

COSTA FIRST NOVEL AWARD WINNER 2017



Eleanor Oliphant is Completely Fine by Gail Honeyman
HarperCollins

About the book:

Eleanor Oliphant leads a simple life. She wears the same clothes to work every day, eats the same meal deal for lunch every day and buys the same two bottles of vodka to drink every weekend. Eleanor Oliphant is happy. Nothing is missing from her carefully timetabled life. Except, sometimes, everything. One simple act of kindness is about to shatter the walls Eleanor has built around herself. Now she must learn to navigate the world that everyone else seems to take for granted – while searching for the courage to face the dark corners she’s avoided all her life. Change can be good. Change can be bad. But surely anything is better than...fine?

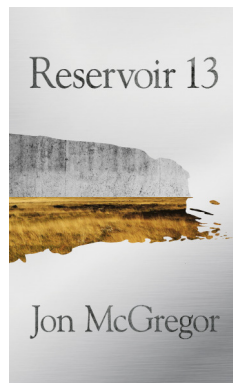
About the author:

Gail Honeyman wrote her critically-acclaimed debut, *Eleanor Oliphant is Completely Fine*, while working full-time, fitting writing into early mornings and holidays. While it was still a work-in-progress, she won the Scottish Book Trust’s Next Chapter Award, which included a writing retreat at Moniack Mhor Creative Writing Centre - an opportunity to spend uninterrupted time working on the book.

The book was the focus of an 8-way auction at Frankfurt Book Fair and has since gone on to sell in over 30 territories worldwide. In January 2017 it was named as one of the *Observer’s* Debuts of the Year and, since publication in May, has spent over 20 weeks in the *Sunday Times* bestseller list and been chosen as the WHSmith Fiction Book of the Year. It was also chosen for the *Radio 2* Book Club, serialised by *BBC Radio 4* for Book at Bedtime and has been optioned for film by Reese Witherspoon. Gail is a graduate of the Universities of Glasgow and Oxford. Born in Stirling, she currently lives in Glasgow.

What the judges said: “*Eleanor Oliphant* is Completely Fantastic. The end!”

COSTA NOVEL AWARD WINNER 2017



Reservoir 13 by Jon McGregor

4th Estate

About the book:

Midwinter in the early years of this century. A teenage girl on holiday has gone missing in the hills at the heart of England. The villagers are called up to join the search, fanning out across the moors as the police set up roadblocks and a crowd of news reporters descends on their usually quiet home. Meanwhile, there is work that must still be done: cows milked, fences repaired, stone cut, pints poured, beds made, sermons written, a pantomime rehearsed. The search for the missing girl goes on, but so does everyday life. As it must. As the seasons unfold, there are those who leave the village and those who are pulled back; those who come together or break apart. There are births and deaths; secrets kept and exposed; livelihoods made and lost; small kindnesses and unanticipated betrayals.

About the author:

Jon McGregor is the author of four novels and two story collections, including *The Reservoir Tapes*, which was recently broadcast on *BBC Radio 4*. He is the winner of the International Dublin Literary Award for his third novel, *Even the Dogs*, the Betty Trask Prize and the Somerset Maugham Award for his first novel, *If Nobody Speaks of Remarkable Things*, and has three times been longlisted for the Man Booker Prize.

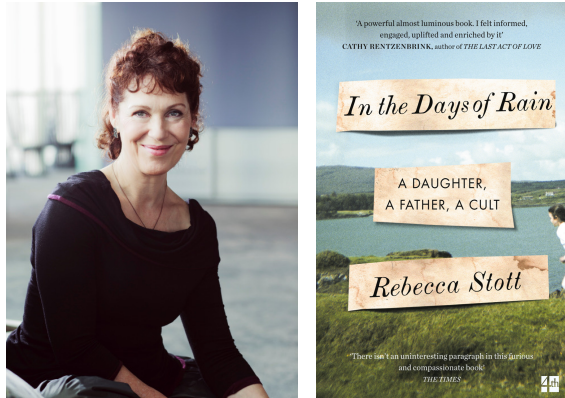
He is a Professor of Creative Writing at the University of Nottingham where he edits *The Letters Page*, a literary journal in letters; he's also been a writer-in-residence with First Story, the national literary and creative writing charity, and with the British Antarctic Survey. He was born in Bermuda in 1976, spending his childhood in Norfolk and his university years in Bradford, West Yorkshire. Jon McGregor lives in Nottingham.

What the judges said:

“Hypnotic, compelling and original – this stunning novel simply blew us away.”



