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## **ANNOUNCING THE URSULA K. LE GUIN PRIZE FOR FICTION**

*“Hard times are coming, when we’ll be wanting the voices of writers who can see alternatives to how we live now, can see through our fear-stricken society and its obsessive technologies to other ways of being, and even imagine real grounds for hope. We’ll need writers who can remember freedom—poets, visionaries—realists of a larger reality.”*

*—Ursula K. Le Guin*

**PORTLAND, OREGON**—The Ursula K. Le Guin Literary Trust is thrilled to announce the Ursula K. Le Guin Prize for Fiction, which will be given for the first time in 2022.

The Ursula K. Le Guin Prize for Fiction is an annual \$25,000 cash prize given to a writer for a single book-length work of imaginative fiction. This award is intended to recognize those writers Ursula spoke of in her 2014 National Book Awards speech—realists of a larger reality, who can imagine real grounds for hope and see alternatives to how we live now. The first prize will be awarded on October 21, 2022. October 21st was Ursula K. Le Guin’s birthday.

Le Guin was the much-celebrated author of novels, short stories, poetry, children’s books, and essays. The breadth and imagination of her work earned her six Nebula Awards, seven Hugo Awards, and SFWA’s Grand Master, along with the PEN/Malamud and many other awards. In 2014 she was awarded the National Book Foundation Medal for Distinguished Contribution to American Letters. As the London *Times* put it, “She is legend.”

Theo Downes-Le Guin, Le Guin’s son and literary executor, said, “Many will appreciate an irony in that Ursula herself was suspicious of literary awards and prizes. At the same time, she recognized their genuine value in honoring a writer and increasing visibility of good, undervalued writing. She also knew that a bit of money, at the right moment and in the right spirit, can be a turning point in a writer’s ability to continue writing. I hope the Prize will provide meaningful help and recognition to writers who might otherwise not receive it.”

The nomination process for the prize is open to all; readers, authors, booksellers, publishers, librarians, and anyone else can nominate work they believe fits the prize criteria. The Trust will create a shortlist of finalists from the nominated works, and a panel of five jurors will read the shortlisted works.

The nomination period for the 2022 Prize will begin February 1, 2022, and full details are available at [ursulakleuin.com/prize](http://ursulakleuin.com/prize), where readers can also sign up to be notified when nominations open.

The inaugural year's jurors are adrienne maree brown (*Grievors*); Becky Chambers (*A Psalm for the Wild-Built*); Molly Gloss (*Unforeseen*); David Mitchell (*Utopia Avenue*); and Luis Alberto Urrea (*The House of Broken Angels*). (Full bios are below.)

David Mitchell said, "Ursula Le Guin's visionary fiction entered my head when I was young and has never left. Her novels and stories defined, in part, my understanding of what fiction can do, should do, and why. I am deeply honoured to be a juror in the inaugural year of a literary prize created in Ursula's memory, and I look forward to encountering new works of imaginative fiction which, like Ursula's, glow in the dark."

"Ursula Le Guin's books are what made my younger self want to become a science fiction writer, so I consider it a huge honor to be part of the jury for this prize," said Becky Chambers. "Fictional futures that give us something to point our compasses toward are a vital thing, and I'm so excited for the opportunity to help celebrate the voices continuing that work."

More about the 2022 jurors:

**adrienne maree brown** is the author of *Grievors* (the first in her novella series with the Black Dawn imprint),  *Holding Change: The Way of Emergent Strategy Facilitation and Meditation*, *We Will Not Cancel Us and Other Dreams of Transformative Justice*, *Pleasure Activism: The Politics of Feeling Good*, *Emergent Strategy: Shaping Change, Changing Worlds* and the co-editor of *Octavia's Brood: Science Fiction from Social Justice Movements*. She is the co-host of the *How to Survive the End of the World* and *Octavia's Parables* podcasts. adrienne is rooted in Durham.

**Becky Chambers** is a science fiction author, and is best known for her Hugo Award-winning Wayfarers series. Her books have also been nominated for the Arthur C. Clarke Award, the Locus Award, and the Women's Prize for Fiction, among others. Her latest works are *The Galaxy, and The Ground Within* (the fourth and final Wayfarers novel), and *A Psalm for the Wild-Built* (the first of her Monk and Robot novellas). She lives with her wife in Northern California.

**Molly Gloss** is the author of five novels as well as the story collection *Unforeseen*. Her awards include an Oregon Book Award, Pacific Northwest Booksellers Awards, the PEN West Fiction Prize, the James Tiptree Jr. Award; a Theodore Sturgeon Award for short fiction; and a Whiting Writers Award. She writes both realist and science fiction, and her work in both genres often concerns the landscape, history and mythology of the American West.

**David Mitchell** is a British-Irish writer born in 1969. He has been nominated for the Booker Prize five times and his work has appeared in over 30 languages. With KA Yoshida, he translated into English the bestselling autism memoir, *The Reason I Jump* by Naoki Higashida. His 2014 novel *The Bone Clocks* won the World Fantasy Award. His 2016 novel, *From Me Flows What You Call Time*, was entrusted to the Future Library Project and will not be published until 2114. His screenwriting credits include the upcoming *Matrix 4* film. He lives in West Cork, Ireland.

**Luis Alberto Urrea**, a Guggenheim Fellow and Pulitzer Prize finalist, is the author of 18 books, winning numerous awards for his poetry, fiction and essays. Born in Tijuana to a Mexican father and American mother, Urrea is most recognized as a border writer, though he says, “I am more interested in bridges, not borders.” *The Devil’s Highway*, Urrea’s 2004 non-fiction account of a group of Mexican immigrants lost in the Arizona desert, won the Lannan Literary Award and was a finalist for the Pulitzer Prize and the Pacific Rim Kiriyama Prize. His latest novel, *The House of Broken Angels*, was a 2018 finalist for the National Book Critics Circle Award and a *New York Times* Notable Book of the Year. He won an American Academy of Arts and Letters Fiction award for his collection of short stories, *The Water Museum*, which was a finalist for the PEN/Faulkner Award. Urrea’s novel *Into the Beautiful North* is a Big Read selection of the National Endowment of the Arts. He is a distinguished professor of creative writing at the University of Illinois-Chicago.

Juror photos available upon request.