



THE WRITERS' GUILD AWARDS

PROGRAMME

MONDAY 16TH JANUARY 2023

THE ROYAL COLLEGE
OF PHYSICIANS

11 St Andrews Place,
Regent's Park, London
NW1 4LE

The Writers' Guild of Great Britain is a trade union
registered at 134 Tooley Street, London SE1 2TU

 @TheWritersGuild

www.writersguild.org.uk

#wggbawards



THE WRITERS' GUILD AWARDS

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PRESIDENT'S WELCOME

Welcome to this year's Writers' Guild Awards – the highlight of our year as we come together to celebrate writers and writing and the light they continue to shine in these difficult times.

I don't know why I put 'these difficult times' but I like that it suggests yet another tumultuous year on the political, economic and global stage is the final one of its kind. The upside of the current downsides is that, yet again, Writers' Guild members have kept us entertained and informed; have held those in power to account, while at the same time soothed and uplifted our spirits through the astonishing breadth and depth of work they have produced. I am so proud of you all.

Screenwriters in film and TV, playwrights, authors, poets, comedy writers, animation writers, audio dramatists, video games writers – each and every one is testament to the fact that writers have a unique role to play in our society.



Our annual awards ceremony is also a chance to celebrate the work of our union and activists, more important than ever, as the digital landscape in which writers work evolves at a dizzying speed. The WGGB stays one step ahead of the game to ensure that we are there at the negotiating table, out there on demonstrations, or lobbying MPs in Parliament or the devolved governments.

And we are immensely grateful to all those in the creative industries who work with us, or support our work, to effect change. We know many of them are here tonight, including our sponsors, without whom these awards could not happen. We thank and salute you all – we are all stronger when we work together collectively.

Sandi Toksvig OBE
WGGB President

HISTORY OF THE AWARDS

Since they were established in 1961, the Writers' Guild of Great Britain Awards have been honouring the cream of British writers and writing. The Awards also recognise the importance of our work in preserving freedom of speech, and championing writing as an essential part of our national and international culture.

Previous winners include:

- | | | | |
|------------------|---------------------|---------------------|---------------------|
| ■ Danny Boyle | ■ Dawn French | ■ Roddy Doyle | ■ Kay Mellor |
| ■ Richard Curtis | ■ Jimmy McGovern | ■ Jennifer Saunders | ■ Russell T. Davies |
| ■ Jo Brand | ■ Lynda La Plante | ■ Caryl Churchill | ■ Heidi Thomas |
| ■ John Finnemore | ■ Anthony Minghella | ■ Tom Stoppard | ■ Jack Thorne |

PROGRAMME OF EVENTS

6.30pm Welcome reception

7.00pm Welcome by WGGB Chair Lisa Holdsworth

THE WRITERS' GUILD AWARDS CEREMONY HOSTED BY RACHEL PARRIS

- Best Online Comedy
- Best Long Running TV Series
- Best Writing in a Video Game
- Best Children's TV Episode
- Best Radio Comedy
- Best First Novel
- Best First Screenplay
- Remembering WGGB Members
- Best Radio Drama
- Best Play for Young Audiences
- Best Play
- Best Long Form TV Drama
- Best TV Situation Comedy
- Best Screenplay
- Best Short Form TV Drama
- Outstanding Contribution

Speech by WGGB President Sandi Toksvig OBE

9.00pm Celebration drinks

11.00pm Bar close & carriages

ALCS

We're proud to sponsor the **2023** Writers' Guild Awards!
Congratulations to all the shortlisted writers!

In September 2022, we paid around £5.5m to 15,000 of
our members who write for TV, radio and film.


So, if you've written for a TV show, film or radio episode,
you should join.

ALCS is dedicated to protecting authors' rights and
paying our members for secondary uses of their works.
Plus, it's free for WGGB members to join!

Find out more at alcs.co.uk



ABOUT WGGB



The Writers' Guild of Great Britain is the TUC-affiliated trade union representing professional writers in TV, film, theatre, audio, books, poetry, comedy, animation and videogames.

Our members also include emerging, aspiring and student writers.

We have been negotiating better pay and working conditions for writers since 1959. The national agreements we have in place cover major employers, including the BBC, ITV, National Theatre, Royal Court and Royal Shakespeare Company.

We have counted high-profile writers amongst our members throughout our history and continue to do so today.

