

For Immediate Release: Fri 10 Nov 2023



WOMEN'S PRIZE TRUST ANNOUNCES SHORTLIST OF SCULPTORS COMMISSIONED TO CREATE 'THE CHARLOTTE'

London, Friday 10 November 2023: The Women's Prize Trust – the UK charity which champions equity for women in the world of books and masterminds the annual Women's Prize for Fiction and Women's Prize for Non-Fiction – today announces the three artists shortlisted to create 'The Charlotte'. The sculpture will be cast in bronze and presented to each year's winner of the Women's Prize for Non-Fiction.

The competition is organised by the **Charlotte Aitken Trust** in association with the **Royal Society of Sculptors**, the British charity established in 1905 which promotes excellence in the art and practice of sculpture.

The judging panel is chaired by **Laura Ford**, President of the Royal Society of Sculptors. Her fellow judges were **Rachel Cugnoni**, Director of the Charlotte Aitken Trust; **Clare Alexander**, Literary Agent and Charlotte Aitken Trust trustee; **Sebastian Faulks**, novelist and Chair of the Charlotte Aitken Trust; and **Kate Mosse**, writer and Founder Director of the Women's Prize for Fiction and the Women's Prize from Non-fiction. The panel chose the shortlist of three from a longlist of submissions.

The sculptors shortlisted – **Jane Ackroyd**, **Ann Christopher** and **Lara Ritosa-Roberts** – will now each create a maquette. The winning sculptor, who will receive a prize of £10,000, will be announced at a ceremony at the Royal Society of Sculptors in January 2024. The

inaugural 'Charlotte' will be presented at an award ceremony in central London on Thursday 13th June 2024.

Jane Ackroyd FRSS has spent her life making sculpture, both figurative and abstract. She studied at St Martin's School of Art and later at the Royal College of Art where she received the Special Melchett Award for work in Steel and the Fulham Pottery Award. Jane has produced many public and private commissions and her work appears in collections in the US, France, Switzerland, Italy and the UK. A large commission in collaboration with Levitt Bernstein Architects on the redevelopment of the Old Royal Free Hospital in Islington in 1993 won the Europa Nostra Prize. In 1995, she won an award from The Jackson Pollock-Lee Krasner Foundation for work to date.

Ann Christopher RA FRSS studied at Harrow School of Art and West of England College of Art. She became an elected member of the Royal Academy of Arts in 1980, a Royal Academician in 1989 and a Fellow of the Royal Society of British Sculptors in 1992. She accepts both public and private commissions from across the UK, USA and France and has exhibited in London, New York and France. *Edge and Line* was her first solo exhibition in New York in 2019.

Lara Ritosa-Roberts MRSS is a London-based artist and lecturer, working within the fields of sculpture, installation and performance. She has participated in a variety of creative projects across the UK and Europe, including Lates at Tate Modern and Tate Britain; Rijeka2020 - the European Capital of Culture; City of Women Festival, Ljubljana; National Theatre's Watch This Space; and the Whitstable Biennale.

Laura Ford, President of the Royal Society of Sculptors, said:

'We were delighted when, out of the blue, the Women's Prize Trust approached the Royal Society of Sculptors to help commission 'The Charlotte', a new prize for a female non-fiction writer. It was a wonderful fit, as female sculptors have played a leading role in our history over the past 100 years. Shortlisting was a challenge because of the high quality of submissions.'

Rachel Cugnoni, Grants Director of the Charlotte Aitken Trust, said:

'It has been an enormous pleasure to work with the Royal Society of Sculpture to find the artwork for 'The Charlotte'. We had a 'Bessie' on the table in front of us throughout the judging process to remind us what 'The Charlotte' will sit alongside. The brief to create a piece of art which hit the intersection between literature and the visual arts

inspired some wonderful work from the entrants and we would like to thank all the sculptors who took part for their creative engagement.'

