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FOR RELEASE 2:30PM EDT, SEPTEMBER 12, 2018

2018 NATIONAL BOOK AWARDS LONGLIST FOR TRANSLATED LITERATURE

The ten contenders for the National Book Award for Translated Literature, a new category for 2018

New York City, September 12, 2018: The National Book Foundation today announced the Longlist for the 2018 National Book Award for Translated Literature, a fifth Awards category added earlier this year. Finalists will be revealed on October 10.

The titles on the inaugural Translated Literature Longlist span nine languages, with writers working in French, Spanish, Arabic, Tamil, Norwegian, Italian, Japanese, Polish, and Russian. Authors and translators live across the globe, in Germany, France, India, Russia, Argentina, and more. The list includes eight novels, one story collection, and one work of nonfiction. One debut, the novel *Disoriental*, makes its way onto the list.

Longlisted authors have been recognized with honors such as the Man Booker International Prize, Italy's prestigious Strega Prize, Norway's Dobloug Prize, France's Prix du Roman-News, Japan's Akutagawa Prize, and the PEN Translation Prize, among many others. Translators of the Longlist titles have been recognized by the National Endowment for the Arts, PEN America, the Fulbright Program, and more, and have translated the work of Anna Gavalda, Kenzaburō Ōe, Sergio Chejfec, and Karl Ove Knausgaard, to name a few. Pulitzer Prize winner and National Book Award Finalist Jhumpa Lahiri appears on the list as translator of Domenico Starnone's novel *Trick*. Reflecting independent publishers' extensive work in literary translation, seven of the ten titles are put forth by independent presses.

Norwegian authors **Hanne Ørstavik** and **Gunnhild Øyehaug** are the Longlist's only two writers working in the same language. Ørstavik's short novel, *Love*, translated from the Norwegian by Martin Aitken, takes place in a remote town in the north of Norway, following a mother and young son separately navigating

their way through a single night, disconnected and headed for tragedy. Translated by Kari Dickson, Gunnhild Øyehaug's *Wait, Blink: A Perfect Picture of Inner Life* is a structurally playful novel that flits between the lives of its disparate characters, exploring the outrageous notion of life itself.

Intergenerational relationships provide the bulk of the narrative in **Domenico Starnone's** *Trick* and **Yoko Tawada's** *The Emissary*. In *Trick*, which was translated from the Italian by Pulitzer Prize-winning writer Jhumpa Lahiri, an aging illustrator watches over his four-year-old grandson in an apartment in Naples, forced to confront his own troubled past in the face of the child's youth and innocence. In *The Emissary*, translated from Japanese by Margaret Mitsutani, a young boy and his great-grandfather live fully entwined lives in Japan following a fictional, unnamed disaster, their dispositions reflecting and juxtaposing one another.

Translated from Arabic by both the author and Max Weiss, **Dunya Mikhail's** *The Beekeeper: Rescuing the Stolen Women of Iraq* is a nonfiction account of the deeply troubling, but ultimately hopeful, stories of women in northern Iraq who manage to escape the brutality of extremists with the help of an unlikely hero.

Two Longlisted titles mine the complexities and poignancies of personal relationships. In **Tatyana Tolstaya's** story collection, *Aetherial Worlds*, translated from the Russian by Anya Migdal, the author renders the fantasies and realities of her characters' interior and exterior lives to cut to the heart of the Russian psyche. Translated from the original Tamil by Aniruddhan Vasudevan, **Perumal Murugan's** *One Part Woman* scrutinizes issues of caste and tradition as it follows an Indian couple desperate to have a child as they become increasingly bold in their attempts to conceive, endangering their relationship.

Translated from Spanish by Heather Cleary, **Roque Larraquy's** *Comemadre* is the author's first work to be translated into English, telling the story of a grotesquely experimental hospital staff and an artist obsessed with transforming his body. Connecting two narratives set one hundred years apart, the novel is an interrogation of the connections between the body, science, and art.

Two works explore the meaning of home and the nature of travel and displacement. **Négar Djavadi's** debut novel *Disoriental*, translated from the French by Tina Kover, follows a young Iranian woman living in Paris, divided between the life she's made for herself and a rich family history that spans many generations in Iran. Translated from Polish, **Olga Tokarczuk's** *Flights*, which won Tokarczuk and translator Jennifer Croft the Man Booker International Prize earlier this year, weaves together a bevy of narratives and characters, observed by a single narrator, as they wander through space and time, moving towards or away from the things they seek.

