



PRESS RELEASE

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ENTENTE LITTÉRAIRE PRIZE / PRIX DE L'ENTENTE LITTÉRAIRE

We are delighted to announce that **submissions to the Entente Littéraire Prize (Prix de l'Entente Littéraire), a new UK-France literary prize for writers of young adult literature, are now open.** The submissions window will be formally opened at Receptions at the French Embassy in London and the British Embassy in Paris tonight (23rd January) as part of wider **celebrations to mark the start of the 120th anniversary of the Entente Cordiale** year.

Announced in September 2023 by **Her Majesty The Queen** and **Madame Brigitte Macron** during the **King and Queen's State Visit to France**, the Entente Littéraire Prize (Prix de l'Entente Littéraire) is inspired by the Entente Cordiale, the 1904 agreement between the UK and French governments that improved bilateral relations. The idea to establish a UK-France literary prize was agreed by **Prime Minister Sunak** and **President Macron** at the **UK-France bilateral Summit** in Paris on 10 March 2023.

'In September 2023, together with Her Majesty Queen Camilla, I had the honour to announce the creation of the new Entente Littéraire Prize, which reflects the strong and unique bonds that exist between France and the United Kingdom,' says Brigitte Macron. *'I am delighted that the Prize is becoming a reality with its opening for authors' submissions. I hope this new prize will arouse the curiosity of young French and British readers for authors unknown to them previously and will make them want to discover literature beyond borders.'*

It will be judged by a **British-French jury led by celebrated author Joanne Harris**, who is bilingual and will act as President of Judges. *'As a dual national of France and of the UK, I'm thrilled and honoured to play a role in the launch of this exciting new prize, which represents so much that is dear to me; the country that taught me to love reading, and the country that taught me how to be a writer,'* she says.

'Both our countries have a rich and varied literary heritage as well as a close shared history, and it's wonderful to see them in partnership for this welcome celebration of young adult fiction. It's also wonderful to be part of a prize that celebrates translators as well as creators, and I'm looking forward, both to reading the entries, and to working with my colleagues from both sides of the Channel.'

Harris's fellow judges are acclaimed YA writers **Marie-Aude Murail** and **Timothée de Fombelle** from France and **Patrice Lawrence** and **Joseph Coelho** from the UK.

'I am delighted to be a judge for the inaugural Entente Littéraire Prize,' says Coelho. *'Books hold a special place in bringing people together and I cannot wait to read the YA submissions'*

from France and to discover wonderful new voices and new stories. This prize will allow exciting voices both in the UK and France to discover new audiences and in doing so bring us all a little bit closer.'

Timothée de Fombelle adds: *'Stories invent us, they make us. So how could we not celebrate literature for young people? These books are preparing the world of tomorrow.'*

Patrice Lawrence is also thrilled to be part of a new prize valuing YA writing as well as the work of translators: *'I often grouch that writing for children and young people is undervalued in literary circles. The same argument can be made for translated work which is especially rare in children's publishing. It's such an honour to be an inaugural judge in a prize that celebrates such a wide scope of writing for young people and exposes readers on both sides of the Channel to exciting new work.'*

Two prizes of 8000€ will be awarded: one each for YA writing submitted in French and English translation for the eligible period. Each 8000€ prize will be split equally between the creators of the book (**the writer and translator** and – where applicable – illustrator).

The Entente Littéraire Prize is organised by the Royal Society of Literature and the Institut français du Royaume-Uni in London, in collaboration with the French Ministry of Culture, the Department for Culture, Media and Sport, the British Embassy in Paris and the French Embassy in London. The prize looks to encourage and celebrate the joy of reading and shared literary experiences between France and the UK.

'The name of the prize is a welcome reminder of the 1904 Entente Cordiale, which marked the end of a period of antagonism between our two nations, and heralded a closer, more understanding relationship,' adds Harris. *'I hope that this prize will do the same from a literary perspective: for it is in our stories that we learn to understand one another, and in our shared dreams that we start to glimpse the chance of a better future.'*

Editors' notes

The **deadline for entries** to the Entente Littéraire Prize (Prix de l'Entente Littéraire) is **Monday 8 April 2024**. The judging panel consists of two UK writers and two French writers, and is chaired by one bilingual President.

Judges will be responsible for compiling a shortlist of outstanding books featuring up to three works translated from French into English, and up to three works translated from English into French. The shortlist will be announced in winter 2024 and the winners will be announced shortly thereafter at a special event in Paris.

