

THE INTERNATIONAL PROVERSE PRIZE
FOR UNPUBLISHED FICTION, NON-FICTION, OR POETRY
SUBMITTED IN ENGLISH (MAY BE A TRANSLATION)

A BRIEF HISTORY TO DATE

28 June 2022

The establishment of the Proverse Prize was announced in 2008 at The Proverse Prize Dinner, held in Hong Kong, and entries were received for the first competition in the summer of 2009. As of June 2022, eight women and eleven men have won or shared the Prize. (*The winners of the 2021 competition have not yet been announced.*)

They are:

Rebecca Tomasis, Laura Solomon, Gillian Jones, David Diskin, Peter Gregoire, Sophronia Liu, Birgit Linder, James McCarthy, Philip Chatting, Celia Classe, Lawrence Gray, Gustav Preller, Ivy Ngeow, Feng Chi-chun, D.J. Hamilton, J.P. Linstroth, Jack Mayer, Paola Caronni, George Watt.

Their work includes 9 novels, one young adult novella, one biography, one family memoir, five poetry collections, one short-story collection, and a mixed-genre collection of poetry and essays.

Considering separately the entries that became finalists and/or winners of supplementary (publication) prizes, and excluding those that finally became winners of the Proverse Prize, totally about 41 of these works, by a total of about 31 authors to date, from the 2009 to 2021 competitions inclusive have been published by Proverse Hong Kong. (*Only one finalist in the 2021 competition has yet been announced.*) The about 19 men and 12 women to date (some of the writers are repeat entrants, and have been counted once only) are:

Victor E. Apps, John Asome, Nicholas Binge, Liam Blackford, Rupert Kwan Yun Chan, Sally Dellow, Wayne Furlong, Patricia Glinton-Meicholas, Lawrence Gray, Patricia W. Grey, Andrew S. Guthrie, Emily Ho, Carolina Ilica, L.W. Illsley, Jupy James, Akin Jeje, Melody Kemp, Lelawattee Manoo-Rahming, Sergio Monteiro, Vishal Nanda, James Norcliffe, Jan Pearson, Jason S Polley, Damon Rose, Hayley Ann Solomon, Laura Solomon, Shahilla Shariff, James Tam, Penelope Pelham West, Sheng-Wei Wang, Dennis Wong.

Their work includes one detective fiction (by Dennis Wong), two works of historical non-fiction (John Asome, Sheng-Wei Wang), one edition of C19th century letters (Penelope Pelham West), thirteen novels (Nicholas Binge, Lawrence Gray, Patricia W. Grey, Peter Humphreys, Sergio Monteiro, Jan Pearson (4 times), Damon Rose, Laura Solomon (twice), James Tam), three young adult novellas (Victor D. Apps, Laura Solomon, Melody Kemp), one novella (Laura Solomon), four memoirs (by Rupert Kwan Yun Chan, Wayne Furlong, Emily Ho and Jason S Polley), 12 poetry collections (Liam Blackford, Sally Dellow, Patricia Glinton-Meicholas, Andrew S. Guthrie, Henrik Hoeg, Carolina Ilica, Akin Jeje, Lelawattee Manoo-Rahming, Vishal Nanda, James Norcliffe, Jason S Polley, Hayley Ann Solomon, Shahilla Shariff), two short story collections (by Lawrence Gray and Hayley Ann Solomon), a young adult epic (by L.W. Illsley), and an illustrated book for very young children (by Jupy James).

Considering all 60 entries published to date, i.e. (a) Winners of the Proverse Prize together with b) Winners of Supplementary Prizes and c) Finalists published, 18 have been poetry and 41 are in prose, with one mixed genre (prose and poetry).

Most of the published entries have been addressed to adult readers, but five are books for children or young adults.

Most of the entries published, including Proverse Prize winners, Supplementary Prize winners and Finalists published, have obtained very favourable advance notices (which we usually include within the text of the published works) as well as post-publication notices in the media and/or online.