COSTA BIOGRAPHY AWARD WINNER 2017



In the Days of Rain by Rebecca Stott

4th Estate

About the book:

As Rebecca Stott's father lay dying, he begged her to help him write the memoir he'd been struggling with for years. He wanted to tell the story of their family who for generations had all been members of a fundamentalist Christian sect. Yet each time he reached a certain point, he became tangled in a thicket of painful memories and couldn't go on.

The Exclusive Brethren were a closed community who believed the world is ruled by Satan: non-Brethren books were banned, women were made to wear headscarves and those who disobeyed the rules were punished. Rebecca's father, like her grandfather, had been an influential Brethren Minister: he preached in the 'Iron Room' of their meeting houses and made choices that would eventually come to haunt him. Rebecca was born into the Brethren, yet as an intelligent, enquiring child she was always asking dangerous questions. She would discover that her father had been asking them too, and that the fault line between faith and doubt had almost engulfed him.

About the author:

Author and academic **Rebecca Stott** was born in Cambridge and grew up in Brighton. She is the author of the novels *Ghostwalk*, shortlisted for the Society of Authors first novel award, and *The Coral Thief* which was broadcast as a BBC Radio 4's Book at Bedtime.

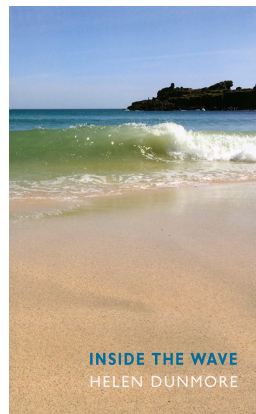
Her non-fiction includes *Darwin and the Barnacle*, *Oyster* and *Darwin's Ghosts: In Search of the First Evolutionists*. She lives in a converted Victorian library and herbarium in Norwich with several other writers and teaches English Literature and Creative Writing in the University of East Anglia.

What the judges said:

"A stand-out winner. We were all gripped and astonished by this unique life and the exquisite way she tells it."



COSTA POETRY AWARD WINNER 2017



Inside the Wave by Helen Dunmore

Bloodaxe Books

About the book:

To be alive is to be inside the wave, always travelling until it breaks and is gone. These poems are concerned with the borderline between the living and the dead – the underworld and the human living world – and the exquisitely intense being of both. They possess a spare, eloquent lyricism as they explore the bliss and anguish of the voyage.

About the author:

Helen Dunmore was a poet, novelist, short story and children's writer. Her poetry books have been given the Poetry Book Society Choice and Recommendations and won several prizes including the Cardiff International Poetry Prize, the Alice Hunt Bartlett Award and the Signal Poetry Award. Her poem 'The Malarkey' won the 2010 National Poetry Competition. She published three books of short stories and fifteen novels - most recently, *Birdcage Walk* in 2017. She died in June 2017.

What the judges said:

“An astonishing set of poems – a final, great achievement.”



COSTA CHILDREN'S BOOK AWARD WINNER 2017



The Explorer by Katherine Rundell

Bloomsbury Children's Books

About the book:

After crashing hundreds of miles from civilisation in the Amazon rainforest, Fred, Con, Lila and Max are utterly alone and in grave danger. They have no food, no water and no chance of being rescued. But they are alive and they have hope. As they negotiate the wild jungle they begin to find signs that something - someone - has been there before them. Could there possibly be a way out after all?

About the author:

Katherine Rundell is the bestselling author of *Rooftoppers*, *The Girl Savage*, *The Wolf Wilder* and *The Explorer*. Her work has been translated into more than 20 languages and she has won, among other prizes, the Waterstones Children's Book Prize, a Blue Peter Award in 2014, the Boston Globe Horn Book Award, the Andersen Prize in Italy and Le Prix Sorcières in France. She was born in 1987 and grew up in London, Zimbabwe and Brussels; she returns to Harare every year.

In 2017 she wrote a play, *Life According to Saki*, which won the Carol Tambor Best of Edinburgh award and transferred to New York. She worked on a short film about a tortoise, *Henry*, for Oculus Rift, which went on to win an Emmy for Outstanding Original Interactive Programme. She has also been selected as one of the Aarhus39 - 39 of the leading children's writers from across Europe - and one of the Hay30 'writers and thinkers'.

In 2008 she was elected a Fellow of All Souls College, Oxford, where she wrote a doctoral thesis on John Donne and taught Shakespeare to undergraduates. She lives in London and a little in Oxford. In her spare time she walks a tightrope and is learning, very slowly, to fly a small aeroplane.

What the judges said:

"A glorious read and a timeless voyage of wonder that will be enjoyed by readers aged 8 to 80."