We lobby and campaign on behalf of screenwriters, playwrights, audio dramatists, authors and video games writers, to ensure their voices are heard in a rapidly changing digital landscape.

We offer a range of benefits to our members, including free training, contract vetting, a pension scheme, Welfare Fund, entry to our Find A Writer directory, a weekly ebuletin, plus member-only screenings, events and discounts.



WGGB organises events, screenings and training workshops for its members in-person and online
Photo: Em Fitzgerald

BECOME A MEMBER

We welcome all professional writers working in the fields we represent, and have a variety of membership options, including one for aspiring/emerging writers (Candidate Members), Student Members and Affiliate Members.

You can join online at **www.writersguild.org.uk** or by phoning our membership team on **020 7833 0777**



WGGB has supported the TUC's #WeDemandBetter campaign for a better deal for working people
Photo: Shutterstock.com/1000words

RECENT ACHIEVEMENTS



Our survey found that over 70% of screenwriters had not been properly credited for their work
We also launched the New Play Commission Scheme this year
Photo: Shutterstock.com/gnepphoto

In Animation

- We have revised our Guidelines for Animation Writers.
- We have produced a best-practice guide for industry professionals in collaboration with the Personal Managers' Association.
- Children's animation scriptwriters are now eligible for the WGGB pension.

In Books

- We surveyed writers on the practices of contributory publishers who charge authors to publish their books and together with Society of Authors published the results in a report *Is it a steal?* which is forming the basis of a campaign to tackle bad practice.
- We have launched a guide to self-publishing at a special online event.
- Our Books Committee represents poets and non-fiction writers as well as writers of prose and deals with various issues of relevance to them.

In Comedy

- We run special events, most recently 'Comedy is a serious business' with the David Nobbs Memorial Trust at Edinburgh International Film Festival.
- We supported Comedy 50:50, an initiative with ITV, RTS, ERA 50:50, Funny Women and BAFTA to implement measures to address gender imbalance in comedy, starting with writers.

In Film

- We sponsored an event at the 2022 BFI London Film Festival where we released the results of a survey of screenwriters which found that over 70% had not been credited in the promotion and distribution of their work, and they had routinely experienced being belittled and abused. We will be launching a campaign to tackle this.
- We have launched joint guidelines with Directors UK on creating positive collaborations.

- Our Locked Box deal with the British Film Institute (BFI) ensures that writers now get a share (alongside producers and directors) of recouped income from feature films supported with Lottery Funding through the BFI Film Fund (and held in a 'locked box' for reinvestment in the British film industry). There is around £100,000 earmarked for writers.
- We have run a series of free, exclusive WGGB member film screenings, and offered members the chance to attend film premieres, including Q&As with writers, directors and leading cast members.
- We continue to engage with Pact on updating the film agreement and screenwriting credits agreement.
- We have produced a model film agreement.
- We have campaigned against moves to privatise Channel 4.
- We continue to negotiate and update our minimum terms agreements with the BBC, ITV and Pact (representing the independent producers).
- Writers Digital Payments, set up and run by WGGB and the Personal Managers' Association, ensures writers get paid whenever their work is shown on digital services like BBC iPlayer, and has paid out over £6.8 million to writers to date.
- We have run the Equality Writes campaign to tackle the under-representation of women writers in film and TV, and another campaign, Free is NOT an Option, against unpaid work in television.

