



Shortlist announced for national award recognising new writers

25th April 2017: The Romantic Novelists' Association (RNA) has announced the shortlist for its prestigious Joan Hessayon Award for new writers.

The shortlist is made up of authors whose debut novels have been accepted for publication after passing through the Romantic Novelists' Association New Writers Scheme. Each year 250 places are offered to unpublished writers writing in the romantic fiction genre. As part of the scheme, they can submit a complete manuscript for critique by one of the Association's published authors as well as attend RNA events which offer opportunities to meet and network with publishers, agents and other published authors.

This year's contending novels include historical romance, paranormal romance, contemporary romance and romantic comedy, and explore a variety of themes which include family, secrets and loss.

Commenting on the shortlist for 2017, Eileen Ramsay, current RNA Chairman, said, "This year's list of contenders demonstrates an amazing depth and breadth of work from our debut RNA authors, and includes everything from historical regency romance through to funny, witty rom-coms. I am absolutely thrilled that we have another superb group of graduates from our New Writers' Scheme, which is unique to our association. It's fantastic to see this new talent being nurtured through to publication. Congratulations to everyone on the list!"

Immi Howson, who runs the New Writers Scheme, commented, "It is wonderful to see debut authors graduating from the New Writers Scheme. The scheme is a real

testament to the support given to new authors by the RNA and the Joan Hessayon Awards is a great illustration of its value and success.”

The Award will be presented at the RNA Summer Party on Thursday 18th May at the Royal Over-Seas League, Park Place, London SW1A 1LR at 19.15.

The Joan Hessayon Award is generously sponsored by gardening expert Dr. David Hessayon OBE, in honour of his late wife Joan, who was a longstanding member of the RNA and a great supporter of its New Writers' Scheme.

The full shortlist for 2017 is:

Victoria Cornwall	<i>The Thief's Daughter</i>	Choc Lit
Kate Field	<i>The Magic of Ramblings</i>	Accent Press
Terri Fleming	<i>Perception</i>	Orion
Jen Gilroy	<i>The Cottage at Firefly Lake</i>	Forever, Grand Central, Hachette
Morton Gray	<i>The Girl on the Beach</i>	Choc Lit
Vivien Hampshire	<i>How to Win Back Your Husband</i>	HQ Digital
April Hardy	<i>Sitting Pretty</i>	Accent Press
Emily Kerr	<i>Who Does He Think He Is?</i>	Crooked Cat
Abbey MacMunn	<i>Touched</i>	Tirgearr Publishing
Arabella Sheen	<i>Castell's Passion</i>	Beachwalk Press Inc
Lynda Stacey	<i>House of Secrets</i>	Choc Lit

The New Writers' Scheme has been run by the RNA since 1962 and is unique among professional writing associations. It aims to encourage fresh talent in the writing of romantic novels that reflect all aspects of love and life, contemporary or historical.

Manuscripts submitted under the scheme are from unpublished authors and are read by an experienced writer or editor who provides invaluable feedback. Any manuscript that is subsequently published as a debut novel is eligible for the Joan

Hessayon Award. All eligible books are judged by a panel of experienced RNA members who are already published authors.

Cover images for all the novels, together with author photographs, can be found at:

[RNA's Joan Hessayon contending author images and book covers](#)

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