Publishers submitted a total of 142 books for the 2018 National Book Award for Translated Literature. The judging panel in the category's first year is made up of Karen Maeda Allman, Sinan Antoon, Harold Augenbraum (Chair), Susan Bernofsky, and Álvaro Enrigue. These distinguished judges were given the charge of selecting what they deem to be the best books of the year. Their decisions are made independently of the National Book Foundation staff and Board of Directors; deliberations are strictly confidential.

The National Book Award Finalists will be announced on October 10, and the Winners announced at the invitation-only National Book Awards Ceremony and Benefit Dinner on November 14 in New York City.

2018 Longlist for the National Book Award for Translated Literature:

Négar Djavadi, *Disoriental*

Translated by Tina Kover

Europa Editions

Roque Larraquy, *Comemadre*

Translated by Heather Cleary

Coffee House Press

Dunya Mikhail, *The Beekeeper: Rescuing the Stolen Women of Iraq*

Translated by Dunya Mikhail and Max Weiss

New Directions Publishing

Perumal Murugan, *One Part Woman*

Translated by Aniruddhan Vasudevan

Black Cat / Grove Atlantic

Hanne Ørstavik, *Love*

Translated by Martin Aitken

Archipelago Books

Gunnhild Øyehaug, *Wait, Blink: A Perfect Picture of Inner Life*

Translated by Kari Dickson

Farrar, Straus and Giroux / Macmillan Publishers

Domenico Starnone, *Trick*

Translated by Jhumpa Lahiri

Europa Editions

Yoko Tawada, *The Emissary*

Translated by Margaret Mitsutani

New Directions Publishing

Olga Tokarczuk, *Flights*

Translated by Jennifer Croft

Riverhead Books / Penguin Random House

Tatyana Tolstaya, *Aetherial Worlds*

Translated by Anya Migdal

Alfred A. Knopf / Penguin Random House

Translated Literature Biographies:

Martin Aitken has translated numerous novels from Danish and now also Norwegian, including works by Karl Ove Knausgaard, Peter Høeg, Helle Helle, and Kim Leine. His translations have also appeared in anthologies as well as in many literary journals and magazines. In 2012, he was awarded the American-Scandinavian Foundation's Nadia Christensen Translation Prize.

Heather Cleary's translations include Sergio Chejfec's *The Planets* (finalist, BTBA 2013) and *The Dark* (nominee, National Translation Award 2014), and a selection of Oliverio Gironde's poetry for New Directions. She teaches at Sarah Lawrence College and has served as a judge for the BTBA and the PEN Translation Award. She is a founding member of the Cedilla & Co. translator collective and a founding editor of the digital, bilingual *Buenos Aires Review*.

Jennifer Croft is the recipient of Fulbright, PEN, MacDowell, and National Endowment for the Arts grants and fellowships, as well as the inaugural Michael Henry Heim Prize for Translation and a Tin House Workshop Scholarship for her novel *Homesick*, originally written in Spanish. She holds a PhD from Northwestern University and an MFA from the University of Iowa. She is a founding editor of *The Buenos Aires Review* and has published her own work and numerous translations in *The New York Times*, *The Los Angeles Review of Books*, *VICE*, *n+1*, *Electric Literature*, *Lit Hub*, *BOMB*, *Guernica*, *The New Republic*, *The Guardian*, *The Chicago Tribune*, and elsewhere. Her translation from Polish of Olga Tokarczuk's *Flights* won the Man Booker International Prize in 2018.

Kari Dickson was born in Edinburgh, Scotland. She has a BA in Scandinavian studies and an MA in translation. Before becoming a translator, she worked in theater in London and Oslo. Previously a teaching fellow in the Scandinavian Studies section at the University of Edinburgh, she is now an occasional tutor in Norwegian and translation.

Négar Djavadi was born in Iran in 1969 to a family of intellectuals opposed to the regimes both of the Shah, then of Khomeini. She arrived in France at the age of eleven, having crossed the mountains of Kurdistan on horseback with her mother and sister. She is a screenwriter and lives in Paris. *Disoriental* is her first novel.

Tina Kover's translations include the Modern Library edition of *Georges* by Alexandre Dumas, père; *The Black City* by George Sand; and Anna Gavalda's *Life, Only Better*. In 2009, she received a National Endowment of the Arts, Literature Fellowship for her translation of *Manette Salomon* by the Goncourt brothers.

