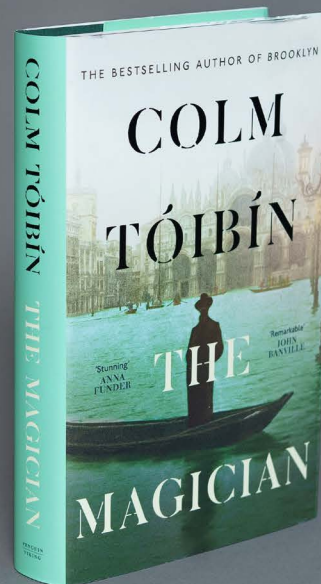
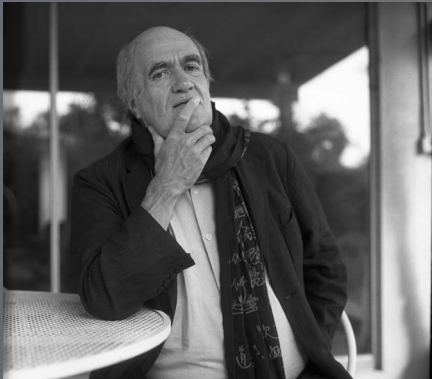


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**BESTSELLING IRISH NOVELIST COLM TÓIBÍN WINS  
RATHBONES FOLIO PRIZE 2022 FOR “CAPACIOUS,  
GENEROUS, AMBITIOUS” NOVEL *THE MAGICIAN***

2022 WINNER



Acclaimed, bestselling Irish novelist Colm Tóibín was tonight awarded the Rathbones Folio Prize 2022 for his novel *The Magician* (Viking), a haunting, intimate portrait of the exiled German Nobel winner Thomas Mann.

This is the first time Tóibín wins the £30,000 prize, following his previous shortlisting in 2015 for the novel *Nora Webster*.

*The Magician* traces the life of author, essayist, philanthropist and social critic Thomas Mann, one of the most acclaimed – and contradictory – figures in continental European literature. In his epic fictionalised biography of Mann, Tóibín masterfully charts the turbulent story of the first half of

the 20<sup>th</sup> century.

It is the second time the Irish writer has used fiction to get into the mind of a novelist, following 2004's *The Master*, on Henry James.

Tóibín was four chapters into writing the book when he was diagnosed with cancer. Six months of heavy-duty chemotherapy followed. *"I knew that if the cancer came back, the chances of writing the book were zero,"* he told the Rathbones Folio Prize in an interview. *"Once I could really start working again, I worked really hard and really fast."* He needed to get *The Magician* finished, he said. *"Then I could worry about the health stuff. Anyway, I finished it."* (The cancer has not returned.)

After much discussion and debate, the judges, **Tessa Hadley**, **William Atkins** and **Rachel Long** chose *The Magician* from an incredibly strong and diverse shortlist, which featured novels, poetry and non-fiction from internationally renowned talent from across the UK, Ireland and South Africa, including Booker Prize-winner *The Promise* by Damon Galgut.

**The judges said:** *'Choosing one winner from the eight titles shortlisted for the Rathbones Folio Prize found us pulled in so many different directions by these extraordinary books, which we lived with and loved and read and read again. We sat around a table for several hours picking out lines and passages, taking in the very different worlds of each book and arguing passionately for every one of them. And then gradually it became clear – and was a surprise to all of us – that we'd each arrived at the same decision. Colm Tóibín's *The Magician* is such a capacious, generous, ambitious novel, taking in a great sweep of 20th century history, yet rooted in the intimate detail of one man's private life.'*

After reading 80 books for this prize, judge Rachel Long said that *The Magician* made her *'fall in love with reading all over again'*.

Chair of the judges Tessa Hadley made the announcement as part of tonight's prize ceremony, which was hosted at the **British Library**. **The Rathbones Folio Prize** is known as the writer's prize as it is the only award in which all the books considered for the prize are selected and judged by an academy of peers and is also the only prize to consider all works of literature, regardless of form.

Bestselling novelist Tóibín, who is based in Ireland, spoke of his interest in Mann being sparked as a teenager in **a special writing masterclass hosted by events producers 5x15** for the shortlisted authors, chaired by James Naughtie. The digital livestream took place on Wednesday 9<sup>th</sup> March, and was one of three events in collaboration with 5x15 featuring seven of the eight shortlisted authors. On Wednesday 9<sup>th</sup> March, Tóibín appeared with fellow shortlist author Philip Hoare and shared how Mann's story had stuck with him and prompted him to explore his world and the duality of his personal and private life in more detail. Speaking during the masterclass, Tóibín said he was interested in **'the difference between the figure at the breakfast table and in the study'** and had **'a sense of [Mann] as someone who was uneasy in the world.'**

Tóibín has been shortlisted for the Booker Prize three times, won the Costa Novel Award (for *Brooklyn*), the Impac Award and the David Cohen Prize for Literature in 2021. In 2011 he was awarded the Irish PEN Award for contribution to Irish Literature. This is his first Rathbones Folio Prize, following his previous shortlisting in 2015. He is the author of ten novels including

*The Master, Brooklyn, The Testament of Mary, Nora Webster, and, House of Names* and has also published two collections of stories and many works of non-fiction. Earlier this year, he was named as the new laureate for Irish fiction, taking over from Sebastian Barry. He is also Chancellor of the University of Liverpool, UK, and Mellon Professor in the Department of English and Comparative Literature at Columbia, New York. Born in Enniscorthy, he currently lives between Dublin and Los Angeles.

