coming-of age story, this is an insightful exploration of family and cultural identity through the eyes of a young French-Algerian man seeking to form ties with his estranged sister' – Joanne Harris

Men Don't Cry: 'As the first in my family to be born in the UK, I adored this book. The characterisation, the family dynamics and the incredibly funny writing about belonging and not belonging to a country was spot on' – Patrice Lawrence

Men Don't Cry: 'This book does many things brilliantly it dives into prejudice, toxic masculinity, tradition and racism, but is also a nuanced look at identity and culture and how we could all benefit from being more open, more understanding and respectful of the life and wishes of the individual' – Joseph Coelho

Jefferson: 'A quirky, but ultimately very topical novel, exploring themes of power, cruelty, exploitation and what makes us human, wrapped up in a deceptively comfortable metaphor' – Joanne Harris

Jefferson: 'A police procedural that starts in a world of human-like animals and ends up in a world of beast-like humans. An original, funny, poignant story enclosing a deeply uncomfortable truth' – Patrice Lawrence

Jefferson: 'A totally surprising and delightful murder mystery but with anthropomorphised animals! it is part Ruth Rendell, part Wind in the Willows, cleverly subverting these genres to tell a tale of prejudice and racism through the lens of animal cruelty and human arrogance' – Joseph Coelho

Editors' notes

About the Entente Littéraire Prize (Prix de l'Entente Littéraire):

The Entente Littéraire Prize is organised by the Royal Society of Literature and the Institut français du Royaume-Uni in London, in collaboration with the French Ministry of Culture, the Department for Culture, Media and Sport, the British Embassy in Paris and the French Embassy in London.

The idea to establish a UK-France literary prize was agreed by Prime Minister Sunak and President Macron at the UK-France bilateral Summit in Paris on 10 March 2023.

Two prizes of 8000€ will be awarded: one each for YA writing submitted in French and English translation for the eligible period. Each 8000€ prize will be split equally between the creators of the book (the writer and translator and – where applicable – illustrator).

The winner of this year's prize will be announced at a special event in London in early December, as part of the RSL's 204th birthday celebrations.

About the judges

Joanne Harris OBE, FRSL was born in Barnsley in 1964, of a French mother and an English father. She studied Modern and Mediaeval Languages at Cambridge and was a teacher for fifteen years, during which time she published three novels, including *Chocolat* (1999), which was made into an Oscar-nominated film starring Juliette Binoche. Since then, she has written 20 more novels, plus novellas, short stories, game scripts, screenplays, a stage musical (with Howard Goodall) and three cookbooks. Her books are now published in over 50 countries and have won a number of British and international awards. She is an honorary Fellow of St Catharine's College, Cambridge, has honorary doctorates in literature from the universities of Sheffield and Huddersfield, and has been a judge for the Whitbread (Costa) Prize, the Women's Prize, the Desmond Elliott Prize, the Betty Trask Award, the Primadonna Prize and the Royal Society Winton Prize for Science, as well as for the Fragrance Foundation awards for perfume and perfume journalism (for which she also received an award in 2017). She was elected a Fellow of the Royal Society of Literature in 2022. She is a passionate advocate for authors' rights, and was the Chair of the Society of Authors (SoA) for four years. She is currently a member of the Board of the Authors' Licensing and Collecting Society (ALCS).

Joseph Coelho FRSL is a multi-award-winning children's author and playwright. His YA 'Story told in poems' *The Girl Who Became A Tree* was shortlisted for The 2021 Carnegie Medal and received a special mention from the Bologna Ragazzi Award 2021. He has written plays for Little Angel Theatre, Tutti Frutti Productions, Polka Theatre and The Unicorn Theatre amongst others. He is two-time winner of the Indie Book Awards (2019 & 2022) with Picture Books 'If All The World Were...' and 'My Beautiful Voice' respectively '(illu. Allison Colpoys)'. His Poetry Collection *Werewolf Club Rules* (Illu. John O'leary) won the 2015 CLIPPA Poetry Award. His plays for adults have received a special commendation from the Verity Bargate Award and been longlisted for the Bruntwood Playwriting Competition. He is Waterstones Children's Laureate 2022 – 2024.

Marie-Aude Murail has published over 100 books, translated into 22 languages, some of which have been adapted into plays or films, and others into comic books. Made an *officier* in the *Légion d'honneur* for "contributing to France's cultural influence ", she has been read by millions, of all ages, for the past 30 years. Her books for young people include *Vive la République!* and *Golem* (published by Pocket Jeunesse), the *L'Espionne* series (published by Bayard) for younger readers, *Oh, boy !*, *Simple*, *Miss Charity*, *Malo de Lange*, as well as the *Nils Hazard* and *Sauveur & Fils* series (published by L'école des Loisirs). She also published a family biography in September 2018, *En nous beaucoup d'hommes respirent* (published by L'Iconoclaste). On 21 March 2022, she was awarded the Hans-Christian Andersen Award by the International Board on Books for Young People (IBBY).

Patrice Lawrence FRSL is an award-winning English writer whose work spans genres from contemporary thrillers to historical fantasy. Her books for young adults have won many prizes including the Bookseller YA Prize, the Waterstones Prize for Older Children's Fiction, the Crimefest YA Prize twice, the Woman and Home Teen Drama Award and the inaugural Jhalak Prize for Children and Young People. Her novella, *Needle*, was shortlisted for the Carnegie Award and won the Little Rebel Awards. Before becoming a full-time writer, she worked for more than 20 years in organisations promoting social justice.

Born in 1973, **Timothée de Fombelle** started his career as a playwright, before devoting himself to children's literature. He has written a variety of sagas, often in several volumes, all of which have won awards and been translated into many languages (*Toby Alone*, *Vango*, *The Book of Pearl*, *Alma*, etc.), as well as shorter or illustrated texts (*Céleste ma planète*, *Capitaine Rosalie*, *Esther Andersen*, etc.). He has also published a story about childhood for adults: *Neverland*.

For more information:

www.institut-francais.org.uk/entente-litteraire-prize

<https://rsliterature.org/entente-litteraire-prize/>

For press enquiries, contact:

Royal Society of Literature:

Catherine Riley: 020 7845 4679 | catherine.riley@rsliterature.org

Institut français du Royaume-Uni:

Natacha Antolini: 020 7871 3520 | natacha.antolini@institut-francais.org.uk