

WINNERS ANNOUNCED: AESTHETICA CREATIVE WRITING AWARD



**The Aesthetica Creative Writing Award winners are announced.
Read excerpts from this year's winners across poetry and short fiction.**

The Aesthetica Creative Writing Award – now in its 15th year – is a celebration of innovation across poetry and short fiction, commending writers for their use of form, concept and technique. The winners for the 2021 award have been announced, each winning £1,000 plus literary consultations with **Redhammer Management**, as well as subscriptions and further prizes from **Bloodaxe**, **Vintage**, **Granta** and **The Poetry Society**.

In poetry, **Tamsin Hopkins' *if you're being followed*** was commended for its use of the long line – with all its delicate rhythmical subtleties – leading the reader through a liminal space in which the ephemera of the mundane become signs of things beyond themselves:

choose who you want behind you, the person to tell you: you were followed, your footsteps
dogged, you're dead, you've been dead for some time and you're just fine the dead way you
are. Choose the person who tells you how it happened, who was there and what they said, and
says let it go now. Someone you can tell about the mistakes you'll leave, your mess of papers,
the bills, the files, the easy photos and the difficult photos, the journals with all the bad things
you wrote in the days when you were seriously down.

Hazel Allan's winning short story, *Daft Cow (A True Story)*, begins with a frightened woman hiding behind net curtains and is worth several re-readings, filled as it is with overlooked incident and jarring detail: the pretty, primrose shade of bruises; police lights flashing "to the same rhythm as the Vegas decorations outside number three..." The piece was celebrated for delivering a heart-punching double twist as its title character eats a Christmas dinner; sits in a chair; changes a life. "This was a time for mighty miracles", it reads:

I hid behind my net curtains and watched him stalk up their garden path. With his hair scraped
back from his face he looked all thin and beaky, like a diseased crow. He was puffing on a cigarette
like it was some kind of race.

Tucked under his arm was a gift with no name on; another empty apology hastily wrapped
in shiny paper. And a toy dump truck with a bow stuck to its windscreen. The boy, too young to know
the difference between Santa and Satan, would light up like a Christmas tree when he saw it.

Beyond the winners, this year's shortlisted entries connect readers to a profound sense of self as well as their shared humanity. Emergency threads its way through many of the works – considering the pandemic as well as cultural crises born of inequality and injustice, telling familiar stories in a new light. The 60 shortlisted writers

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are published in the **Aesthetica Creative Writing Annual 2021**. Entries open for the 2021/2022 edition from 1 December via **Submittable**.

Notes for Editors:

For press information please contact **Kate Simpson, Assistant Editor,**
kate@aestheticamagazine.com

- **About the Creative Writing Award:** The Aesthetica Creative Writing Award is an international literary prize that is a hotbed for new talent in **Poetry** and **Short Fiction**, celebrating ingenuity in form, with works on any theme and in any genre. Now in its 15th year, the Prize supports both emerging and established writers, and has previously published the likes of **Forward Prize-nominee Ella Frears**, *The London Magazine* Poetry Prize-winner **Sharon Black**, Foyle Young Poet of the Year-winner **Ella Duffy** and Cambridge University's Jacqueline Bardsley Poet-in-Residence, **Mariah Whelan**.
- **Previous Winners:** The winners of the 2019/2020 Aesthetica Creative Writing Award were **Sean Gregory** (also longlisted for the Bridport First Novel Prize 2019) and **Patricia Robertson** (also shortlisted for the Pushcart Prize). For a full list of winners and shortlistees, [click here](#).
- **The Creative Writing Annual:** The 2021 Creative Writing Annual includes 60 shortlisted writers as well the two winners across poetry and short fiction. This year's winning and shortlisted entries connect readers to a profound sense of self as well as their shared humanity. For more information about the annual, [click here](#).
- **Entries for the 2021/2022 edition:** Entries open for the 2021/2022 edition from 1 December until 31 August 2021. Prizes include **two £2,500 awards plus publication, literary consultations, subscriptions and more**. Aesthetica accepts poetry and short fiction. For more information about submissions, visit our [Submittable page](#).
- **About Aesthetica:** Aesthetica Magazine is a worldwide destination for art and culture. In-depth features foreground today's most innovative practitioners across art, design, photography, architecture, music and film. It has a readership of over 400,000 and national and international distribution. Across the brand, we also produce a number of awards, exhibitions and events that are focused on talent development in art, photography, literature and film. The awards celebrate excellence from both new and established practitioners. These comprise the [Aesthetica Short Film Festival](#), the [Art Prize](#), the [Future Now Symposium](#) and the [Creative Writing Award](#).
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