

Judges announced for the John Llewellyn Rhys Prize 2010

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Claire Allfree, literary editor of *Metro*, has been named as the chair of an illustrious panel of judges for this year's John Llewellyn Rhys Prize.

Claire will head up a panel which includes critic and broadcaster **Bidisha** and poet **Maura Dooley** to judge the best work of literature (fiction, non-fiction, poetry or drama) by a UK or Commonwealth writer aged 35 years or under.

The shortlist will be announced on Friday 15 October. The winner will receive a cheque for £5,000, with the other shortlisted authors receiving £500 each. The winner will be announced at a ceremony at Century Club in London on Tuesday 23 November.

Claire Allfree commented:

'I am delighted to be chairing the judging panel for this year's John Llewellyn Rhys Prize. I've always thought the prize invaluable for the way it champions young writers from across a variety of disciplines, and for the way it reaches out across the world to exciting new writers from all sorts of different backgrounds and cultures with new stories to tell. The prize has a proven track record for picking out authors who have gone on to enjoy stellar careers and I'm confident that this year will be no different.'

Fellow judge Bidisha:

'The John Llewellyn Rhys prize has honoured many of my favourite writers, from Sarah Hall and Jeanette Winterson to last year's winner Evie Wyld. It has been curiously, even creepily prescient in selecting young writers, be they novelists, poets, journalists, essayists, biographers or memoirists, who go on to forge distinguished and longstanding international careers in the many decades that (hopefully) follow. I'm super jazzed at the opportunity to cross genres, disciplines, structures and approaches to find the greatest writers of today – and tomorrow. The rule is simple. They just have to be amazing.'

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Notes to Editors

About the John Llewellyn Rhys Prize

The prize was founded in 1942 in honour of the writer John Llewellyn Rhys, who was killed in action in the Second World War. His young wife – also a writer – initiated the award to honour and celebrate his life. Past winners include Margaret Drabble in 1966, William Boyd in 1982, Jeanette Winterson in 1987, Matthew Kneale in 1992, David Mitchell in 1999, and, most recently, Evie Wyld in 2009 with her book *After the Fire, a Still Small Voice*. Evie is currently Booktrust's online writer in residence.

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.

About the Judges

Claire Allfree (Chair) is assistant arts editor and literary editor at *Metro*, where she has worked since the paper was launched. A voracious reader, she studied English at Cambridge, and is utterly delighted to be chairing this year's John Llewellyn Rhys Prize. She lives in London.

Bidisha is a critic, writer and broadcaster. A former BBC Radio 3 Night Waves presenter, she now presents *The Strand* for the BBC World Service, as well as presenting various other shows for BBC Radio 4 and the World Service. She writes for *The Guardian*, *The Financial Times*, *The New Statesman*, *The Observer* and *Msllexia*. Her most recent book is the travel memoir *Venetian Masters*. When not reading for the John Llewellyn Rhys Prize this summer she will be guest presenting *Woman's Hour* on BBC Radio 4.

Maura Dooley has published several collections of poetry, most recently *Life Under Water* and edited anthologies of verse and essays, amongst them *The Honey Gatherers: Love Poems* and *How Novelists Work*. She has worked with new writers all her working life for – amongst others – the Arvon Foundation, Performing Arts Labs, Southbank Centre, Jim Henson Film and currently for Goldsmiths College, University of London. She has twice been shortlisted for the T.S. Eliot Prize and is a Fellow of the Royal Society of Literature.