



## THE SHOCK OF THE FALL BY NATHAN FILER NAMED 2013 COSTA BOOK OF THE YEAR

**London, 20.30pm 28th January 2014:** *The Shock of the Fall* by debut author and mental health nurse Nathan Filer has beaten bestselling novelist Kate Atkinson to win the title of 2013 Costa Book of the Year. *The Shock of the Fall* tells the story of Matthew and Simon, two brothers who are separated yet united by a tragic accident.

The announcement was made this evening (Tuesday 28th January) at an awards ceremony held at Quaglino's in central London.

The 2013 Costa Short Story Award, judged separately from the main prize, was won by writer and poet Angela Readman.

Filer beat novelist and bookmakers' favourite, Kate Atkinson, for *Life After Life*, biographer Lucy Hughes-Hallett for *The Pike*, poet Michael Symmons Roberts for *Drysalter* and author and political cartoonist, Chris Riddell, for *Goth Girl and the Ghost of a Mouse*, to win the overall prize and a cheque for £30,000 at the awards ceremony.

Following the judging, Rose Tremain CBE, chair of the final judges, said: "This book stood out in a very good list. The voice in which the author has chosen to tell his story is perfectly aligned with the subject matter and very well sustained to the end."

She continued, "The book is exceptionally moving without being sentimental – we're very much hoping there will be more from this writer."

Tremain chaired a final judging panel that included actress Natascha McElhone, Texas singer songwriter Sharleen Spiteri, presenter Richard Osman, columnist and scriptwriter Emma Kennedy, writer John Burnside, and authors Anne de Courcy, Matt Cain and Gerard Woodward.

The Costa Book Awards is the only major UK book prize that is open solely to authors resident in the UK and Ireland and also, uniquely, recognises the most enjoyable books across five categories – First Novel, Novel, Biography, Poetry and Children's Book - published in the last year.

Originally established in 1971 by Whitbread Plc, Costa announced its takeover of the sponsorship of the UK's most prestigious book prize in 2006. 2013 marks the 42nd year of the Book Awards.

*The Shock of the Fall*, published by HarperCollins Publishers, is only the fifth first novel to take the overall prize. Kate Atkinson won for her debut novel, *Behind the Scenes at the Museum*, in 1995, and *The Tenderness of Wolves* by Stef Penney was the last first novel to win the overall Award in 2006. *Bring Up the Bodies* by novelist Hilary Mantel was named Costa Book of the Year in 2012.

Since the introduction of the Book of the Year award in 1985, it has been won eleven times by a novel, five times by a first novel, five times by a biography, five times by a collection of poetry and once by a children's book.

### **Angela Readman wins 2013 Costa Short Story Award**

The Costa Book Awards ceremony also saw the announcement of the winner of the Costa Short Story Award. Writer and poet Angela Readman from Newcastle, won the public vote to win £3,500 for her story, *The Keeper of the Jackalopes*. Two runners-up, writer Kit de Waal and Tony Bagley, each received £1,500 and £500 respectively.

Established in 2012, the new Award - run in association with the Costa Book Awards but judged independently of the main five-category system – is unique in that it was judged anonymously (ie without the name of the author being known throughout the process). It is for a single, previously unpublished short story of up to 4,000 words written in English by an author aged 18 years or over, and is open to both published and unpublished writers.

A shortlist of six stories was selected by a panel of judges - Richard Beard, Fanny Blake, Victoria Hislop and Simon Trewin - and then made available on the Costa Book Awards website for the public to download and vote for their favourite. Costa Managing Director, Christopher Rogers, announced the winner and runners-up and presented them with their cheques.

For more information please visit [www.costabookawards.com](http://www.costabookawards.com).

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**Notes for Editors:**

**About the Costa Book Awards:**

- The Costa Book Awards, formerly the Whitbread Book Awards, were established in 1971 to encourage, promote and celebrate the best contemporary British writing.
- The total prize fund for the Costa Book Awards – including the Costa Short Story Award - stands at £60,000.
- The award winners from the five categories - Novel, First Novel, Biography, Poetry and Children's Book - each receive £5,000.
- The overall Costa Book of the Year is selected from the five Category Award Winners with the winner receiving a further £30,000.
- The winner will be announced at an awards ceremony in central London on 28th January, 2014.
- To be eligible for the 2013 awards, books must have been first published in the UK or Ireland between 1 November 2012 and 31 October 2013.
- The 2012 Costa Book of the Year was *Bring Up the Bodies* by Hilary Mantel (Fourth Estate).