Jhumpa Lahiri is the Pulitzer Prize-winning author of *Interpreter of Maladies*. Her books include *The Namesake*, *Unaccustomed Earth*, National Book Award Finalist *The Lowland*, and, most recently, *In Other Words*, an exploration of language and identity. She is the translator of Domenico Starnone's *Ties* and *Trick*.

Roque Larraquy is an Argentinian writer, screenwriter, professor of narrative and audiovisual design, and the author of two books, *La comemadre* and *Informe sobre ectoplasma animal*. *Comemadre* is his first book translated into English.

Anya Migdal is a writer, translator, and actor living in New York. Tatyana Tolstaya's *Aetherial Worlds*, which Anya translated, was published by Knopf in March 2018.

Dunya Mikhail was born in Iraq in 1965, and worked as a journalist for the *Baghdad Observer*. Facing increasing threats from the Iraqi authorities, she fled first to Jordan, then to the United States. In 2001, she was awarded the UN Human Rights Award for Freedom of Writing. New Directions also published Mikhail's *Diary of A Wave Outside the Sea*, which won the 2010 Arab American Book Award for poetry. She currently lives in Michigan and works as an Arabic instructor for Michigan State University.

Margaret Mitsutani was born in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania, and graduated from the College of Wooster in 1974. She has lived in Japan since the late 1970s and holds an MA in comparative literature from Tokyo University. In addition to Yoko Tawada, she has translated the works of Kyōko Hayashi, Kenzaburō Ōe, and Mitsuyo Kakuta.

Perumal Murugan is a prominent figure of contemporary Tamil literature. He has written six novels and four collections each of short stories and poetry. His best-known novel *One Part Woman* won the prestigious ILF Samanvay Bhasha Samman for writing in Indian languages and, for the English translation, the Translation Prize from India's National Academy of Letters.

Hanne Ørstavik published the novel *Cut* in 1994. Her literary breakthrough came three years later with the publication of *Love (Kjærlighet)*, which in 2006 was voted the sixth best Norwegian book of the last 25 years in a prestigious contest in *Dagbladet*. Since then, the author has written several acclaimed and much discussed novels and received a host of literary prizes.

Gunnhild Øyehaug is an award-winning Norwegian poet, essayist, and fiction writer. Her novel *Wait, Blink* was made into the acclaimed film *Women in Oversized Men's Shirts*. She has also worked as a coeditor of the literary journals *Vagant* and *Kraftsentrum*. Øyehaug lives in Bergen, where she teaches creative writing.

Domenico Starnone is an Italian writer, screenwriter, and journalist. He was born in Naples and lives in Rome. He is the author of thirteen works of fiction, including *First Execution*, and *Via Gemito*, winner of Italy's prestigious literary prize, the Strega Prize.

Yoko Tawada was born in Tokyo in 1960, moved to Hamburg when she was twenty-two, and then to Berlin in 2006. She writes in both Japanese and German, and has published several books—stories, novels, poems, plays, essays—in both languages. She has received numerous awards for her writing including the Akutagawa Prize, the Adelbert von Chamisso Prize, the Tanizaki Prize, the Kleist Prize, and the Goethe Medal. New Directions published her story collections *Where Europe Begins* (with a Preface by Wim Wenders) and *Facing the Bridge*, as well her novels *The Naked Eye*, *The Bridegroom Was a Dog*, *Memoirs of a Polar Bear*, and *The Emissary*.

Olga Tokarczuk is one of Poland's most celebrated and beloved authors, a winner of the Man Booker International Prize, as well as her country's highest literary honor, the Nike. She is the author of eight novels and two short story collections, and has been translated into a dozen languages. Her work has appeared in *n + 1*, *BOMB*, and *Asymptote*.

Tatyana Tolstaya lives in Moscow. For twelve years, she was the co-host of *The School for Scandal*, a popular talk show on Russian television covering culture and politics. She is also the co-founder of a

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creative writing academy in Moscow. She has written for *The New York Review of Books* and *The New Yorker*. Five of her books, including her novel *The Slynx*, have been translated into English.

Aniruddhan Vasudevan is a performer, writer, and translator, and is currently a graduate student at the University of Texas at Austin.

Max Weiss is an Associate Professor of History and Near Eastern Studies at Princeton University. He is the author of *In the Shadow of Sectarianism*, and the translator of Samar Yazbek's *A Woman in the Crossfire* and Nihad Siree's *The Silence and the Roar*.