In Theatre

In Radio and audio

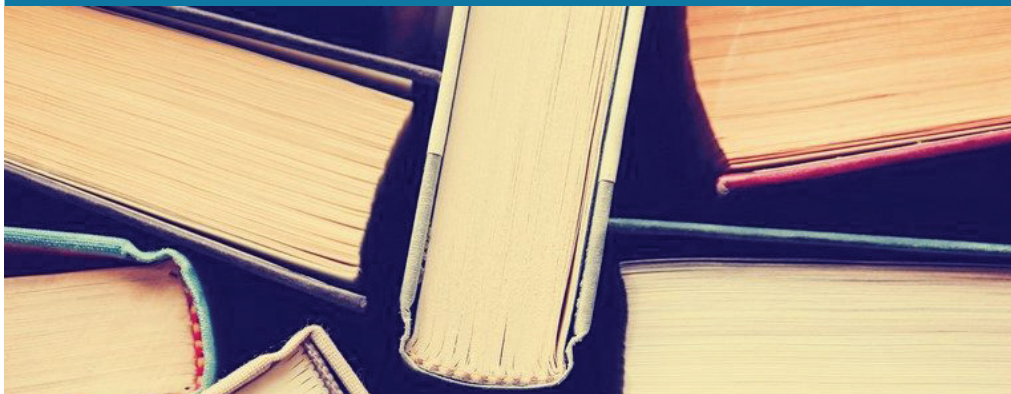
- We have negotiated special fees for BBC podcasts.
- We meet regularly with the BBC to raise issues on pay and conditions for radio writers, which are enshrined in our national agreement with the corporation.
- We organise the annual Tinniswood audio drama script award, alongside the Society of Authors, which is presented at the BBC Audio Drama Awards.
- We have successfully lobbied Ofcom to secure improved transparency and accountability measures for the BBC and now continue to campaign for better terms for writers and a reversal of the recent cuts to broadcast audio drama.

In Television

- We have produced a model TV agreement.
- We are working with major SVOD providers on a new commissioning agreement for writers.
- We launched the New Play Commission Scheme alongside partner organisations which tackled the decline in playwriting commissions following the pandemic.
- We launched new digital principles for theatre to protect playwrights' rights following the explosion in streaming and online delivering of stage plays during Covid-19.
- We have spoken out about the recent shake-up to Arts Council England (ACE) funding which poses a serious threat to new writing, and will be talking to ACE to address this.
- We produced best-practice guidelines to protect playwrights and the health of the theatre sector during the Covid-19 lockdown.
- We regularly negotiate significant minimum rates increases with UK Theatre, the Independent Theatre Council and TNC (representing the Royal Court, Royal Shakespeare Company and National Theatre).
- We hold annual Olwen Wymark Theatre Encouragement Awards.



RECENT ACHIEVEMENTS



We surveyed writers on the practices of contributory publishers and launched a new guide to self-publishing
Photo: Shutterstock.com/Alexi Logvinovich

In Video Games

- We have launched new guidelines for games writers and those who work with them.
- We hold events, including an annual panel event with the International Game Developers Association and online festivals of games writing.


Across several of our craft areas

- Our Equality & Diversity Committee has launched an Access Rider and a Disabled, deaf and/or neurodivergent members' network.
- We surveyed writers on the cost-of-living crisis and found that 55% said rising energy and food costs were impacting on their ability to sustain a writer career.
- We supported the TUC's #WeDemandBetter campaign for a better deal for working people.
- We work collectively with other unions and organisations to combat bullying, harassment and discrimination in the creative industries.
- We have campaigned against cuts to funding for arts subjects at English universities.
- We supported the #PayTheCreator campaign from the Creators' Rights Alliance, of which WGGB is a member.
- We continue our campaigning and lobbying work to advocate for our members who have been impacted by the pandemic.
- We heard the call of young activists in the Youth For Climate / School Strike movement, and declared a climate emergency, pledging to put the climate crisis at the heart of all we do.
- We lobbied Government during the Brexit negotiations and beyond to ensure writers' voices were on the agenda.

B B C

THE BBC WOULD LIKE TO WISH
ALL THE NOMINEES THE BEST OF LUCK

HAPPY VALLEY

Final series Jan 1  iPLAYER

BEST ONLINE COMEDY

HOSTAGE NEGOTIATION

Kieran Murphy



MARY SHELLEY WRITES FRANKENSTEIN

Eleanor Morton
& Christian Brighty



THE ROOM NEXT DOOR – BORIS JOHNSON RESIGNATION SPEECH

Michael Spicer



BEST LONG RUNNING TV SERIES

CORONATION STREET, EPISODE 10642/3

Damon Alexis-Rochefort



DOCTORS, EPISODE 5, 'HELLO?'

