



# 2017 Category Judges

## FIRST NOVEL AWARD



**Sandeep Mahal**  
**Director of Nottingham UNESCO City of Literature and**  
**Literary Consultant at SLAM Films**

Sandeep started her career in public libraries in Sandwell before moving to The Reading Agency, where she led a powerful partnership consortium transforming the way UK publishers collaborated with the UK public library network. Most recently she was Director of The Space – a commissioning agency supporting greater digital access to the arts, co-funded by Arts Council England and the BBC. Sandeep is a Trustee of Spread the Word and a Literary Consultant at SLAM Films where she works with SLAM's creative team on all literary acquisitions. In 2013 she was awarded the prestigious fellowship from the Clore Cultural Institute.



**Sophie Raworth**  
**BBC Presenter and Journalist**

Sophie Raworth is a journalist who presents the BBC News at One, Six and Ten. She's also an avid reader and has her own book website: [www.readbyraworth.com](http://www.readbyraworth.com)



**Simon Savidge**  
**Blogger and Vlogger, Savidge Reads**

Simon Savidge writes the blog [Savidge Reads](http://Savidge Reads) as well as the [YouTube channel](http://YouTube channel) of the same name. He's also one of the cohosts of [The Readers](http://The Readers) podcast.



## NOVEL AWARD



### **Lucy Atkins** **Author and Critic**

Lucy Atkins is an award-winning, bestselling author of three novels and seven non-fiction books. Her most recent novel is *The Night Visitor* (Quercus, 2017). She is a literary critic for *The Sunday Times* and used to work at the *Times Literary Supplement*. Lucy has written many features and book reviews for UK newspapers and magazines including *The Guardian*, *The Times*, *The Telegraph*, *Woman & Home*, *Grazia* and *Red* magazine. She regularly talks about books on *BBC Radio Oxford*, and

chairs literary events.



### **Freya North** **Author**

Freya North is the internationally-bestselling author of 14 novels. She has won the Romantic Novel of the Year Award and been shortlisted for others. In 1996 she gave up a PhD to write her first novel - which attracted a fierce bidding war between five publishers. Her most recent novel is *The Turning Point* which garnered critical acclaim on both sides of the Atlantic and is a *Sunday Times* bestseller. Freya founded the Hertford Children's Book Festival, is a judge for the Campaign to Protect Rural England and is an Ambassador for Beating Bowel Cancer, for whom she is cycling coast-

to-coast this year.



### **Wayne Winstone** **Owner, Winstone's Bookshops**

Wayne has been in the book trade for over 25 years, most of those spent as a Director or in Senior Management at Ottakar's and Waterstones. In 2011 he launched the first of three award-winning independent bookshops in the South West called Winstone's. When not running the business or reading Costa submissions, Wayne can be found listening blissfully to Frank Zappa at loud volume.



## BIOGRAPHY AWARD



**Arifa Akbar**  
**Freelance Journalist, Critic and Columnist**

Arifa Akbar is Head of Content at the publisher, *Unbound*, where she's launch editor of the online literary website, *Boundless*. She's a freelance reviewer for the *Financial Times*, the *London Evening Standard* and *Sky News*, and is also curating a Muslim literary festival called MFest at the British Library in April 2018. She is the former literary editor of *The Independent*, where she worked for fifteen years in various roles including arts correspondent and news reporter. She's a Trustee of the

Orwell Foundation, and sits on the Advisory Committee for English PEN's Writing in Translation programme.



**Simon Garfield**  
**Author**

Simon Garfield is the author of 18 books of non-fiction, including the bestsellers *Mauve*, *Just My Type* and *On The Map*. He's a Trustee of Mass Observation, and is the editor of several books of journals and letters from the archive, including *Our Hidden Lives* and *A Notable Woman*. His study of AIDS in Britain, *The End of Innocence*, won the Somerset Maugham Prize, while *To The Letter* was one of the

inspirations for the theatre shows, *Letters Live*. His most recent book is *Timekeepers: How the World Became Obsessed With Time*.



**Richard Humphreys**  
**Non-Fiction Buyer, Waterstones**

Richard Humphreys has been a bookseller for over 20 years, first joining Books Etc in 1994, and subsequently working in a number of bookshops in central London. Shortly after Borders purchased Books Etc in 1997, he began his buying career at Charing Cross Road where he was the fiction and crime buyer for Borders. Over time, he moved into a variety of roles, ultimately specialising in non-fiction. He joined Waterstones in 2010 as the academic buyer, and since 2011 has headed

up the non-fiction buying team. In a previous life Richard was a Royal Navy submariner and diver.



## POETRY AWARD



**Moniza Alvi**  
**Poet**

Moniza Alvi was born in Pakistan and grew up in Hertfordshire. Her poetry collections include *The Country at My Shoulder*, *Europa* and *At the Time of Partition*, each of these shortlisted for the T S Eliot Prize. She had a long career as a secondary school teacher in London, and now lives in Norfolk where she tutors for the Poetry School.



**Kiran Millwood Hargrave**  
**Author**

Kiran Millwood Hargrave is an award-winning poet, playwright, and bestselling author of the British Book Awards and Waterstones Children's Book of the Year, *The Girl of Ink & Stars*. She was a Barbican Young Poet, President of the Oxford University Poetry Society, and her work has appeared in numerous journals including *Magma*, *Agenda*, *Shearsman* and *Room*. Her fourth collection, *OE*, a retelling of the myth of Orpheus and Eurydice in collaboration with the artist Tom de Freston, is published by Bloomsbury.



**Nicholas Wroe**  
**Guardian Writer and Editor**

Nicholas Wroe is a writer and editor on the *Guardian Review*. As a writer he's conducted in-depth profile interviews with some of the most prominent figures in poetry, from Seamus Heaney, Czeslaw Milosz and John Ashbery to Carol Ann Duffy, Don Paterson and Kate Tempest. As an editor, Nicholas has overseen *Review's* poetry coverage and edited two *Guardian* pamphlet series: Great 20th-Century Poets and Great Romantic poets. He's previously been a judge of the Forward Poetry Prizes as well as the Dylan Thomas Prize.



## CHILDREN'S BOOK AWARD



**Sanchita Basu De Sarkar**  
**Owner, Children's Bookshop, Muswell Hill**

Sanchita started working at the bookshop fresh out of university and has owned it since 2016. Her life is now an excellent mix of reading, small children, author events and tea. She's previously judged the Independent Bookshop Prize.



**Fiona Noble**  
**Children's & YA Previews Editor, The Bookseller**

Fiona Noble has over twenty years' experience of the children's book world, beginning her career as a Saturday library assistant aged 16. She's worked in a variety of bookselling and publishing roles, including Children's Books Manager for the Ottakar's book chain. Since 2009 she's been Children's & Young Adult Previews Editor for trade publishing magazine *The Bookseller*, and chairs their British Book Industry Children's Book of the Year award. She also works as a freelance children's books journalist and consultant, and is a regular contributor to the *Observer's* Children's Book of the Week.



**Piers Torday**  
**Author**

A former theatre and television producer, Piers is now an award-winning and bestselling writer for children. His books include *The Last Wild* trilogy (Guardian Children's Fiction Prize) and *There May Be a Castle*. The son of the late Paul Torday (*Salmon Fishing in the Yemen*), he recently completed his father's final unfinished novel, *The Death of an Owl*. His latest project is the stage world premiere of John Masefield's *The Box of Delights*, which he has adapted for Wilton's Music Hall. Piers has reviewed children's books for *The Guardian* and *The Spectator*, and is a former judge of the Guardian Children's Fiction Prize. He lives in North London with his husband and a very naughty dog.