The £10,000 RSL Encore Award for best second novel of the year is awarded to

**Ian McGuire** for *The North Water* (Scribner) and

The Nation’s Favourite Second Novel is *Pride and Prejudice*

Comments on the RSL Encore Award 2017:

*The North Water* works by disorientation, from its violent opening scenes to its voyage through high seas and blocks of ice; it creates a series of unstable, dangerous environments, and peoples them with the good, the bad and all points in between.’ **Alex Clark (Chair of judges)**

‘I am delighted and grateful to win to the RSL Encore Award for 2017. Second novels can be a struggle to write, and *The North Water* was many years in the making, so it’s a great pleasure to get this recognition from the judges.’ **Ian McGuire**

Comment on the Nation’s Favourite Second Novel:

‘This is the most fascinating poll, and we’ll be talking about it for a long time. So many surprises. The only unsurprising result is the winner, and personally I’m thrilled that Jane Austen has come out tops.’ **Deborah Moggach** (author of *The Best Exotic Marigold Hotel* and screenwriter of the 2005 *Pride and Prejudice* film)
Notes for Editors
RSL Encore Award

The £10,000 Encore Award for the best second novel of the year was first awarded in 1990 and is sponsored by Lucy Astor. The award celebrates the achievement of outstanding second novels. This is the first year that the RSL has administered the award.

‘Comparisons with great seafaring novels of the past are inevitable and valid, and yet it’s the riveting, closing scenes, set on dry land and played out with cinematic immediacy, that make this book what it is. I have never read anything quite like it.’
Julia Copus (Judge)

‘As compulsive as it is unsettling, this is an epic for our times, in which the ghosts of empire dog the present and humanity faces the ravages of nature.’
Ted Hogkinson (Judge)

Ian McGuire grew up near Hull and studied at the University of Manchester, where he later became a founder and co-director of the university’s Centre for New Writing. The North Water was a New York Times bestseller and was nominated for the Man Booker Prize and the LA Times Book Prize 2016.

Other books on the 2017 shortlist

Jenni Fagan
The Sunlight Pilgrims (William Heinemann)

Paul Kingsnorth
Beast (Faber & Faber)

Eimear McBride
The Lesser Bohemians (Faber & Faber)

Sarah Perry
The Essex Serpent (Serpent’s Tail)

Sara Taylor
The Lauras (William Heinemann)

Previous Encore Award winners include:

2015 Sunjeev Sahota
The Year of the Runaways

2014 Neel Mukherjee
The Lives of Others

2013 Evie Wyld
All the Birds, Singing

2012 Ned Beauman
The Teleportation Accident

2011 Joe Dunthorne
Wild Abandon

2010 Adam Foulds
The Quickening Maze

2009 Julia Leigh
Disquiet

2007 M.J. Hyland
Carry Me Down

2005 Nadeem Aslam
Maps for Lost Lovers

2004 Michelle de Kretser
The Hamilton Case

2003 Jeremy Gavron
The Book of Israel

2002 Ali Smith
Hotel World

2001 Anne Enright
What Are You Like?

2000 Claire Messud
The Last Life
The Nation’s Favourite Second Novel

Second novels are a notorious challenge for writers. Whether their first novel was a triumph or a flop, the pressure is always on the follow-up. But what do readers make of second novels? Do we even know which of our favourite novels are second novels? We decided to hold a public vote to raise literary awareness and discussion and to encourage people to read more novels. We had an open call for public suggestions in January and the final voting list of over 100 second published novels was agreed by the RSL’s governing Council.

The top ten
1  Jane Austen - Pride and Prejudice
2  Tan Twan Eng - The Garden of Evening Mists
3  Anne Brontë - The Tenant of Wildfell Hall
4  Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie - Half of a Yellow Sun
5  Barbara Pym - Excellent Women
6  Gabriel Garcia Márquez - One Hundred Years of Solitude
7  Mikhail Bulgakov - The Master and Margarita
8  Salman Rushdie - Midnight’s Children
9  James Joyce - Ulysses
10 = Charles Dickens - Oliver Twist
    = J.R.R. Tolkien - Lord of the Rings: The Fellowship of the Ring

‘Great fanfare usually accompanies the publication of a writer’s first novel, so it’s wonderful that the Royal Society of Literature is celebrating the nation’s favourite second novels. I was delighted to find my own novel, The Garden of Evening Mists, on the list, and I’m extremely honoured that it’s been voted the second of the nation’s most favourite second novels, behind Pride & Prejudice. Thank you to everybody who voted for my book, and also to those who voted for the other books.’
Tan Twan Eng, runner-up to Jane Austen

‘What a cornucopia of reading these top ten books provide! Who would have thought the Nation’s Favourite Second Novels would result in such a diverse and enticing short list. I have a fantasy of getting under the blankets and not re-emerging until I’ve read or re-read them all. Here’s to second novels.’
Lisa Appignanesi, Chair of the RSL

For further information about the RSL Encore Award or the Nation’s Favourite Second Novel, please contact annette@rsliteration.org | 020 7845 4680 | @RSLiterature | rsliteration.org