Toby Walton



DOCTORS, SERIES 22, EPISODE 88, 'ONE POINT SIX PERCENT'

Claire Bennett



BEST WRITING IN A VIDEO GAME

CITIZEN SLEEPER

Gareth Damian Martin



IMMORTALITY

Sam Barlow, Barry Gifford,
Amelia Gray & Allan Scott



THE QUARRY

Will Byles, Alex Farnham
& Graham Reznick



BEST CHILDREN'S TV EPISODE

DODGER, EPISODE 9, 'DOSH'

Rhys Thomas &
Lucy Montgomery



THE BEAKER GIRLS, EPISODE I, 'THE ICE CREAM THIEF'

Emma Reeves



JACQUELINE WILSON'S LITTLE DARLINGS, EPISODE I, 'DESTINY'

Nathan Bryon



BEST RADIO COMEDY

CONVERSATIONS FROM A LONG MARRIAGE

Jan Etherington



RAGING ENIGMA

Chris Neill



WHATEVER HAPPENED TO BABY JANE AUSTEN

David Quantick



BEST FIRST NOVEL

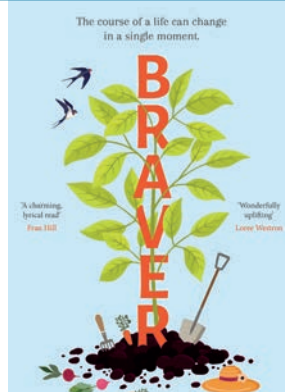
AN OLIVE GROVE IN ENDS

Moses McKenzie



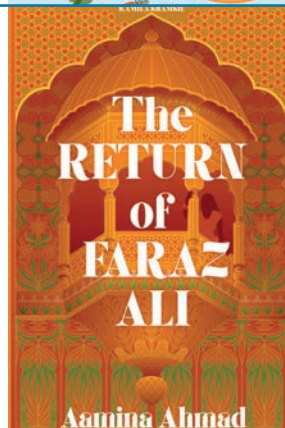
BRAVER

Deborah Jenkins



THE RETURN OF FARAZ ALI

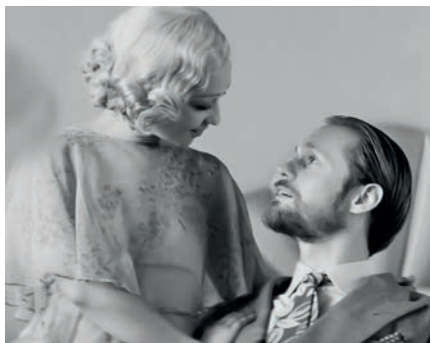
Aamina Ahmad



BEST FIRST SCREENPLAY

PASSING

Rebecca Hall



PIRATES

Reggie Yates



THE DUKE

Richard Bean &
Clive Coleman



BEST RADIO DRAMA

END OF TRANSMISSION

Anita Sullivan



LIFE RIGHTS

Nicholas Meiklejohn



WATERLOO STATION

Katie Hims



REMEMBERING WGGB MEMBERS

Photo: www.kyptography.co.uk



Kay Mellor (1951-2022)

By WGGB Chair Lisa Holdsworth

The sudden death of Kay Mellor at the age of 71 is a shock to everyone who knew her. A long-term and loyal WGGB member, she was always full of energy and always working. Indeed, she was working on several projects for TV and theatre at the time of her death. She simply loved telling stories.

Her own story sounds like something she scripted. She grew up in a working-class family in Leeds and was married with two children by the age of 19. After taking a Theatre Studies A Level at night school, she went to Bretton Hall in Wakefield and would initially pursue a career in acting. However, writing was her passion.

She started her career in the soaps, including *Coronation Street* and *Brookside*. She would go on to create her own soap, *Families*. However,

it was *Children's Ward*, the children's medical drama she created with Paul Abbott, that won her acclaim and her first BAFTA.

She would go on to win another for *Band of Gold*, a show about sex workers in Bradford. She researched the show by paying the girls working Bradford's notorious Lumb Lane for their time and their stories. *Band of Gold* not only cemented her reputation as a writer, but also her commitment to centring working-class women's stories in her work. *Playing the Field*, *Fat Friends*, *Between the Sheets* and *Strictly Confidential* all focussed on women, and female viewers responded by watching in their millions. Her theatre work was inspired by the women she knew. *A Passionate Woman* was a frank account of her mother's affair. *Queen* was a bittersweet story of a soap queen in her twilight years.

Kay was also an enthusiastic advocate for new talent and often gave other writers their first break in the industry. Sally Wainwright celebrated her generosity when presenting her with her WGGB Outstanding Contribution to Writing award in 2015:

"The other great thing that defines Kay is her boundless generosity towards up-and-coming writers. Her commitment not just to her own writing, but to writing. I am forever indebted to Kay for the time and trouble she took with me at that early stage in my career. She was selfless and kind and not just willing but eager to share her insight and knowledge."

