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press release

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1971 Booker Prize for Fiction

Booker McConnell Limited and the Publishers Association, joint sponsors of Britain's largest fiction prize, worth £5000 to its winner, announce the panel of judges to choose the winner of the 1971 award. Four of the five judges, Saul Bellow, John Fowles, John Gross and Malcolm Muggeridge will be newcomers to the panel, while the fifth judge, Lady Antonia Fraser, will continue from the 1970 panel.

Biographical notes on all the judges are attached.

The format of the 1971 Booker Prize is to be different from previous years 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 will be invited to submit full-length novels, written in English by citizens of the Commonwealth, Eire and South Africa, with scheduled publication dates between 1 September and 15 November 1971 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 United Kingdom at any time during 1971. While it is hoped that the winning book will be an Autumn novel, so that, coming close to publication the award would have greater impact, the prime consideration of the judges will, of course, remain merit.

A short list 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 and the Publishers Association for the best novel written by a citizen of the Commonwealth and published for the first time in Britain. The first winner of the Prize in 1969 was "Something to Answer For" by P.H. Newby (Faber). The 1970 winner was "The Elected Member" by Bernice Rubens (Eyre & Spottiswoode).

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