**Paul Stockton, CEO of Rathbones, said:** *“Rathbones is proud to sponsor a prize that consistently brings us the best of literature and storytelling being written today. We send our congratulations to Colm Tóibín, whose novel *The Magician*, is an outstanding reflection of a high quality talent of writing across the globe that was also echoed in the impressive shortlist. We are delighted that the Rathbones Folio Prize plays such a significant role in nurturing and supporting such remarkable talent, and are thrilled to continue supporting the prize’s commitment to enriching people’s lives through literature.”*

Tóibín was shortlisted alongside **Natasha Brown** (*Assembly*), **Damon Galgut** (*The Promise*), **Selima Hill** (*Men Who Feed Pigeons*), **Philip Hoare** (*Albert and the Whale*), **Claire Keegan** (*Small Things Like These*), **Gwendoline Riley** (*My Phantoms*), and **Sunjeev Sahota** (*China Room*).

In winning, he joins **Carmen Maria Machado** (2021), **Valeria Luiselli** (2020), **Raymond Antrobus** (2019), **Richard Lloyd Parry** (2018), **Hisham Matar** (2017), **Akhil Sharma** (2015) and **George Saunders** (2014) as previous winners of the prize – the only one governed by an international academy of distinguished writers, the Folio Academy.

The Rathbones Folio Prize is borderless and open to all genres – fiction, non-fiction, and poetry – which means it reflects a greater diversity and variety of voices present in our literary culture and society as a whole.

The Rathbones Folio Prize is the flagship of the Literature / Folio Prize Foundation, which also includes the **Rathbones Folio Prize Mentorships** for aspiring young writers and Rathbones Folio Prize Sessions at literary festivals across the UK.

Join the conversation via: [rathbonesfolioprize.com](https://rathbonesfolioprize.com) | [@RathbonesFolio](https://twitter.com/RathbonesFolio)

### **Notes to Editors**

**About the Rathbones Folio Prize |** The Folio Prize was established in 2013 as the first major English language book prize open to writers from around the world. It is the only prize in which all the books considered for the prize are selected and judged by an academy of peers. When new sponsors, Rathbone Investment Management, came on board in 2017 the prize was expanded to include all works of literature, regardless of form. Previous winners were George Saunders in 2014, Akhil Sharma in 2015, Hisham Matar in 2017, Richard Lloyd-Parry in 2018, Raymond Antrobus in 2019, Valeria Luiselli in 2020, and Carmen Maria Machado in 2021.

**About The Folio Academy |** The Folio Academy is a community of 300+ writers, who represent excellence in literature. Academicians include: Margaret Atwood, Carol Ann Duffy, Ian McEwan, Salman Rushdie, Zadie Smith and Sir Tom Stoppard. Between them, Academicians have won

thousands of literary awards, including 16 Man Booker Prizes. Academicians may be called upon to comment on literature matters in the media, to appear at festivals and public events, and may volunteer to mentor young writers in the Rathbones Folio Mentorships scheme, run in association with the charity First Story, which runs creative writing residencies in secondary schools serving low-income communities.

**About The Literature/Folio Prize Foundation |** The Literature/Folio Prize Foundation is a registered charity committed to bringing the most outstanding works of English language literature to public attention both through the awarding of the Prize and the Rathbones Folio Mentorships scheme, as well as other initiatives. Overseen by its trustees, the Foundation seeks to engage readers and writers throughout the English-speaking world in cultural debate and in the celebration and sustainment of the art of literature, which it believes has the capacity to enrich and change people's lives.

**About Rathbone Investment Management |** Rathbone Investment Management is one of the UK's leading providers of high-quality discretionary investment management services. It manages over £68.2 billion\* of funds for individuals, charities and trustees, and is part of Rathbones Group Plc, an independently owned company with a listing on the London Stock Exchange. Investment management services are offered in Aberdeen, Birmingham, Bristol, Cambridge, Chichester, Edinburgh, Exeter, Glasgow, Kendal, Liverpool, London, Lymington, Newcastle and Winchester. Offshore investment management services are offered by subsidiary Rathbone Investment Management International in Jersey. *\*As at 31 December 2021, includes funds managed by Rathbone Unit Trust Management*