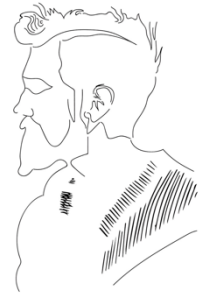


The Barbellion Prize

2020



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

THE BARBELLION PRIZE: *Promoting ill & disabled voices in writing*

The Barbellion Prize 2020 is proud to announce its main judging and advisory panels, in its inaugural year.

The Barbellion Prize is dedicated to the furtherance of ill and disabled voices in writing. The prize is awarded annually to an author whose work has best spoken of the experience of chronic illness and/or disability.

Advisor to the Prize, **Professor Tom Shakespeare FBA**, Professor of Disability Research at London School of Hygiene and Tropical Medicine, comments: "Writers with illnesses and impairments, from Robert Louis Stevenson to Flannery O'Connor to 'WNP Barbellion' himself have contributed mightily to literature. I applaud the creation of this new prize, hoping it will shine a spotlight on their contemporary successors."

Author and Assistant Professor of Literature, **Dr Shahd Alshammari**, and member of the judging panel says: "The Barbellion Prize seeks to amplify voices that are seldom heard, and if they are, they're not heard enough. It is a privilege reading all this wonderful work and I hope that more publishers discover disabled writers' writing."

For more information, please visit our website – www.thebarbellionprize.com
Submissions for the prize close October 31st. A longlist will be announced in mid-December, while a shortlist will be announced after the New Year. The winner will be announced on February 12th 2021.

Judging Panel

Our main panel of judges are those primarily concerned with formulating a longlist, a shortlist, and picking a winner – with a vote in that process. They are...

Dr Shahd Alshammari is Assistant Professor of Literature. She earned her PhD at the University of Kent (UK). She currently teaches in Kuwait. Her research interests include disability and gender studies and women's illness narratives.

She is the author of *Notes on the Flesh* (2017, Faraxa Press) and has appeared at various literary festivals. Alshammari was diagnosed with Multiple Sclerosis many years ago and continues to raise awareness about MS and invisible illnesses in the Middle East. It's important for her that all disability is acknowledged and made visible.



Jake Goldsmith is the founder and director of The Barbellion Prize, which is in its inaugural year. He lives with Cystic Fibrosis, Type 1 Diabetes, autism, depression, and kyphoscoliosis. He is an author primarily interested in intellectual history, particularly the work of Raymond Aron, Albert Camus, and Manès Sperber.

He lives in Suffolk, England, looked after by his family and his cat, Lemons.



Cat Mitchell is a Lecturer and is the Programme Leader of the Writing and Publishing degree at the University of Derby. Before working in academia, she worked in publishing, including four years in various marketing and publicity roles at Penguin Random House UK. She has multiple chronic conditions including Fibromyalgia, and has a particular research interest in working conditions for disabled employees and authors in the publishing industry.



Advisory Panel

Our advisory panel exists to help our judges formulate their opinions on submissions with more diverse ideas and input. And also to help with the day-to-day running of the prize.

Dr Stevie Marsden is a Lecturer in Publishing at the University of Derby. They are an expert in literary prize culture and have experience in managing and consulting on a number of major prizes. Stevie's academic research interests include contemporary book culture(s) and publishing, and diversity and inclusion in the creative industries.



Blaine McCartney is a Postgraduate Taught student of Violence, Terrorism and Security at Queens University Belfast. His research interests include the experiences of disabled people before, during, and after conflict. He currently works for the NHS.



Professor Tom Shakespeare FBA is Professor of Disability Research at London School of Hygiene and Tropical Medicine, founding chair of the Northern Disability Arts Forum and former member of Arts Council of England.

Trustees Our trustees, responsible for the administration of the prize, include **Elizabeth Ferretti, Jake Goldsmith, Blaine McCartney.**

ENDS

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