She leaves an enviable legacy.

During the ceremony we will also pay tribute to other members we have lost during the past year. Obituaries can be found at www.writersguild.org.uk/news



Eric Chappell (1933-2022)

By WGGB Treasurer Gail Renard

Eric Chappell was a master of comedy writing and a long-standing WGGB member, best remembered for his iconic ITV comedy *Rising Damp*.

Chappell was born in 1933 in Lincolnshire into a working-class family. He showed a flair for writing stories. His mother disapproved of putting pen to paper “in case it’s held against you at a later date”.

Chappell studied accountancy but, instead of studying for his exams, spent his evenings writing a novel. After many rejections, he changed tack. “I had a eureka moment one night in the bath – why don’t I write a play? For one thing it’s only 20,000 words instead of 70,000.”

Chappell’s plan worked. While working for the East Midlands Electricity Board and writing in secret, his play *The Banana Box* had its first performance at the Hampstead Theatre Club in November 1970.

The Banana Box was set in a seedy boarding house featuring a landlord named Rooksby, played by Wilfred Brambell. A real-life landlord named Rooksby threatened to sue, the character was renamed and so Rigsby was born.

The Banana Box transferred to London’s West End in 1973, with a cast which included Leonard Rossiter, Frances de la Tour, Don Warrington and the former Manfred Mann singer Paul Jones.

Chappell finally resigned from the East Midlands Electricity Board. He wrote a television pilot of *The Banana Box*, which the BBC rejected because Chappell’s script contained “too many jokes”. ITV’s Yorkshire TV commissioned the series which became *Rising Damp*, one of the most successful sitcoms in television history.

Writing the play before the telly series became Chappell’s *modus operandi*. Amongst other sitcoms, he also created *Only When I Laugh*, *Duty Free*, *The Squirrels*, *The Bounder* and *Home To Roost*, a sitcom about a middle-aged divorced man, happy in his solitude until his teenage son, thrown out by his mother, moves in. It starred John Thaw and Reece Dinsdale.

Dinsdale remembers Chappell fondly: “Eric sat with us for much of our rehearsals. I was never quite sure if he was there to amend things or if he just wanted to be there for the laughter. He loved laughing, often at his own words... but especially at what his actors were doing with them. I don’t think I ever saw him without a smile on his face. I think laughter was his *raison d’être*.”

Chappell wrote over 200 TV comedy scripts and 20 plays, which are still performed by am drams worldwide.

BEST PLAY FOR YOUNG AUDIENCES

BRAIDS

Olivia Hannah



HOW TO SAVE THE PLANET WHEN YOU'RE A YOUNG CARER AND BROKE

Nessah Muthy

Photo: Elizabeth Ayodele photographed by Rosie Turner with graphic design by @pillsforskills



THE IT

Vivienne Franzmann



BEST PLAY

THE HOUSE OF SHADES

Beth Steel

Photo: Helen Murray



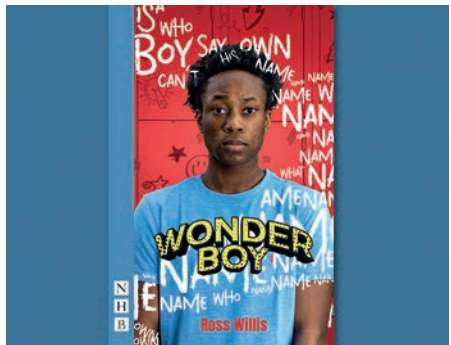
THE P WORD

Waleed Akhtar



WONDER BOY

Ross Willis



BEST LONG FORM TV DRAMA

SLOW HORSES EPISODE I, 'FAILURE'S CONTAGIOUS'