**About the Costa Short Story Award:**

- The Costa Short Story Award was launched in 2012.
- The Costa Short Story Award is for a single, previously unpublished short story of up to 4,000 words by an author aged 18 years or over and written in English.
- The author's primary residence must have been the UK or Ireland for the past three years.
- The Award runs in association with the Costa Book Awards but is judged independently of the main five-category system
- Entrants need not have been previously published but publishers and agents may submit entries on behalf of authors.

### **About Costa**

Costa is the UK's favourite coffee shop, having been awarded "Best Branded Coffee Shop Chain in the UK and Ireland" by Allegra Strategies for four years running (2010, 2011, 2012 & November 2013). Winner of "Best Branded Coffee Chain in Europe" Allegra Strategies 2011, 2012 and 2013.

With over 1,600 coffee shops in the UK and more than 1,000 overseas, Costa is the fastest-growing coffee shop business in the UK and the second largest coffee shop operator in the world. Founded in London by Italian brothers Sergio and Bruno Costa in 1971, Costa has become the UK's favourite coffee shop chain and has recently diversified into both the at-home and gourmet self-serve markets. Costa employs over 11,000 people and is creating around 1,500 jobs this year and over 4,500 jobs in the next 3 years in the UK.

Just 1% of the world's production of coffee is good enough for us to choose from. Only the very best 100% RFA certified coffee available can go into creating the unique taste and aroma of our Mocha Italia blend.

Costa is committed to looking after coffee-growers. That's why we've established The Costa Foundation, a registered charity. The Costa Foundation's aims are to relieve poverty, advance education and the health and environment of coffee-growing communities around the world. So far, The Costa Foundation has funded the building of 42 schools and improved the social and economic welfare of coffee-growing communities.

## **Further Background**

### **The Shock of the Fall by Nathan Filer**

HarperCollins *Publishers*

#### **About the book:**

*The Shock of the Fall* tells the story of Matthew and Simon, two brothers who are separated yet united by a tragic accident. Exploring themes of loss, grief and mental illness, this extraordinary novel transports the reader directly into the mind of Matthew and his slow descent into madness as he confronts his role in the boyhood death of his older brother ten years ago.

#### **About the author:**

**Nathan Filer**, 32, is a writer and lecturer in Creative Writing at Bath Spa University. He is a qualified mental health nurse and for many years worked for the mental health service in Bristol where he still lives.

*The Shock of the Fall* was subject to an eleven-way auction and bought by HarperCollins for a substantial six figure sum. It was selected for BBC Radio 2 Bookclub and a Specsavers National Book Award. It will be published in paperback in January 2014 by The Borough Press and will also be published in twelve other countries, including Israel (from where he was once deported for reasons of national security).

His stand-up poetry has been a regular fixture at festivals and spoken-word events across the UK, including Latitude, Port Eliot, and Wilderness. It has been broadcast on BBC 3 and BBC Radio 4, 7 and 5 Live.

He has also appeared at the Cheltenham Literature Festival and Hay Festival. His 2005 comedy short film *Oedipus* won the BBC Best New Filmmaker Award and numerous other prizes, including Berlin's Zebra Poetry Film Award and the Audience Choice Award at Toronto's World of Comedy Film Festival.

**What the judges said:**

"It's hard to believe this is a first novel – it's so good it will make you feel a better person."

