

EUROPEAN UNION PRIZE FOR LITERATURE

Verdict of the European jury

The EUPL 2022 European jury members met each of the 14 nominating organisations, who had a chance to present their nominees. After having previously read all of the sample translations, this gave the European jury additional insight into the books, and added knowledge about the authors and their circumstances. This year's entries were interesting throughout and their literary quality outstanding. If future nominating organisations keep in view that this is a European Prize and that therefore their entries should have a European perspective of some sort, they should be fine.

We chose to honour the following nominees, because their books were superbly written, had original voices, powerful stories, were relevant to our time, kept us on our toes, and got us to want to know more about the story and to recommend them to fellow translators and publishers in order to make these books travel to each of their country, both in Europe and worldwide.

- **Gaea Schoeters** from Belgium for her novel *'Trofee'*
- **Slađana Nina Perković** from Bosnia and Herzegovina for her novel *'In the Ditch'*
- **Iva Pezuashvili** from Georgia for his novel *'A garbage chute'*
- **Tadhg Mac Dhonnagáin** from Ireland for his novel *'Madame Lazare'*
- **Jacobo Bergareche** from Spain for his novel *'Los dias perfectos'*
- **Eugenia Kuznetsova** from Ukraine for her novel *'Ask Miyechka'*

On top of the qualities listed before, which were present in each of the books, we also wanted to highlight:

- **Slađana Nina Perković** has a very contemporary voice, and hers was one of the very few books which actually made us all laugh even though its topic was civil war!
- **Eugenia Kuznetsova's** book, besides being very well written, felt poignantly nostalgic and fairy-tale-like, considering the current situation in Ukraine. How many years will it take to be able to write again about a grandmother receiving her three granddaughters in her lovely country house for the summer, a house where they spent so many of their holidays as children and which may by now be destroyed?
- **Gaea Schoeters'** writing is highly professional and refined. Her book is a compelling page-turner despite its hard-to-digest subject – a billionaire hunter of big African beasts who is cleverly persuaded by the owner of the lodge to adding a human being to his trophies.
- **Jacobo Bergareche** wrote a funny and refreshing book and felt somehow eminently different from other entries. His novel showed preoccupations which were very much part of our old Western world until that world recently came upside down, scenes of seduction during seminars in America with funny parallels with Faulkner whose papers are housed in the city where the seminar takes place.
- **Tadhg Mac Dhonnagáin** wrote a sprawling European novel about language, family ties, identity, and social questions. Add to that the themes of Jewish identity, Second World War, and a mystery rooted in language, and you will see the fullness and ripeness of this novel.
- **Iva Pezuashvili's** book resonates with the images that we are being confronted with on a daily basis in these times: the ones of war and its dire consequences. At the same time, it is modern, deeply engaged and emphatic, and, last but not least, full of tongue-in-cheek humour and entertainment. Such literature creates empathy, it can also be used as a tool to better understand our world. Iva is this powerful voice that needs to be heard far beyond the borders of his native Georgia.

Koukla McLehose for the jury