



**\*\* UNDER STRICT EMBARGO UNTIL THURSDAY JANUARY 2019 \*\***

**BRANFORD BOASE AWARD AT TWENTY**: **THE LONGLIST 2019**

**Longlist for the 2019 Branford Boase Award announced**

**20th anniversary year for the award that singles out the most exciting new children’s authors**

The longlist for the **2019 Branford Boase Award** is announced today (Thursday 31 January 2019). This important award is celebrating its twentieth year. Set up in memory of author Henrietta Branford and her editor Wendy Boase, one of the founders of Walker Books, the **Branford Boase Award** is given annually to the author of an outstanding debut novel for children and has highlighted many of the twenty-first century’s leading children’s authors at the start of their careers. Over its twenty year history winners and shortlisted authors have included **Siobhan Dowd**, **Meg Rosoff**, **Mal Peet**, **Frank Cottrell Boyce** and **Patrick Ness** as well as **Frances Hardinge** and **Philip Reeve**.

Uniquely, the **Branford Boase Award** also honours the editor of the winning title and highlights the importance of the editor in nurturing new talent.

This year more than 40 books were submitted, twice as many as in its first year, and by two dozen different publishers; 20 have made it onto the longlist. These include Matt Killeen’s **Costa** shortlisted **Orphan Monster Spy**; Sophie Anderson’s widely praised fairytale adventure **The House with Chicken Legs**; and Onjali Q.Raúf’s sensitive, touching story about a young refugee, **The Boy at the Back of the Class**.

**The 2019 Branford Boase Award longlist in full:**

**The House with Chicken Legs** by Sophie Anderson, edited by Rebecca Hill and Becky Walker (Usborne)

**Boy Underwater** by Adam Baron, edited by Nick Lake and Sarah Hughes (HarperCollins)

**The Train to Impossible Places** by P.G. Bell, edited by Rebecca Hill and Becky Walker (Usborne)

**Rosie Loves Jack** by Mel Darbon, edited by Sarah Stewart (Usborne)

**The Fandom** by Anna Day, edited by Kesia Lupo (Chicken House)

**Me Mam. Me Dad. Me** by Malcolm Duffy, edited by Fiona Kennedy (Head of Zeus)

**Twister** by Juliette Forrest edited by Lauren Fortune (Scholastic)

**Flight** by Vanessa Harbour, edited by Janet Thomas (Firefly)

**Brightstorm** by Vashti Hardy, edited by Linas Alsenas (Scholastic)

**The Goose Road** by Rowena House, edited by Mara Bergman (Walker Books)

**Pages & Co: Tilly and the Bookwanderers** by Anna James, edited by Rachel Denwood and Sarah Hughes (HarperCollins)

**The Mystery of the Colour Thief** by Ewa Jozefkowicz, edited by Fiona Kennedy (Head of Zeus)

**I Am Thunder** by Muhammad Khan, edited by Lucy Pearse (Macmillan)

**Orphan Monster Spy** by Matt Killeen, edited by Sarah Stewart (Usborne)

**The Boy at the Back of the Class** by Onjali Q Raúf, edited by Lena McCauley (Orion Children’s Books)

**On a Scale of One to Ten** by Ceylan Scott edited by Rachel Leyshon (Chicken House)

**Outwalkers** by Fiona Shaw, edited by Bella Pearson and Anthony Hinton (David Fickling Books)

**Sunflowers in February** by Phyllida Shrimpton, edited Emma Matthewson (Hot Key)

**Run Riot** by Nikesh Shukla, edited by Emma Goldhawk (Hodder Children’s Books)

**The Fox Girl and the White Gazelle** by Victoria Williamson, edited by Jennie Skinner and Sally Polson (Floris Books)

This year the judges are **Sanchita Basu De Sarkar** of the **Children’s Bookshop**, Muswell Hill; **Ellen Krajewski**, librarian at **Hemel Hempstead School**, Hertfordshire; **Louise Johns-Shepherd**, chief executive of CLPE; and **Mitch Johnson**, author of **Kick,** winner of the 2018 **Branford Boase Award**. The panel is chaired by **Julia Eccleshare**, children’s director of the Hay Festival.

**Julia Eccleshare says**: “Once again we were delighted by the number of entries and by the sheer quality of the books submitted. We are proud that so many of the authors acknowledged by the **Branford Boase Award** have gone on to write outstanding novels for children, and are proud too to be championing editors, those invisible women and men whose contribution to literature is so often overlooked. For twenty years the **Branford Boase Award** has supported publishers as they encourage and develop new writers, something that would have pleased Henrietta and Wendy very much.”

The **Branford Boase Award** is sponsored by **Walker Books** who have pledged new funding to ensure its future. **Jane Winterbotham**, publishing director said: “**Walker Books** is delighted to continue its support for the **Branford Boase Award**. We hugely value the contribution the award has made in encouraging and highlighting new writing talent, as well as in recognising the role played by the editor in supporting writers at the start of their career. The award is an inspiring memorial to the work of gifted novelist Henrietta Branford and Walker’s founding editor, Wendy Boase, in whose names the award was established 20 years ago.”

The **shortlist** for the Award will be announced on 1st May 2019. The winner will be announced on 3rd July at a ceremony in London.

The **Henrietta Branford Writing Competition**, the annual competition for young people which runs in conjunction with the **Branford Boase Award**, is also open.

**Walker Books** have published a new edition of Henrietta Branford’s multi-award-winning book **Fire, Bed and Bone**. The story of the Peasants' Revolt seen through the eyes of an old hunting dog, it gives a long-ago past an immediacy and freshness as it tells of working people's struggle for survival in the face of cruelty by landlords and the church. Branford’s last book, it won the **Guardian** prize, a **Smarties Award** and was highly commended for the **Carnegie Medal**.

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**Notes to Editors:**

The annual **Branford Boase Award** celebrates the most promising book for seven year-olds and upwards written by a first-time novelist and also highlights the importance of the editor in the development of new authors. The shortlisted authors may have published other books in another genre – for example, poetry or a picture book – but eligibility for the prize requires that this is their first children’s novel.

As well as encouraging publishers to find and promote new writers, the Award sets out to alert readers of all ages to the work of interesting newcomers.

The **Branford Boase Award** was set up in 2000 in memory of the outstanding and prize-winning author **Henrietta Branford** and **Wendy Boase**, editorial director and one of the founders of Walker Books. They worked together on a number of Henrietta’s novels, a partnership they greatly enjoyed. Both Henrietta and Wendy died of cancer in 1999. Katherine Roberts won the inaugural **Branford Boase Award** in 2000 with **Song Quest**, edited by Barry Cunningham.

Running alongside the Branford Boase Award, the **Henrietta Branford Writing Competition** encourages writing talent in under 18s.

The Award is the joint idea of **Julia Eccleshare** and **Anne Marley**. Julia is children’s director of the Hay Festival and a regular contributor to Radio 4’s Front Row and Open Book programmes. Anne is now co-director of Authors Aloud UK and was Head of Children’s, Youth & Schools Services for Hampshire Library & Information Service for many years. She has served on many children’s book award panels, including the CILIP Carnegie & Kate Greenaway Awards.

The 2018 BBA was won by Mitch Johnson and his editors Rebecca Hill and Becky Walker with **Kick** (Usborne).

**For more information about the award, including a full list of past winners, and the Henrietta Branford Writing Competition visit** [**www.branfordboaseaward.org.uk**](http://www.branfordboaseaward.org.uk) **.**

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