Will Smith



THE RESPONDER

Tony Schumacher



THIS IS GOING TO HURT

Adam Kay



Photo: Benedict Spence c/o SISTER
and Terrible Productions

BEST TV SITUATION COMEDY

BIG BOYS

Jack Rooke



DEAD CANNY

Anna Costello



DERRY GIRLS

Lisa McGee



BEST SCREENPLAY

ALI & AVA

Clio Barnard



MRS HARRIS GOES TO PARIS

Carroll Cartwright,
Tony Fabian, Keith
Thompson &
Olivia Hetreed



MUNICH – THE EDGE OF WAR

Ben Power

Photo: Sarah Lee



BEST SHORT FORM TV DRAMA

FLOODLIGHTS

Matt Greenhalgh



FOUR LIVES

Neil McKay



THEN BARBARA MET ALAN

Jack Thorne &
Genevieve Barr





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ASubramaniam@hwfisher.co.uk

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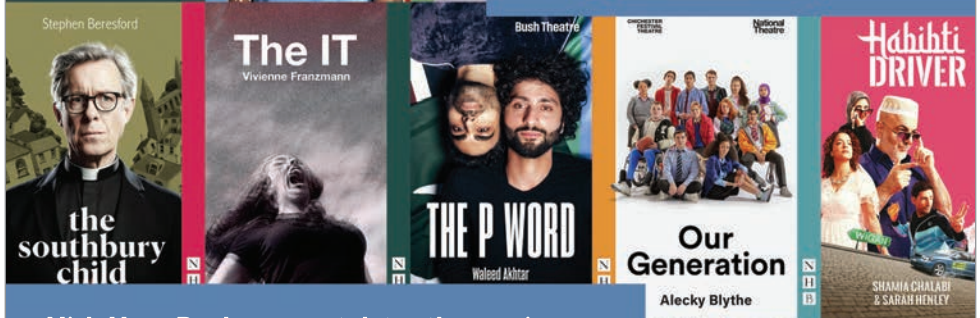
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‘Publishing plays gives permanent form to an evanescent art, and allows many more people to have some kind of experience of a play than could ever see it in a theatre’
Nick Hern, publisher



Nick Hern Books congratulates the nominees and winners of the 2023 Writers’ Guild Awards

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THE 2023 WRITERS' GUILD
AWARDS

Wishing every
success to
all nominees
this evening



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and wishes them the best of luck!

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THANKS

Every year we rely on so much from so many to make our Awards event a success. Big thanks to our superb 2023 host Rachel Parris, loyal sponsors, all the presenters including WGGG President Sandi Toksvig OBE, and to the event production team led by Ali Welsh, who pull and push levers and turn all the wheels and cogs.

Thank you to all the hardworking jurors who read and watch and decide who is the best of the best. You are the best!

Thanks also to Premier PR and our live Tweeter Ming Ho, photographer Matt Writtle, our clips team Lexy Howe and Reece Clara, and the Guild staff: Ellie Peers, Lesley Gannon, Kate Glasspool, John Sailing, Joe Abel, Eleanor Dawson, Tiffany Hanks-McComas and Sarah Woodley.

Our grateful thanks go to:

Adrian Poynton, Alan Spence, Amelia Bullmore, Andrea Gibb, Brian McAvera, Carol Rodger, Cerriann Taylor, Claire Bennett, Dan Muir, Dan Whitehead, Darren Jones, David James, David Quantick, David Reed, Dean Drinkel, Debbie McAndrew, Debbie Moon, Eddie Robson, Edel Brosnan, Eleanor Morton, Gary Lawson, Grainne Maguire, Harry Carr, Helena Medina, Henrietta Hardy, Izzy Mant, Jan Woolf, Jane Lamcraft, Jillian Mannion, Joel Morris, Jude Tindall, Julie Parsons, Karen Anstee, Kate Price, Katharine Way, Kim McCusker, Kim Taylor, Line Langebek, Lisa Evans, Lyn Papadopoulos, Mandi Riggi, Mark Catley, Martin Day, Martin Jameson, Mata Haggis,

Maurice Gran, Max Benitz, Merle Nygate, Michael Bryher, Michael Wynne, Nick Wood, Nicola Wildin, Olivia Wood, Olu Alakija, Phil O'Shea, Poppy Corbett, Qaisra Shahraz, Rhiannon Tise, Richard Deacon, Richard Mooney, Richard Pinner, Richard Shannon, Roland Moore, Sam Horley, Sarah Longthorne, Sarah Morgan, Shai Hussain, Simon Guerrier, Sukey Venables-Fisher, Susy Kane, Tasha Dhanraj, Terry Newman, Tim Glencross, Tom Williams, Tosin Otudeko, Tracey Goddard, Vicky Ireland, Will Ing, William Gallagher

And a final big thank you to our Awards Working Party this year:

William Gallagher, Lisa Holdsworth, and Gail Renard

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