One, Peter Gregoire's *Article 109*, became a Hong Kong best seller. Another, a biography of Sir George Macartney, *The Diplomat of Kashgar: A Very Special Agent*, sells steadily, partly because of the subject-matter, but particularly because of the well-accepted speaking engagements of the author, James McCarthy, who is active in seeking these opportunities.

On the strength of his 2019 entered novel, *Professor Everywhere*, Nicholas Binge obtained a London agent, and his second novel was a subject of competitive international bidding.

Feng Chi-shun's novel, *Three Wishes in Bardo* (Proverse Prize winner 2017), has been sub-licensed and published in 2022 as an audio-book by a USA publisher.

WHO HAVE THE ENTRANTS BEEN?

The youngest at the time they signed the entry form has been 24 and the oldest, 91.

Over time and on average, as shown above, slightly more than half have been men; but in individual years there has sometimes been a considerable imbalance between the genders.

Entrants up to now have described themselves, among others, as: poets, writers, artists and musicians, businessmen, professionals (such as accountants, chiropractors, economists, engineers, librarians, a clinic nurse, medical doctors, ministers of religion, a real estate developer, a solicitor, a university administrator), teachers (including school-teachers, tutors and university professors, a yoga-teacher, a life-coach and a photographer), students (including undergraduate and Phd students), editors, translators and researchers, journalists, screenwriters, and TV media writers, divers, housewives, military analysts, retired people (including pathologists, professors, botanists, geologists, nature conservationists, registered nurses, solicitors, sea-farers), a dog-walker and a Mrs Hong Kong World.

Some entrants have previously been published, others not. Some have won writing prizes before, some have not. For some, this is the first book they have ever completed and/or the first prize for which they have ever entered.

The 19 as of June 2022 now-published Proverse Prize winning entries from 2009-2020 inclusive include works by those born in the Peoples' Republic of China, England, Germany, Hong Kong, Italy, Malaysia, New Zealand, Scotland, South Africa, the United Arab Emirates and the USA.

For seven of these 19 writers, English is not their mother-tongue.

As for those who have won supplementary prizes or been published as finalists, they include those born in Australia, the Bahamas, Canada, China, Denmark, Gibraltar, Hong Kong, Kenya, New Zealand, Romania, Singapore, South Africa, the Bahamas, the United Kingdom, Trinidad and Tobago, the USA.

TRANSLATIONS INTO ENGLISH

The point is emphasised that, although entries should be SUBMITTED IN ENGLISH, translations into English have always been welcome. Up to 2015 inclusive, only translations into English of work not yet published in any language were eligible. From 2016 onwards, unpublished **first** translations into English of works already published in their original language have also been eligible to enter.

PRACTICAL DETAILS

The practical details for the receipt of Entry forms and fees as well as entered work are subject to ongoing revision in the light of experience. Depending on the time of year, the full details & entry form for either

the current or the previous year's competition are always on the website: www.proversepublishing.com. Most recently, the annual entry period has run from 7 May until 30 June. Information and entry via the Proverse submissions manager is available from 7 May each year: <<https://proversehongkong.submittable.com/submit>>.

Those considering entering are advised to check the Proverse website www.proversepublishing.com from time to time, or request a subscription to the free Proverse E-Newsletter, published every 4-6 weeks, by emailing the following address: <info@proversepublishing.com>. They are also invited to send the information on to any they know who may be interested.

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#### STANDARD OF ENTRIES

We have always been delighted by the work that has been submitted. Its excellence is reaffirmed by the fact that, over time, about eleven of those recognised by this competition later received competitive HKADC grants in support of publication.

One subsequently received publication support from the Ride Fund of the Royal Asiatic Society Hong Kong.

One work by a writer who sadly died before she knew that she had won the prize, won her a posthumous Phd in creative writing from an American University.

Excellent comments and reviews have been received.

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WINNERS OF THE PROVERSE PRIZE
(Founded 2008)

A maximum of two entrants may be awarded the title of “Winner” and share the cash prize.