**Judges:**

Rachael Beale	<i>Web Manager, London Review of Books</i>
Fanny Blake	<i>Novelist, Journalist and Books Editor of Woman &amp; Home</i>
Matt Cain	<i>Writer and Broadcaster</i>

**Shortlist, selected from a total of 108 entries:**

Sam Byers	<i>Idiopathy</i>	Fourth Estate
Kate Clanchy	<i>Meeting the English</i>	Picador
Sathnam Sanghera	<i>Marriage Material</i>	William Heinemann

**Previous First Novel Award winners include:**

Francesca Segal	<i>The Innocents</i>	2012
Christie Watson	<i>Tiny Sunbirds Far Away</i>	2011
Kishwar Desai	<i>Witness the Night</i>	2010
Raphael Selbourne	<i>Beauty</i>	2009
Sadie Jones	<i>The Outcast</i>	2008
Catherine O'Flynn	<i>What Was Lost</i>	2007
Stef Penney	<i>The Tenderness of Wolves</i>	2006
Tash Aw	<i>The Harmony Silk Factory</i>	2005
Susan Fletcher	<i>Eve Green</i>	2004
DBC Pierre	<i>Vernon God Little</i>	2003

**Previous Books of the Year**

2012	<b><i>Bring Up the Bodies</i></b>	Hilary Mantel	Novel
2011	<b><i>Pure</i></b>	Andrew Miller	Novel
2010	<b><i>Of Mutability</i></b>	Jo Shapcott	Poetry
2009	<b><i>A Scattering</i></b>	Christopher Reid	Poetry
2008	<b><i>The Secret Scripture</i></b>	Sebastian Barry	Novel
2007	<b><i>Day</i></b>	A.L. Kennedy	Novel
2006	<b><i>The Tenderness of Wolves</i></b>	Stef Penney	First Novel
2005	<b><i>Matisse: the Master</i></b>	Hilary Spurling	Biography
2004	<b><i>Small Island</i></b>	Andrea Levy	Novel
2003	<b><i>The Curious Incident of the Dog in the Night-Time</i></b>	Mark Haddon	Novel
2002	<b><i>Samuel Pepys: The Unequalled Self</i></b>	Claire Tomalin	Biography
2001	<b><i>The Amber Spyglass</i></b>	Philip Pullman	Children's Book

2000	<b><i>English Passengers</i></b>	Matthew Kneale	Novel
1999	<b><i>Beowulf</i></b>	Seamus Heaney	Poetry
1998	<b><i>Birthday Letters</i></b>	Ted Hughes	Poetry
1997	<b><i>Tales from Ovid</i></b>	Ted Hughes	Poetry
1996	<b><i>The Spirit Level</i></b>	Seamus Heaney	Poetry
1995	<b><i>Behind the Scenes at the Museum</i></b>	Kate Atkinson	First Novel
1994	<b><i>Felicia's Journey</i></b>	William Trevor	Novel
1993	<b><i>Theory of War</i></b>	Joan Brady	Novel
1992	<b><i>Swing Hammer Swing!</i></b>	Jeff Torrington	First Novel
1991	<b><i>A Life of Picasso</i></b>	John Richardson	Biography
1990	<b><i>Hopeful Monsters</i></b>	Nicholas Mosley	Novel
1989	<b><i>Coleridge: Early Visions</i></b>	Richard Holmes	Biography
1988	<b><i>The Comforts of Madness</i></b>	Paul Sayer	First Novel
1987	<b><i>Under the Eye of the Clock</i></b>	Christopher Nolan	Biography
1986	<b><i>An Artist of the Floating World</i></b>	Kazuo Ishiguro	Novel
1985	<b><i>Elegies</i></b>	Douglas Dunn	Poetry

## **Angela Readman – Winner of the Costa Short Story Award 2013 for *The Keeper of the Jackalopes***

### **About the story:**

*The Keeper of the Jackalopes* is the story of a girl, her father, a Jackalope and survival.

### **About the author:**

Angela Readman's stories have been shortlisted in the Costa Short Story Award (2012), The Asham Award and The Bristol Prize. Her work has been published online and some of her stories have recently appeared in the anthologies *Once Upon a Time There was a Traveller* (Virago), *Root* (Iron Press) and *Unthology 3* (Unthanks.) Originally from Middlesborough, she now lives in Newcastle, has an MA in Creative Writing and also writes poetry. Her poetry has been a winner of The Essex Poetry Prize, and in 2013 she won The Mslexia Poetry Competition. She is currently working on a short story collection, *Don't Try This at Home*.