Kate Mosse, writer and Founder Director of the Women's Prize for Fiction and Women's Prize for Non-fiction, added:

'When we were launching the Women's Prize for Fiction back in 1996, we were lucky to be gifted a cast of 'The Bessie' by the sculptor and artist Grizel Niven. Now, nearly 30 years later, as we launch our sister prize, there will be a companion piece created by a contemporary artist and I cannot wait to see both works of art side by side! It is a wonderful moment of the past and the present working together to celebrate and honour women's creativity in both literature and art.'

The Women's Prize for Non-Fiction is sponsored by Findmypast, the UK's leading family tree company. It is also supported by the Charlotte Aitken Trust – which is funding the £30,000 prize money and a statuette named the 'Charlotte' over a three-year period – and an anonymous donor who has gifted a significant one-off contribution to help establish the Prize.

For further information, please contact Christian Lewis [christian@womensprize.com/](mailto:christian@womensprize.com)
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If you are interested in collaborating with the Women's Prize Trust – or to discuss sponsorship opportunities – please contact Executive Director Claire Shanahan claire@womensprize.com

About the Women's Prize for Non-Fiction

The **Women's Prize for Non-Fiction** is awarded for the best work of narrative non-fiction written in English and published in the United Kingdom between 1 April 2023 and 31 March 2024. The winner receives a cheque for £30,000 and a limited-edition artwork known as 'The Charlotte', both gifted by the Charlotte Aitken Trust. The Prize celebrates excellence in writing and research, strong and original narrative voices, and accessibility. The 2024 Women's Prize for Fiction is sponsored by Findmypast.

About the Women's Prize Trust

The Women's Prize Trust is the registered charity that enriches society by creating equitable opportunities for women in the world of books and beyond. We work with women writers at all stages of development, and all readers, to unlock potential, boost confidence, and increase skills and knowledge. The charity is behind the Women's Prize for Fiction, the largest celebration of women's creativity in the world, and the Women's Prize for Non-Fiction, the inaugural prize launched to champion women's expertise and authority. As a result, we are developing a global community of women writers and readers, reducing social isolation and enhancing mental health and wellbeing.

Claire Shanahan is Executive Director of the Women's Prize Trust; Anna Rafferty is Chair of the Board; Kate Mosse is Founder Director for the Women's Prize for Fiction and Women's Prize for Non-Fiction.

In addition to commercial sponsorship, individual donors, trusts and foundations support the work of the Trust. More information about donating to the Trust can be found [here](#).

About Findmypast

The UK's leading family tree company, Findmypast is used by millions around the world to research family stories. Customers can explore over 14 billion historical records from prestigious libraries and archives, including exclusive national censuses, newspapers, military records, passenger lists, and much more. An innovative family tree, smart search tools, and personalised hints and tips make it easy to get started. Sign up for a free trial today and find out where your past will take you. More information can be found [here](#).

About the Charlotte Aitken Trust

[The Charlotte Aitken Trust](#) is a charitable foundation set up by the celebrated literary agent Gillon Aitken in his late daughter's name. The purpose of the Trust, as defined by Gillon, is to support, encourage, sustain and promote literary creativity in all its forms. The Trust was established in 2020 and since then has given grants and created associations with The Brontë Parsonage, the Forward Poetry Prize, the RNIB, the Young Vic and The Sunday Times Young Writer of the Year Award among

others. The board of trustees is Sebastian Faulks (Chair), Clare Alexander, Rachel Cugnoni, Nick Feeny, Lauren Howard and Simon Murray.

About The Royal Society of Sculptors

The Royal Society of Sculptors is an artist-led, membership organisation created more than 100 years ago to champion contemporary sculpture and the artists who create it. They provide a supportive membership community to sculptors throughout their careers, offering access to expert advice, training, bursaries, residencies and awards. The Society leads the conversation about sculpture today through exhibitions and events for all. Today it welcomes everyone interested in exploring this art form and its many possibilities. The Royal Society of Sculptors is based in London's South Kensington, in a beautiful listed building, Dora House, that hosts an array of exhibitions, artists' talks and creative workshops.

