



East Anglian Book Awards

In partnership with **Eastern Daily Press** **JARROLD** **N** National Centre
for Writing

Supported by the University of East Anglia Faculty of Arts & Humanities

EMBARGOED: 4pm, Friday 23 November 2018

Founder of Norfolk Children's Book Centre honoured with Exceptional Contribution Award

The winners of the coveted East Anglian Book Awards 2018 were revealed this afternoon (Friday 23 November) at a literary lunch and celebration of regional writing and publishing held at Norwich City Football Club.

The Exceptional Contribution Award 2018 was presented to Marilyn Brocklehurst, founder of the Norfolk Children's Book Centre based in Alby, Norfolk. Marilyn created the centre over 30 years ago. After a career working in Library Services, Marilyn had a dream to set up the 'ideal bookshop for children.' With over 50,000 books, and comfortable areas for reading, the centre welcomes hundreds of visitors each year from all over the country. The judging panel said the reward recognised Marilyn's 'unstinting passion and energy and her lifetime dedication to children's literature in East Anglia.'

The overall Book of the Year Award went to celebrated nature writer Jules Pretty for *The East Country: Almanac Tales of Valley and Shore*. He received £1,000, generously supported by the PACCAR Foundation.

The East Country is a work of creative non-fiction which mixes memoir, natural history, cultural critique and spiritual reflection into a single compelling narrative. It follows the seasons through 74 tales set in a variety of landscapes, from valley to salty shore.

Peggy Hughes, one of the judges and Programme Director at the National Centre for Writing based in Norwich, described the book as ‘meditative, poetic and spare, a compelling praise song for the natural world, and a call to us to hold it dear. We were absorbed by it.’

The East Anglian Book Awards are organised by the Eastern Daily Press, Jarrold and the National Centre for Writing, with support from UEA’s Faculty of Arts & Humanities.

It was also an afternoon of celebration for the 2018 category winners:

- **History & Tradition:** *This Hollow Land: Aspects of Norfolk Folklore* by Peter Tolhurst (Black Dog Books)
- **Biography & Memoir:** *The Lady Lord Mayors of Norwich 1923 – 2017* by Phyllida Scrivens (Pen & Sword)
- **The Mal Peet Children’s Award:** *Kick* by Mitch Johnson (Usborne)
- **General Non-Fiction:** *The East Country: Almanac Tales of Valley and Shore* by Jules Pretty (Comstock)
- **Poetry:** *Gall* by Matt Howard (Rialto)
- **Fiction:** *Devoured* by Anna Mackmin (Propolis)

The ‘Book by the Cover’ Award, sponsored by East Anglian Writers for the best-designed cover of the shortlisted titles, went to Niki Medlik for *Devoured*.

The ceremony also featured speeches from special guests Simon Scarrow, Carl Gorham and Rebecca Stott, winner of the 2017 Costa Biography Award.

Since the East Anglian Book Awards began in 2008 they have showcased the work of well over 100 authors, 175 titles, and more than 80 publishers.

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Notes to Editors:

1. Press enquiries contact Hannah Salvi at Hannah.S@nationalcentresforwriting.org.uk 01603 877177

2. The **National Centre for Writing** (NCW) is a place of discovery, exchange, ideas and learning for writers, literary translators and readers. Based in the restored and extended 15th century Dragon Hall in the heart of England's first UNESCO City of Literature, it explores how writing can inspire and change the world we live in. Its year round programme of events, festivals and courses reaches over 14,000 people a year with an additional 110,000 engaged online. Through its learning and participation programme it supports 20,000 young people a year and has a commitment to working with those in the most disadvantaged areas. NCW's patrons include Margaret Atwood, JM Coetzee, Kei Miller and Elif Shafak.
www.nationalcentreforwriting.org.uk
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