WINNERS OF THE PROVERSE PRIZE
(Founded 2008)

To purchase any of the titles listed below in paperback, go to the Proverse page at the website of the Proverse Hong Kong distributor, the Chinese University of Hong Kong Press at:

<https://cup.cuhk.edu.hk/Proversehk>

Virtually all are also available in both paperback and ebook editions from all regional amazons and an increasing number of online retailers.

1. Rebecca Tomasis, for her novel, “Mishpacha – Family”. (PP2009, pub. 2010) ISBN: 978-988-19320-1-3. POD ISBN: 9789888228133
2. Laura Solomon, for her young adult novella, “Instant Messages”. (PP2009, pub. 2010) ISBN: 978-988-19320-2-0. POD ISBN: 9789888491544.
https://cup.cuhk.edu.hk/Proversehk?product_id=2008
3. Gillian Jones, for her novel, “A Misted Mirror”. (PP2010, pub. 2011) ISBN: 978-988-19932-3-6. POD ISBN: 9789881993236
4. David Diskin, for his novel, “The Village in the Mountains”. (PP2011, pub. 2012) ISBN: 978-988-19935-9-5. POD ISBN: 9789888228232
5. Peter Gregoire, for his novel, “Article 109”. (PP2011, pub. 2012) ISBN: 978-988-8167-33-3. POD ISBN: 9789888228195
6. Sophronia Liu, for her collection of family sketches, “A Shimmering Sea”. (PP2012, pub. 2013) ISBN: 978-988-8227-02-0. POD ISBN: 9789888491360
7. Birgit Linder, for her illustrated poetry collection, “Shadows in Deferment”. (PP2012, pub. 2013) ISBN: 978-988-8227-17-4. POD ISBN: 9789888228591
8. James McCarthy, for his biography, “The Diplomat of Kashgar”. (PP2013, pub. 2014) ISBN: 978-988-8227-62-4. POD ISBN: 9789888228140
9. Philip Chatting, for “The Snow Bridge and Other Stories”. (PP2014, pub. 2015) ISBN: 978-988-8227-82-2. POD ISBN: 9789888228287
10. Celia Claase, for her essay and poetry collection, “The Layers Between”. (PP2014, pub. 2015) ISBN: 978-988-8228-15-7. POD ISBN: 9789888227846
11. Lawrence Gray, for his novel, “Adam’s Franchise”. (PP2015, pub. 2016) ISBN: 978-988-8228-51-5. POD ISBN: 9789888228515 (NB No HK print-run)
12. Gustav Preller, for his novel, “Curveball: Life never comes at you straight”. (PP2015, pub. 2016) ISBN: 978-988-8228-49-2. POD ISBN: 9789888228508
13. Ivy Ngeow, for her novel, “Cry of the Flying Rhino”. (PP2016, pub. 2017) ISBN: 978-988-8228-97-3. POD ISBN (same as pbk): 9789888228973
Cry of the Flying Rhino: https://cup.cuhk.edu.hk/Proversehk?product_id=3726
14. Feng Chi-shun, for his novel, “Three Wishes in Bardo”. (PP2017, pub. 2018) ISBN: 978-988-8491-41-4. POD ISBN: 9789888491490
15. D.J. Hamilton, for “The Hummingbird Sometimes Flies Backwards” (poetry collection) (PP2018, pub. 2019) ISBN: 978-988-8491-79-7. POD ISBN: 9789888491711
16. J.P. Linstroth, “Epochal Reckonings” (PP2019, pub. 2020) ISBN: 978-988-8491-94-0. POD ISBN (same as pbk): 9789888491940
17. Jack Mayer, “Poems from the Wilderness” (PP2019, pub. 2020) ISBN: 978-988-8491-87-2. POD ISBN (same as pbk): 9789888491872
18. George Watt, “The Finley Confession” (PP2020, pub. 2021) ISBN: 978-988-8492-30-5 (pbk) . POD ISBN (same as pbk): 9789888492305
19. Paola Caronni, “Uncharted Waters” (PP2020, pub. 2021) ISBN: 978-988-8492-40-4 (pbk) . POD ISBN: 9789888492411