The Award is administered in all respects in English by the Royal Society of Literature, (supported by the British Embassy in Paris and the Department of Culture, Media and Sport) and in all respects in French by Institut français in the UK (supported by the French Embassy in the UK and the Ministry of Culture in France).

About the judges

Joanne Harris OBE, FRSL was born in Barnsley in 1964, of a French mother and an English father. She studied Modern and Mediaeval Languages at Cambridge and was a teacher for fifteen years, during which time she published three novels, including *Chocolat* (1999), which was made into an Oscar-nominated film starring Juliette Binoche.

Since then, she has written 20 more novels, plus novellas, short stories, game scripts, screenplays, a stage musical (with Howard Goodall) and three cookbooks. Her books are now published in over 50 countries and have won a number of British and international awards. She is an honorary Fellow of St Catharine's College, Cambridge, has honorary doctorates in literature from the universities of Sheffield and Huddersfield, and has been a judge for the Whitbread (Costa) Prize, the Women's Prize, the Desmond Elliott Prize, the Betty Trask Award, the Primadonna Prize and the Royal Society Winton Prize for Science, as well as for the Fragrance Foundation awards for perfume and perfume journalism (for which she also received an award in 2017). She was elected a Fellow of the Royal Society of Literature in 2022. She is a passionate advocate for authors' rights, and was the Chair of the Society of Authors (SoA) for four years. She is currently a member of the Board of the Authors' Licensing and Collecting Society (ALCS).

Joseph Coelho FRSL is a multi-award-winning children's author and playwright. His YA 'Story told in poems' *The Girl Who Became A Tree* was shortlisted for The 2021 Carnegie Medal and received a special mention from the Bologna Ragazzi Award 2021. He has written plays for Little Angel Theatre, Tutti Frutti Productions, Polka Theatre and The Unicorn Theatre amongst others. He is two-time winner of the Indie Book Awards (2019 & 2022) with Picture Books 'If All The World Were...' and 'My Beautiful Voice' respectively '(illu. Allison Colpoys). His Poetry Collection *Werewolf Club Rules* (Illu. John O'leary) won the 2015 CLIPPA Poetry Award. His plays for adults have received a special commendation from the Verity Bargate Award and been longlisted for the Bruntwood Playwriting Competition. He is Waterstones Children's Laureate 2022 – 2024.

Marie-Aude Murail has published over 100 books, translated into 22 languages, some of which have been adapted into plays or films, and others into comic books. Made an *officier* in the *Légion d'honneur* for "contributing to France's cultural influence", she has been read by millions, of all ages, for the past 30 years. Her books for young people include *Vive la République!* and *Golem* (published by Pocket Jeunesse), the *L'Espionne* series (published by Bayard) for younger readers, *Oh, boy!*, *Simple*, *Miss Charity*, *Malo de Lange*, as well as the *Nils Hazard* and *Sauveur & Fils* series (published by L'école des Loisirs). She also published a family biography in September 2018, *En nous beaucoup d'hommes respirent* (published by L'Iconoclaste). On 21 March 2022, she was awarded the Hans-Christian Andersen Award by the International Board on Books for Young People (IBBY).

Patrice Lawrence FRSL is an award-winning English writer whose work spans genres from contemporary thrillers to historical fantasy. Her books for young adults have won many prizes including the Bookseller YA Prize, the Waterstones Prize for Older Children's Fiction, the Crimefest YA Prize twice, the Woman and Home Teen Drama Award and the inaugural Jhalak Prize for Children and Young People. Her novella, *Needle*, was shortlisted for the

Carnegie Award and won the Little Rebel Awards. Before becoming a full-time writer, she worked for more than 20 years in organisations promoting social justice.

Born in 1973, **Timothée de Fombelle** started his career as a playwright, before devoting himself to children's literature. He has written a variety of sagas, often in several volumes, all of which have won awards and been translated into many languages (*Toby Alone*, *Vango*, *The Book of Pearl*, *Alma*, etc.), as well as shorter or illustrated texts (*Céleste ma planète*, *Capitaine Rosalie*, *Esther Andersen*, etc.). He has also published a story about childhood for adults: *Neverland*.

For more information:

www.institut-francais.org.uk/entente-litteraire-prize

www.rsliterature.org

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