



61
THE NATIONAL BOOK LEAGUE

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P R E S S R E L E A S E

EMBARGOED UNTIL 1.00 AM, FRIDAY, 21 APRIL 1972

1972 Booker Prize for fiction

The National Book League, as administrator of Britain's largest fiction prize, worth £5,000 to its winner, has much pleasure in announcing the panel of judges for the 1972 Booker Prize. They are Miss Elizabeth Bowen, Dr. George Steiner and Mr. Cyril Connolly, who will be chairman of the panel.

Biographical notes on the judges are attached.

The format of the 1972 Booker Prize is similar to that of 1971 in that the date of the announcement of the winner of the prize will be brought as close as is reasonably practical to the publication date of the winning novel. To achieve this publishers are invited to submit full-length novels, written in English by citizens of the Commonwealth, Eire and South Africa, with scheduled publication dates between 31 July 1972 and 23 November 1972 only. However, the judges will be entitled to call in for consideration any full-length novel conforming to the same writing criteria first published in the UK at any time during 1972. While it is hoped that the winning book will be an Autumn novel, so that, coming close to publication, the award will have greater impact, the prime consideration of the judges will, of course, remain merit.

A short list of six titles will be announced when the judges have narrowed their choice to the final six contenders. The announcement of the winner of the Prize will follow shortly afterwards..

The Booker Prize for fiction was created in October 1968 by Booker McConnell Ltd. together with the Publishers Association. The first winner of the prize, in 1969, was P.H. Newby for Something to Answer For (Faber & Faber). In 1970 Bernice Rubens won the prize for The Elected Member (Eyre & Spottiswoode) and in 1971 the prize went to V.S. Naipaul's In a Free State (Andre Deutsch).

Further information from:

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THE JUDGES FOR THE 1972 BOOKER PRIZE

Mr. Cyril Connolly, C.Lit., FRSL., author and journalist, Chevalier de la Legion d'Honneur was educated at Eton and Balliol. He has written for the New Statesman from 1927; in 1939 he founded Horizon, which he edited from 1939 to 1950. He was Literary Editor of the Observer from 1942 to 1943 and currently contributes weekly to the Sunday Times. His books include The Rock Pool (1935), Enemies of Promise (1938), The Unquiet Grave (1944), The Condemned Playground (1944), Put Out The Light (1944) translation, Ideas and Places (1953), The Missing Diplomats (1953) ed., The Golden Horizon (1953) ed. Great English Short Novels (1953), The Pavillions (with Jerome Zerbe) 1962, Previous Convictions (1963), The Modern Movement (1965). He is currently working on his autobiography.

Miss Elizabeth Bowen, CBE, Hon.D.Litt., TCD., C.Lit., was born in Dublin and educated in the South of England. Her first story was written when she was twenty and appeared in 1923 called Encounters. She spent the war years in London working at the Ministry of Information by day and as an air raid warden by night. Her books include The Last September (1929) Joining Charles (short stories 1929), Friends and Relations (1931), To the North (1932), The Cat Jumps (short stories 1934), The House in Paris (1935) The Death of the Heart (1938), Look at all those Roses (short stories 1941) Bowen's Court (1942), Seven Winters (1943), The Demon Lover (short stories 1945) The Heat of the Day (1949), Collected Impressions (essays) 1950, The Shelbourne (1951), A World of Love (1955), A Time in Rome (1960) Afterthought (essays) 1962 The Little Girls (1964), A Day in the Dark (1965), Eva Trout (1969) - winner of the James Tair Black Memorial Prize. She is currently at work on another book.

Dr. George Steiner, MA., D.Phil., PhD., FRSL was born in Paris and educated in France, the USA and England. Having been a Rhodes Scholar at Oxford, he then edited the Economist. He is a member of the Institute for Advanced Study in Princeton. After teaching at universities throughout the United States and Europe he spent a year at the Schweitzer University. At the present time he is an Extraordinary Fellow of Churchill College, Cambridge. He has also been a Guest Professor at Yale and was made a Guggenheim Fellow in 1971. Among his books are Tolstoy or Dostoyesky, The Death of Tragedy Anno Domini, In Bluebeard's Castle and this year Extraterritorial.