WINNERS OF SUPPLEMENTARY (PUBLICATION) PRIZES

1. Akin Jeje, for “Smoked Pearl: Poems of Hong Kong and Beyond” (PP2009, pub. 2010) ISBN: 978-988-19321-1-2 (pbk); ISBN: 978-988-8228-20-1 (POD); ISBN: 978-988-1932105 (Ebk)
2. Jason S Polley, for his poetry collection, “refrain” (PP2009, pub. 2010) ISBN: 978-988-19321-4-3 / 9789881932143. 1st. ed. ISBN: 978-988-8228-61-4 (POD); ISBN: 978-988-19321-6-7 (Ebk)
3. Rupert Kwan Yun Chan, for his autobiography, “Chocolate’s Brown Study in the Bag” (PP2009, pub. 2011) **ISBN:** 978-988-19932-1-2 (pbk) 1st ed; ISBN: 978-988-8491-35-3 (POD); ISBN: 978-988-19932-0-5 (Ebk)
4. Emily Ho, for her “Memoirs of an Ice-Cream Lady” (PP2010, pub. 2011) **ISBN-13:** 978-988-19933-0-4 pbk (1st ed); ISBN: 978-988-8228-25-6 (POD); 9789881993526 (Ebk)
5. Lelawattee Manoo-Rahming, for “Immortelle and Bhandaraa Poems” (PP2009, pub. 2011); **ISBN:** 978-988-19321-3-6 (pbk, 1st ed); ISBN: 978-988-8228-57-7 (POD, full colour); ISBN: 978-988-19935-3-3 (Ebk)
6. L.W. Illsley, for his young adult epic poem, “Astra and Sebastian” (PP2010, pub. 2011) **ISBN:** 978-988-19932-4-3; pbk (1st ed); ISBN: 978-988-19932-4-3 (POD); ISBN: 978-988-8167-06-7 (Ebk)
7. Sally Dellow, for her poetry collection, “Wonder, Lust & Itchy Feet” (PP2010, pub. 2011) ISBN 13: 978-988-19932-7-4 pbk 1st ed; ISBN: 978-988-8491-61-2 (POD, alternate 2nd ed);
8. Laura Solomon, for her novel, “Hilary and David” (PP2010, pub. 2011) **ISBN-13:** 978-988-19932-9-8 (pbk, 1st ed);
9. Jason S Polley, for “cemetery miss you” (PP2010, pub. 2011) **ISBN:** 978-988-19932-8-1 (pbk) 1st ed.; ISBN: 978-988-8228-47-8 (POD); ISBN: 978-988-1993502 (Ebk).
10. Patricia W. Grey, for her novel, “Death has a Thousand Doors” (PP2010, pub. 2011) **ISBN-13:** 978-988-19932-6-7 (pbk, 1st ed); ISBN: 978-988-8228-76-8 (POD); ISBN: 97889881993540 (Ebk)
11. Dennis Wong, for his novel, “Revenge From Beyond” (PP2010, pub. 2011) **ISBN 13:** 978-988-19932-5-0 (pbk 1st ed); ISBN: 978-988-8228-26-3 (POD); ISBN: 978-988-1993519 (Ebk)

Revenge from Beyond: https://cup.cuhk.edu.hk/Proversehk?product_id=1993
12. Victor E. Apps, for his young adult novella, “The Perilous Passage of Princess Petunia Peasant” (PP2013, pub. 2014) **ISBN:** 978-988-8227-56-3 (pbk) 1st ed.; ISBN: 978-988-8228-10-2 (POD); ISBN: 978-988-8227-68-6 (Ebk)
13. Shahilla Shariff, for her poetry collection, “Life-Lines” (PP2011, pub. 2012), 978-988-19935-7-1 (pbk, 1st ed); ISBN: 978-988-8227-05-1 (Ebk)
14. James Norcliffe, for his poetry collection, “Shadow Play” (PP2011, pub. 2012) ISBN: 978-988-19935-8-8. ASIN: 9881199358. 1st (pbk w CD); ISBN: 978-988-8492-06-0 / 9789888492060 (2020) (POD); ISBN: 978-988-8227-04-4 / 9789888227044 (20 May 2013) (Ebk)

