

# PUSHKIN HOUSE BOOK PRIZE



## PUSHKIN HOUSE ANNOUNCES SHORTLIST FOR ITS 10<sup>TH</sup> PUSHKIN HOUSE BOOK PRIZE

Titles on this year's Pushkin House Book Prize shortlist provide insight into cultural life under Stalinism, Soviet family history, climate change, health and life on the Russia-China border as well as the background to the war in Ukraine. The tenth anniversary year of the Prize takes place at a time of seismic shifts that have changed attitudes in and towards Russia. To mark the decade of the Prize, and recognising the importance of the valuable insights that research and scholars offer into the Russian speaking world at this pivotal moment, the judges have exceptionally shortlisted ten books rather than the usual six.

Four of the books offer direct context on the history and politics of the country in the years leading up to the invasion, helping to promote public understanding and informed debate about Russia's past, present and future, in line with the Prize's long-term mission. The £10,000 prize will be awarded to the overall winner in September by a distinguished jury.

**Ekaterina Schulmann, one of the 2022 judges, said:** "In one of the darkest years in post-WWII world history, I think it is particularly honourable of Pushkin House to keep rewarding painstaking scholarship and dedicated studies of Russian history, societal development and culture that are both fundamental and approachable. These books reflect the varieties and revel in the richness of human experience and endeavour that are so easy to lose sight of but should be preserved as an integral part of our shared humanity. The Pushkin House Book Prize is faithful to its mission of fostering and encouraging deeper understanding of the immense complexities of cultures within and beyond Russia."

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The 2022 shortlisted titles are:

- ***On the Edge: Life along the Russia-China Border***  
by Frank Billie & Caroline Humphrey
- ***Navalny: Putin’s Nemesis, Russia’s Future?***  
by Jan Matti Dollbaum et al.
- ***Weak Strongman: The limits of power in Putin’s Russia*** by Timothy Frye
- ***Klimat: Russian in the Age of Climate Change*** by Thane Gustafson
- ***Not One Inch: America, Russia, and the Making of Post-Cold War Stalemate***  
by Mary Sarotte
- ***In Memory of Memory*** by Maria Stepanova
- ***Stalin’s Architect: Power and Survival in Moscow*** by Deyan Sudjic
- ***The Empress and the English Doctor: How Catherine the Great defied a deadly virus*** by Lucy Ward
- ***Playing with Fire: The Story of Maria Yudina, Pianist in Stalin’s Russia*** by Elizabeth Wilson
- ***Collapse: The Fall of the Soviet Union*** by Vladislav Zubok

This year’s judges are **Evgenia Arbugaeva**, photographer, National Geographic Society Storytelling Fellow and recipient of the ICP Infinity and Leica Oskar Barnack awards; **Archie Brown**, Emeritus Professor of Politics at Oxford University and the author of many books including *The Human Factor: Gorbachev, Reagan and Thatcher and the End of the Cold War*, which won the 2021 Pushkin House Book Prize; **Dmitry Glukhovsky**, a multilingual journalist and author of the cult science fiction series Metro and the critically acclaimed *Text*; **Ekaterina Schulmann**, an associate professor at the Moscow School of Social and Economic Sciences, Bosch Academy Richard von Weizsäcker fellow and political commentator; and **Baroness Deborah Bull**, a writer, broadcaster, cultural commentator and Cross-bench Peer in the House of Lords and Vice President (Communities & National Engagement) at King’s College London.

**Douglas Smith, winner of the first Pushkin House Book Prize and a funder of the prize with his wife Stephanie Ellis-Smith, said:** “At a moment when the need to know and understand Russia could not be greater, the expanded shortlist for the Pushkin House Russian Book Prize marvellously captures the intelligence and knowledge of today’s leading experts. The range of subjects is expansive, the insight is deep. Anyone seeking to make sense of the country will want to read these books.”

**Marc Polonsky, managing trustee of The Polonsky Foundation, co-funder of the prize, said:** “The shortlist demonstrates once again the calibre and range of contemporary writing about the Russian speaking world. In these troubled times it is all the more crucial to understand the complex realities of Russia’s history and what is going on today.”

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## About the Pushkin House Book Prize

The prize of £10,000 will be awarded to the author of the best book about Russia or the Russian-speaking world accessible to the general reader, and published in English for the first time between 1<sup>st</sup> January 2021 and 30<sup>th</sup> June 2022. Translations from other languages are eligible and actively sought.

Previous winners are: Archie Brown for *The Human Factor: Gorbachev, Raegan, and Thatcher and the End of the Cold War* (Oxford University Press); Sergei Medvedev for *The Return of the Russian Leviathan* (Polity); Douglas Smith for *Former People: the Final Days of the Russian Aristocracy* (Macmillan); Catherine Meridale for *Red Fortress: The Secret Heart of Russia's History* (Allen Lane); Serhii Plokhy for *The Last Empire: The Final Days of the Soviet Union* (Oneworld); Dominic Lieven for *Towards the Flame* (Penguin); Alexis Peri for *The War Within* (Harvard UP); Rosalind Blakesley for *The Russian Canvas* (Yale UP); and Serhii Plokhy for *Chernobyl* (Allen Lane).

The advisory board for the Pushkin House Russian Book Prize includes:

**Sir Rodric Braithwaite**, former British ambassador to Moscow  
and author of *Afgantsy*

**Andrew Jack**, chairman emeritus, Pushkin House, and journalist  
at the Financial Times

**Bridget Kendall**, BBC diplomatic correspondent, Master of Peterhouse,  
Cambridge University

**Andrew Nurnberg**, managing director, Andrew Nurnberg Associates  
literary agency

**Marc Polonsky**, trustee, The Polonsky Foundation

**Douglas Smith**, historian, translator, author and winner  
of the 2013 Pushkin House Book Prize

## About Pushkin House

Pushkin House is an independent cultural centre established in London in 1954 by immigrants from Russia and British enthusiasts of Russian culture. As a venue offering a varied programme of events, exhibitions and community initiatives, we are a platform for initiating active enquiry, debate and exchange across cultures, with freedom of expression at its heart. We are committed to raising important and sometimes uncomfortable questions about Russia's past and present, including issues of decolonisation and the ideologically charged legacy of Russian culture today, particularly in light of the current events in Ukraine.

**The winner of the 2022 Prize will be announced at a special ceremony at the London Library on the 28<sup>th</sup> of September 2022. Tickets to the ceremony are now available to purchase on our website: [pushkinhouse.org](https://pushkinhouse.org)**