



## PRESS RELEASE

### John Vernon Lord named Moira Gemmill Illustrator of the Year at the V&A Illustration Awards 2018

Supported by the Enid Linder Foundation and the Moira Gemmill Memorial Fund

Gallery 88a

16 May – 24 June 2018

Admission Free

John Vernon Lord has been awarded the Moira Gemmill Illustrator of the Year and Best Illustrated Book prize at the V&A Illustration Awards 2018, for *Ulysses* (The Folio Society). His work will be displayed alongside the winning artworks from each of the categories and the commended student shortlist from today. This year's winners reflect a shift towards a handcrafted aesthetic, through the use of both traditional and contemporary methods. The display includes studies and preliminary drawings to show artists' working processes.

Frank Skinner, comedian and broadcaster, Sally Hales, Editor of Artists & Illustrators Magazine and Tristram Hunt, Director of the V&A judged the overall winner, Best Illustrated Book, Best Editorial, and Best Book Cover categories. The student prize was judged by Richard Allen, recipient of the Illustrator of the Year prize in 2017 and Martin Colyer, writer and art director. The competition has been running since 1972.

**Tristram Hunt, Director of the V&A said:** *"The V&A Illustration Awards are integral to our founding mission, to promote creativity, ingenuity and imagination. The shortlisted works this year were sophisticated, skilful and a pleasure to judge. I congratulate John for his thoughtful and beautiful work, which perfectly captures the spirit of Ulysses and will delight visitors who come to see our Illustration Awards display."*

The winners of each of the 4 categories are as follows:

*Best Illustrated Book and the Moira Gemmill Illustrator of the Year Prize: John Vernon Lord for Ulysses, London: The Folio Society, 2017.* Praised by the judges for his thoughtful interpretation of Ulysses through metaphors and intricate geometrical patterns, acclaimed illustrator Vernon Lord has produced work to accompany many of the great literature classics. His work combines practice as a book illustrator, children's author, and scholar.

*Best Editorial Illustration: Cat O'Neil for RSA Benefits, in French newspaper Libération.* O'Neil was commended by the judges for her melancholic and strong representation of a family financially struggling on state benefits. She holds a First-Class degree in Illustration from Edinburgh College of Art. Her clients include The New York Times, WIRED, The Economist. She is also author of *Home*, an Arts Council funded graphic novel about mixed race heritage and identity.

*Best Book Cover Design: Suzanne Dean for Bluets, published by Jonathan Cape, 2017.* Dean collected, painted and photographed all things blue and layered them together on Photoshop for the cover of a non-fiction title about the colour blue. The judges praised her for successfully creating unity for the book as a whole and perfectly reflecting the writer's narrative. Dean is Creative Director of Vintage Classics, an acclaimed illustrator, and over the years has created a vast number of diverse and memorable covers.

*Student Illustrator of the Year: Joseph Namara Hollis for The Big City.* Namara Hollis created the piece using dip pen and ink combined with monoprint textures, compiled digitally into three colour separations, with details that echo observations made while travelling through South East Asia. He was praised by the judges for bringing charm and sophistication in equal measure to his piece. Joseph is currently studying for an MA in Children's Book Illustration at Anglia Ruskin University.

*Student Illustrator of the Year: Runner Up: Fay Troote for The Diving Pool.* Troote was praised by the judges for her mesmerising, and atmospheric approach through seemingly accidental mark making. She is currently studying for a BA in Arts Illustration at Bournemouth Arts University.

The prize money for each of the four awards categories is £3,000, and the Moira Gemmill Illustrator of the Year Prize is worth an additional £5,000. The student runner-up prize is worth £2,000. This year's shortlist was drawn from over 1,100 submissions, a 42% increase on last year's competition. Previous winners of the Illustration Awards include Sir Quentin Blake, Ralph Steadman, Posy Simmonds, Sara Fanelli, and Yasmeen Ismail.

– ENDS –

#### **Notes to editors:**

1. The Moira Gemmill Illustrator of the Year Prize is named in memory of the late Moira Gemmill, the V&A's former Director of Design.

2. A selection of press images are available to download free of charge from [pressimages.vam.ac.uk](http://pressimages.vam.ac.uk)
3. For further PRESS information about the exhibition, contact the Press Office on 020 7942 2502 or [press.office@vam.ac.uk](mailto:press.office@vam.ac.uk) (not for publication).