



The National Book League

7 Albemarle Street
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Date

PRIZE ADMINISTRATOR: Marilyn Edwards

EMBARGOED UNTIL 9.00 pm ON WEDNESDAY 28 NOVEMBER 1973

We would be grateful if all journalists would make this a verbal embargo until the announcement is made officially at the Cafe Royal on Wednesday, when Lord Butler will present the prize, so that the surprise element will be as great as possible.

B O O K E R P R I Z E 1 9 7 3

The winner of the fifth £5,000 Booker Prize for fiction is J.G. FARRELL for his novel THE SIEGE OF KRISHNAPUR (Weidenfeld & Nicolson £2.25). This announcement was made by Karl Miller on the evening of 28 November at the Cafe Royal at a dinner to celebrate the event, when Lord Butler presented the £5000 cheque and Booker Trophy to Mr. Farrell.

Some fifty novels were considered by the judges, Karl Miller (Chairman), Mary McCarthy and Edna O'Brien, who released the following short list of contenders a month ago:

- The Dressmaker by Beryl Bainbridge (Duckworth)
- The Siege of Krishnapur by J.G. Farrell (Weidenfeld & Nicholson)
- A Green Equinox by Elizabeth Mavor (Michael Joseph & Wildwood House)
- The Black Prince by Iris Murdoch (Chatto & Windus)

Karl Miller, Chairman of the Judges, says; "I doubt whether there is much to be said for reporting the falterings and last minute semi-fallings-out of the judges. Such things generally happen, and they happened here. There were favourites that the judges could not agree over: Mary McCarthy was greatly intrigued by The Black Prince, and, for my part, I feel that Beryl Bainbridge has proved once again with The Dressmaker that she is a writer of outstanding talent. Nevertheless, I ought to say that all the judges concurred in thinking highly of J.G. Farrell's The Siege of Krishnapur and were very happy to award it the prize.

"The Siege of Krishnapur tells how one of the communities of the British Raj kept the flag flying during the Indian Mutiny of 1857. The course of the siege is made entirely convincing (though it is a bit of a mystery why the investing Sepoys did not put up a better show), and the human specimens who compose the garrison are brilliantly lifelike. What brings them to life, as much as anything, is the author's steady but unobstrusive sense of the ironies inherent in this story of a group of people at once ridiculous and brave. The ideas, high and low, which constituted the Raj, and which range from a taste for poetry and Phrenology to a horror of fallen women, are set out as clearly and elegantly as in a sampler."

PLEASE SEE OVER

Director:
Martyn Goff
Deputy Director:
Clifford Simmons

J.G. FARRELL was born in Liverpool but has spent a good deal of his life abroad. He spent two years in New York on a Harkness Fellowship and has lived for long periods in France and Ireland where he spent much of his childhood as well as travelling widely in Mexico, Morocco and the Canadian Arctic. He also spent some time in India researching the background for his novel The Siege of Krishnapur. His previous novels include A Man from Elsewhere, The Lung, A Girl in the Head and Troubles.

The terms of reference for the 1973 Prize are 'the best full-length novel in the opinion of the Judges'. The period from which books have been judged was 1 January 1973 to 28 November 1973. Publishers were only allowed to submit books published between 30 July and 28 November, although they were able to recommend books published by them at any time during 1973. Previous winners of the Prize were:

- 1969 P.H. Newby: Something to Answer for (Faber & Faber)
- 1970 Bernice Rubens: The Elected Member (Eyre & Spottiswoode)
- 1971 V.S. Naipaul: In a Free State (Andre Deutsch)
- 1972 John Berger: G (Weidenfeld & Nicholson)

The Booker Prize for Fiction was created jointly by Booker-McConnell and the Publishers Association in 1968 and is now administered by the National Book League. Booker-McConnell finances the prize of £5,000 as well as expenses immediately connected with the administration of the award. While the costs in the main are borne by Booker-McConnell the Award is organised by a Committee the four of whose six members are appointed by the Publishers Association and the National Book League. That Committee sets the rules - including the period during which a novel has to be published to enable it to qualify for the Prize - and undertakes the task of appointing the Judges as well as seeing to all the other arrangements.

As Colin Eccleshare, President of the Publishers Association, said: "This is in the best traditions of commercial sponsorship of the Arts where the sponsor does not seek to influence the judgement of the professionals but simply aims to help towards the achievement of high standards." The present members of the Prize Committee are:

- Colin Eccleshare, Publishers Association
- Tom Maschler, Publishers Association
- Marilyn Edwards, Publishers Association/National Book League
- Martyn Goff, National Book League
- Michael Weekes, Booker-McConnell
- Lord Hardinge of Penshurst, Booker-McConnell

For further information and photographs of J.G. Farrell as well as photographs of the trophy please contact:

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