15. Patricia Glinton-Meicholas, for her poetry collection, “Chasing Light” (PP2012, pub. 2013) **ISBN:** 978-988-8227-18-1. 1st ed. (pbk); **ISBN:** 978-988-8228-11-9 (POD)
16. James Tam, for his novel, “Man’s Last Song” (PP2011, pub. 2013); **ISBN:** 978-988-8167-34-0 (pbk 1st ed); **ISBN:** 978-988-8228-16-4 (POD); **ISBN:** 978-988-8227-10-5 (22 May 2013) (Ebk)
Man’s Last Song: https://cup.cuhk.edu.hk/Proversehk?product_id=2361
17. Lawrence Gray, for his collection of short stories, “Odds and Sods” (PP2012, pub. 2013) **ISBN** 13: 978-988-8227-16-7 (pbk 1st ed); **ISBN:** 978-988-8228-18-8 (POD); **ISBN:** 978-988-8227-73-0 (9 January 2015) (Ebk).
18. Laura Solomon, for her novella, Vera Magpie (PP2012, pub. 2013) **ISBN:** 978-988-8227-19-8 (Ebk).
19. Laura Solomon, for her young adult novella, “University Days” (PP2010, pub. 2014), **ISBN** 13: 978-988-8227-61-7 / 9789888227617 (1st pbk),
https://cup.cuhk.edu.hk/Proversehk?product_id=3195;
ISBN:978-988-8227-61-7 (POD, 3rd Ed); **ISBN** 13: 978-988-8227-21-1 (Ebk)
20. Jupy James, for her picture book, “Hazel Brown: A Very Special Vet” (PP2013, pub. 2014)
ISBN: 978-988-8227-00-6 (1st, pbk). 280 wide x 240 high x 4 mm spine. (11.00” wide x 9.5” high);
ISBN-13: 978-988-8492-27-5 / 9789888492275. (KDP POD, 6 March 2021), USD22.00. 2nd. 36pp. 8.5in. high x 11.0in. wide; **ISBN-13:** 978-988-8492-28-2 / 9789888492282. (KDP Ebook, via KDP Kids), USD9.99. 7 March 2021. 3rd. 37pp.
21. Jan Pearson, for her novel, “Red Bird Summer” (PP2012, pub. 2014) **ISBN:** 978-988-8227-12-9 (1st pbk); **ISBN:** 978-988-8228-02-7 (POD); **ISBN:** 978-988-8227-75-4 (Ebk)
Red Bird Summer: https://cup.cuhk.edu.hk/Proversehk?product_id=2816
22. Andrew Guthrie, for his poetry collection, “Alphabet” (PP2013, pub. 2015). **ISBN:** 978-988-8227-22-8 (1st pbk); **ISBN:** 978-988-8228-09-6 (POD); **ISBN:** 978-988-8227-92-1 (Ebk)
23. Jan Pearson, for her novel, “Tiger Autumn” (PP2011, pub. 2015) **ISBN-13:** 978-988-8227-31-0 (1st Ed, pbk); **ISBN-13:** 978-988-8492-02-2 / 9789888492022 (POD); **ISBN:** 978-988-8227-86-0 (Ebk).
Tiger Autumn: https://cup.cuhk.edu.hk/Proversehk?product_id=3249
24. Henrik Hoeg, for his poetry collection, “Irreverent Poems for Pretentious People” (PP2015, pub. 2016) **ISBN:** 978-988-8228-34-8 (1st ed, pbk); **ISBN:**978-988-8228-39-3 (2nd Ed, POD); **ISBN:** 978-988-8228-43-0 (Ebk).
25. Jan Pearson, for her novel, “Black Tortoise Winter” (PP2014, pub 2016) **ISBN:** 978-988-8228-06-5. (1st ed, POD); 978-988-8228-72-0 (Ebk)
Black Tortoise Winter: https://cup.cuhk.edu.hk/Proversehk?product_id=3486
26. Hayley Ann Solomon, for her poetry collection, “Celestial Promise” (PP2016, pub. 2017) **ISBN** 13: 978-988-8228-73-7 (1st, POD) no HK Print-run) (1st); **ISBN:** 978-988-8491-02-5 (Ebk)
27. Damon Rose, for his novel, “The Handover Murders” (PP2017, pub. 2018) **ISBN-13:** 978-988-8491-47-6 / 9789888491476 (pbk, 1st ed); ALTERNATE EDITION (POD): 978-988-8491-42-1 / 9789888491421;

