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BBC National Short Story Award 2010 launches

www.theshortstory.org.uk

The BBC National Short Story Award has launched its fifth year. The award is one of the most prestigious for a single short story, with the winning author receiving £15,000. The runner up receives £3,000 and three further shortlisted authors, £500 each.

This year's award is now open for submissions from publishers, agents and published authors from the UK. The closing date for entries is 18 June 2010.

The shortlist will be announced in November with the five stories broadcast on BBC Radio 4 each weekday a week before the winner is announced. The five stories will also be published in a special anthology.

Aimed at highlighting the importance of the short story and supporting the genre, the BBC National Short Story Award stands at the heart of a UK-wide campaign — **story** — that has run alongside the award since 2005. The ambition of both the award and the campaign is to expand opportunities for British writers, readers and publishers of the short story. The award aims to honour the country's finest exponents of the form. **James Lasdun** secured the inaugural award for *An Anxious Man*; last year the poet **Kate Clanchy** won with *The Not-Dead and The Saved*. Other authors shortlisted in previous years have included **Jackie Kay**, **William Trevor**, **Rose Tremain**, **Clare Wigfall**, **Naomi Alderman** and **Lionel Shriver**.

BBC Radio 4 is the world's leading broadcaster of short stories and a staunch and long-time supporter of the form. Short stories are broadcast every week attracting more than a million listeners. The BBC hopes that the award can continue to serve as a reminder of the power of the short story in a literary environment dominated by the novel.

Kate Clanchy, winner of the 2009 BBC National Short Story Award said:

'The Not-Dead and the Saved was only the third short story I'd finished - though I should point out that I'd been working on the form for a couple of years - so I was amazed that it should be shortlisted for the BBC National Short Story Award, and utterly dazzled that it won. The effect on me was simple and immediate: I went home and started writing several more stories.'

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BBC Radio 4's Controller **Mark Damazer** comments:

'I am absolutely delighted that the BBC National Short Story Award 2010 is now in its fifth year, during which time there has been an appreciable resurgence in the popularity of the short story in Britain. The BBC has been able to bring a wealth of exceptional new writing to our listeners and the NSSA has become a highlight of the Radio 4 year.'

Viv Bird, Chief Executive of Booktrust comments:

'The number and quality of entries submitted for last year's award are testament to the enormous impact that the BBC National Short Story Award and Story campaign have had on the profile of the short story in the UK. At Booktrust we are thrilled to be welcoming the award back for its fifth year, and look forward to reading and listening to this year's successful entries in the anthology and on BBC Radio 4.'

For further information on the award, please contact:

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For further information on the BBC, please contact Victoria Wawman on Victoria.Wawman@bbc.co.uk or 0207 765 008

NOTES TO EDITORS:

- The BBC National Short Story Award is administered in partnership with Booktrust. It was formerly known as the National Short Story Prize. The award is open to authors with a previous record of publication who are UK nationals or residents, aged 18 years or over only. The story entered must either be unpublished, or be first published or scheduled for publication after 1 January 2009. The story must not be more than 8000 words. Entrants must submit original work that does not infringe the copyright or any other rights of any third party. Entrants must have a prior record of publication. Entries are limited to stories written in English and only one will be accepted per author. For full details, entry criteria and an entry form see <http://www.booktrust.org.uk/Prizes-and-awards/BBC-National-Short-Story-Award> or www.theshortstory.org.uk, or send a stamped addressed envelope to the BBC National Short Story Award, c/o Booktrust, Book House, 45 East Hill, London SW18 2QZ.

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- The panel will select a shortlist to be announced by 12th November. The shortlisted stories will be broadcast on BBC Radio 4 daily at 3.30pm from 15th November, preceding the final announcement of the award winner and runners up by 30th November.
- For information on **story**, the national campaign to celebrate the short story, please visit www.theshortstory.org.uk. This site includes interviews with writers, agents and publishers, events, competitions and projects listings and features, tips for writers and readers and a selection of classic and contemporary short stories.
- **BBC RADIO 4** is believed to be the world's biggest single commissioner of short stories. Short stories are broadcast every week attracting more than a million listeners. About 40 per cent of Radio 4's short stories are special commissions, mainly from leading authors, and some 35 per cent are from already published material – contemporary and classic – and include stories broadcast to coincide with publication. Unsolicited stories and those not published by mainstream publishers make up at least a further 25 per cent of output. www.bbc.co.uk/radio4
- **Booktrust** is an independent charity dedicated to encouraging people of all ages and cultures to engage with books. The written word underpins all our activity and enables us to fulfil our vision of inspiring a lifelong love of books for all.