



2023 SELFIES BOOK AWARDS WINNERS ANNOUNCED

London (17th April, 2023) - BookBrunch has today announced the winners of the Selfies Book Awards – established to reward the best in self-publishing – for the best adult fiction, the best children’s book and the best memoir/autobiography self-published in the UK in 2022.

At the ceremony, held in Author HQ at The London Book Fair, the **adult fiction category** was won by *The Secret Diary of a Bengali Newlywed* by Halima Khatun, the third in a series which started with *The Secret Diary of an Arranged Marriage*, winner of the 2021 Selfies award for fiction. The book was “fun and readable, with an entertaining voice that made me laugh out loud at times”, and the author made “effective use of TikTok to market the book” said the judges, Carolyn Mays of Bedford Square Publishers, Jacks Thomas, director of BolognaBookPlus, and Chris White, senior testing and integration analyst at NielsenBookData.

In the **children’s book category**, the winner was *When I Grow Up* by Rich Smith, illustrated by Stuart Hinchliff, a “lovely, rhyming, engaging’ book, with great sales, providing ”an original approach to encouraging children to work as team players” said the judges: Helen McAleer, previously md at Walker Books and now a media consultant; Nicolette Jones, writer, journalist and children’s books reviewer for the Sunday Times, and Sophie Gilligan, marketing manager for the London Book Fair.

Highly recommended in the children’s book category was *Mystery in the Palace of Westminster* by Sarah Lustig, a “great adventure” which “romps along with humour”.

In the **memoir/autobiography category**, the winner was Sarah Ziegel’s *Marching to a Different Beat: A family’s journey with autism*, displaying “good, evocative writing”, with a “strong, commercial cover” that tells an important story. Highly commended on this category was *The Register* by Moira Dennis, a “charming history and a record of a history that would have otherwise been lost”, with a “striking” cover.

“Every year the entries for the Selfies Book Awards get more impressive”, said Jo Henry, BookBrunch managing director. “The publishing professionalism displayed by the winners is truly impressive, and we expect them all to go on to even greater things!”

Launched by BookBrunch in 2018, the Selfies are sponsored by Ingram’s award-winning self-publishing platform, IngramSpark® and run in collaboration with the London Book Fair and Nielsen BookData. The Selfies Awards are judged on the quality of the writing; the production values of the book; an enticing cover and blurb that successfully addresses the target audience; and an effective and creative marketing and publicity strategy that has the potential for great sales. Each winner receives £750 in cash and a profile in BookBrunch, while all shortlisted authors receive free entry to

the 2022 London Book Fair Authors' HQ, where a series of events aimed at indie authors is programmed.

THE WINNERS AND HIGHLY COMMENDED TITLES IN FULL

Adult fiction

***The Secret Diary of a Bengali Newlywed* by Halima Khatun.** New husband. New city. New in-laws and new expectations. They say you don't just marry the guy, you marry the whole family. They also say you don't really know someone until you live with them. But, surely, after the challenge of finding a man, and the nightmare of planning my big fat Bangladeshi wedding, this newlywed phase is the easy bit, right?

Children's book

***When I Grow Up* by Rich Smith.** Miss Roberts has told her class they must choose their career for the school careers day competition. Will Harry and Amy choose in time to be in with a chance of winning the prize or will it go in the bin?

***Mystery in the Palace of Westminster* by Sarah Lustig.** Theo Duncan is just an ordinary student – except he also happens to be the son of the Prime Minister. When the parliamentary mace is stolen from inside the Houses of Parliament, Theo is determined to help get it back. But he can't do it alone, and when help is offered, there's a problem. It comes from the new girl at school, Sammy Jhor, who's a supporter of the opposition party.

Memoir/autobiography

***Marching to a Different Beat - A family's journey with autism* by Sarah Ziegel.** Sarah's twin boys were given an autism diagnosis at age two. It was sink or swim time. Unable to communicate with them, she had to learn to swim with them against the tide. Then her youngest two sons were also given an autism diagnosis at age two. This is the story of how she and her husband brought up their four autistic boys. A story of love and patience. A story of strength and hope. A story which will inspire you whether you have an autistic child or not.

***The Register* by Moira Dennis.** The chance discovery of the Admission Register at Logie Primary School in Moray, listing every child who entered the school over nearly a century, inspired a search for the stories behind some of the names. The tales that were told reflect the evolution of a rural community in the Scottish Highlands, charting changes in healthcare and education, in the role of women at home and in employment, in transport, travel and farming and in personal ambitions.

ABOUT THE ORGANISER, SPONSOR AND SUPPORTERS

BookBrunch is a daily news service and information site for the book industry. Joint editors Nicholas Clee and Neill Denny have nearly 50 years experience covering the book trade between them. Since launching in 2008, BookBrunch has been reporting industry news on a daily basis to over 7,000 publishing professionals around in the world. In the least 14 years, Bookbrunch has published thousands of news stories and opinion pieces and interviewed some of the most influential book trade figures. For more details go to www.bookbrunch.co.uk.

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