2018 National Book Awards Judges for Translated Literature:

Harold Augenbraum is Acting Editor of *The Yale Review*. He is the former Executive Director of the National Book Foundation and was a Franke Visiting Fellow at Yale University. He has translated, among others, the works of José Rizal, Juan Rulfo, Cabeza de Vaca, J.Á. González Sainz, and the poetry of Marcel Proust. His most recent translation is the 1885 Filipino novel *Ninay* by Pedro Paterno, under a fellowship from the National Endowment for the Arts.

Karen Maeda Allman is Author Events Co-Coordinator at the Elliott Bay Book Company in Seattle. She has served on jury and awards panels for Hedgebrook, the Washington State Book Awards, the NEA Big Read Book Review Committee, the NEA Literary Translation Fellowships, the Kiriya Prize, and the 2016 DSC Prize for South Asian Literature. She has worked in bookstores since 1989, and in 2017 won a Seattle Arts and Lectures Prowda Literary Champions Award.

Sinan Antoon is a poet, novelist, and translator. He holds degrees from Baghdad University, Georgetown University, and Harvard University, where he specialized in Arabic literature. His books include *I'jaam*, *The Corpse Washer*, *The Baghdad Eucharist*, and *The Book of Collateral Damage* (forthcoming from Yale University Press in 2019). His translation of Mahmoud Darwish's *In the Presence of Absence* won the 2012 American Literary Translators' Award. He is an Associate Professor at New York University.

Susan Bernofsky directs the literary translation program in the Columbia University School of the Arts. Her translations include works by Robert Walser, Franz Kafka, Hermann Hesse, Jenny Erpenbeck, and Yoko Tawada. Her many prizes and awards include the Independent Foreign Fiction Prize, the Oxford-Weidenfeld Translation Prize, the Schlegel-Tieck Prize, the Helen and Kurt Wolff Translation Prize, the Warwick Prize for Women in Translation, and a Guggenheim Fellowship. She blogs about translation at www.translationista.com.

Álvaro Enrígue was a Cullman Center Fellow and a Fellow at the Princeton University Program in Latin American Studies. His work has appeared in many publications, including the *New York Times*, *London Review of Books*, and *El País*. *Sudden Death*, his most recent novel, was awarded the prestigious Herralde Prize in Spain, the Elena Poniatowska International Novel Award in Mexico, and the Barcelona Prize for Fiction. Enrígue was born in Mexico and lives in New York City. He teaches at Hofstra University.

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The mission of the **National Book Foundation** is to celebrate the best literature in America, expand its audience, and ensure that books have a prominent place in American culture. In addition to the **National**

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Book Awards, for which it is best known, the Foundation's programs include **5 Under 35**, a celebration of emerging fiction writers selected by former National Book Award Finalists and Winners; **NBF Presents**, which brings NBA authors to universities, libraries, festivals, and conferences across the country; **Literature for Justice**, a project that uses literature to contextualize and humanize the issue of mass incarceration in America; **Author in Focus**, a series comprised of panels, lectures, and film screenings designed to connect a broad audience with the works of seminal NBF-honored authors, beginning with James Baldwin in 2018; the **Innovations in Reading Prize**, awarded to individuals and institutions that have developed innovative means of creating and sustaining a lifelong love of reading; the **Why Reading Matters** conference, an opportunity for writers, activists, educators, librarians, and nonprofit leaders to explore innovative ways to celebrate literature and expand its influence; **Book Rich Environments**, a partnership with HUD, the US Department of Education, the Urban Libraries Council, and the National Center for Families Learning, which has provided nearly 700,000 books to children and families in public housing authorities around the country; the **Teen Press Conference**, an opportunity for students to interview the current National Book Award Finalists in Young People's Literature; **Raising Readers**, an adult-focused reading initiative to empower adults who work with and raise children to expand their own love of books and reading; and **BookUp**, a writer-led, after-school reading club for middle-school students.

The National Book Awards is one of the nation's most prestigious literary prizes and has a stellar record of identifying and rewarding quality writing. In 1950, William Carlos Williams was the first Winner in Poetry, the following year William Faulkner was honored in Fiction, and so on through the years. Many previous Winners of the National Book Award are now firmly established in the canon of American literature, including Ralph Ellison, Louise Erdrich, Jonathan Franzen, Denis Johnson, Flannery O'Connor, Adrienne Rich, and Jesmyn Ward.