The Handover Murders: https://cup.cuhk.edu.hk/Proversehk?product_id=3843

28. Hayley Ann Solomon, for, “Under the shade of the Feijoa Trees and other stories” (PP2017, pub. 2018) ISBN: 978-988-8491-44-5 / 9789888491445. (1st ed., POD); ISBN: 978-988-8492-03-9 (Ebk)
29. Wayne Furlong, for his memoirs, “Buddha is a Punk Skater” (PP2017, pub. 2018) ISBN: 978-988-8491-48-3 (pbk, 1st ed); ISBN: 978-988-8491-45-2 (POD);
30. Sergio Monteiro, for his novel, “Enoch’s Muse” (PP2017, pub. 2018). ISBN-13: 978-988-8491-50-6 / 9789888491506 (pbk, 1st ed); ISBN: 978-988-8491-46-9 (POD);
31. Carolina Ilica, for her poetry collection, “Violet” (translation from Romanian) (PP2017, pub. 2019) ISBN: 978-988-8491-43-8. (1st ed, POD)
32. Peter Humphreys, for his novel, “Hong Kong Rocks” (PP2019, pub. 2019) ISBN-13: 978-988-8491-83-4 (1st ed, pbk); ISBN-13: 978-988-8491-72-8 (POD); ISBN: 978-988-8491-80-3 (Ebk).
Hong Kong Rocks: https://cup.cuhk.edu.hk/Proversehk?product_id=3999
33. Nicolas Binge, for his novel, “Professor Everywhere” (PP2019, pub. 2020) ISBN: 978-988-8491-84-1 / 9789888491841. (1st ed, HK pbk); ISBN: 978-988-8491-85-8 // 9789888491858 (POD); ISBN: 978-988-8491-86-5 // 9789888491865 (Ebk).

Professor Everywhere: https://cup.cuhk.edu.hk/Proversehk?product_id=4035

34. Jan Pearson, for her novel, “Blue Dragon Spring” (PP2019, pub. 2020) ISBN-13: 978-988-8492-15-2 (9789888492152) (1st ed, POD); ISBN: 978-988-8492-16-9 (9789888492169) (Ebk)
Blue Dragon Spring: https://cup.cuhk.edu.hk/Proversehk?product_id=4170
35. John Asome, for “Coolie Ships of the Chinese Diaspora (1846-1874)” (PP2019, pub. 2020) ISBN: 978-988-8491-98-8 (9789888491988) (1st ed, HK print-run); ISBN 9789888492183 (POD w 5 col. & 3 bw plates); 9789888491995 (POD with 8 b/w plates and no colour plates); 9789888492176 (Ebk)
36. Liam Blackford, for his poetry collection “A Gateway Has Opened” (PP2020, pub. 2021)
37. Vishal Nanda, for his poetry collection, “Please Stand Back From The Platform Door” (PP2020, pub. 2021)
38. Penelope Pelham West for her edition of nineteenth century Letters, “London letters Home” (PP2020, pub. 2021)
39. Melody Kemp for her young adult novella, “Tree Crime” (PP2021, pub. 2022)

FINALISTS PUBLISHED

Sheng-Wei Wang, “The Last Journey of the San Bao Eunuch, Admiral Zheng He”. (PP2018, pub. 2019) ISBN: 978-988-8491-66-7 / 9789888491667 (1st ed HK pbk); ISBN-13: 978-988-8491-81-0 / 9789888491810 (POD); ISBN-13: 978-988-8491-82-7 (Ebk)

Lawrence Gray, “Cop Show Heaven” (PP2013, pub. 2015). ISBN: 978-988-8227-80-8