

Edinburgh writers Val McDermid & Doug Johnstone in the running for best crime novel award

Public vote will help choose the winner of the UK's most prestigious crime writing prize, *Theakston Old Peculier Crime Novel of the Year 2023*

The search for the best crime novel of 2023 is now underway – with two Edinburgh authors in the starting line-up.

Now in its nineteenth year, the *Theakston Old Peculier Crime Novel of the Year* is a hugely sought-after accolade celebrating crime fiction at its very best. There are twenty outstanding authors in the [longlist for the award](#) this year. This includes the doyenne of crime writing world **Val McDermid**, a previous winner who is back in contention for her scintillating second instalment of the Allie Burns series, **1989**. Also representing Edinburgh is Val's bandmate in the [Fun Lovin' Crime Writers](#), **Doug Johnstone**, for his explosive thriller ***Black Hearts*** which follows the Skelf women's struggles with increasingly unnerving cases.

Readers from across the UK are now being asked to choose the six authors who will reach the shortlist, which will be revealed on Thursday 15 June. The eventual winner will be announced on the opening night of Theakston Old Peculier Crime Writing Festival on Thursday 20 July. They will receive £3,000

and a handmade, engraved beer barrel provided by T&R Theakston Ltd.

Simon Theakston, Executive Director of Theakston, said: *“Each year I eagerly await the long list announcement for the Theakston Old Peculier Crime Novel of the Year and every year I’m reminded of the phenomenal talent in the crime fiction writing world, whether a returning icon or a rising star. I’m looking forward to a celebratory toast of Old Peculier in July, but for now, we raise a glass to all the exceptional nominees as the shortlist vote is taken to the public.”*

Chief Executive of Harrogate International Festivals, Sharon Canavar, commented: *“We are delighted to announce the 2023 longlist for the Theakston Old Peculier Crime Novel of the Year, with an exceptional collection of the UK and Ireland’s best crime fiction novels from the past year. The Award is an integral part of the Festival and with a gripping mix of subgenres nominated, from psychological thrillers to murder mysteries, we can’t wait to see how the public vote this year.”*

The fate of this year’s leading crime fiction authors is now in the bloody hands of the public – let’s make sure Val and Doug make the cut!

Vote here: <https://harrogatetheakstoncrimeaward.com/>

The full Theakston Old Peculier Crime Novel of the Year 2023 longlist is:

- *The Murder Book* by Mark Billingham (Little, Brown Book Group; Little Brown)
- *The Botanist* by M.W. Craven (Little, Brown Book Group; Constable)
- *Into The Dark* by Fiona Cummins (Pan Macmillan; Macmillan/Pan)

- *The Paris Apartment* by Lucy Foley (HarperCollins; HarperFiction)
- *The Locked Room* by Elly Griffiths (Quercus)
- *The Twyford Code* by Janice Hallett (Profile Books; Viper)
- *Bad Actors* by Mick Herron (John Murray Press; Baskerville)
- *The Family Remains* by Lisa Jewell (Cornerstone; Century Fiction)
- *Black Hearts* by Doug Johnstone (Orenda Books)
- *The Lost Man of Bombay* by Vaseem Khan (Hodder & Stoughton)
- *The Last Party* by Clare Mackintosh (Little, Brown Book Group; Sphere)
- *All I Said Was True* by Imran Mahmood (Bloomsbury Publishing; Raven Books)
- *Wrong Place Wrong Time* by Gillian McAllister (Penguin Random House; Michael Joseph)
- *1989* by Val McDermid (Little, Brown Book Group; Little Brown)
- *The Heretic* by Liam McIlvanney (HarperCollins; HarperFiction)
- *Blue Water* by Leonora Nattrass (Profile Books; Viper)
- *May God Forgive* by Alan Parks (Canongate Books)
- *Truly Darkly Deeply* by Victoria Selman (Quercus)
- *Reputation* by Sarah Vaughan (Simon & Schuster)

The It Girl by Ruth Ware (Simon & Schuster)



Val McDermid at The Theakston Old Peculier Crime Writing Festival. Saturday 24th July 2021. Picture Credit Charlotte Graham



Author Doug Johnstone, longlisted for the Theakston Old Peculier Crime Novel of the Year 2023

'A new outing for the Skelfs deserves dancing
in the streets of Edinburgh' *Val McDermid*

DOUG
JOHNSTONE

BLACK
HEARTS

'Wonderful characters:
flawed, funny and brave'
Sunday Times

Death is just
the beginning...

Black Hearts by Doug Johnstone

Val
McDermid

THE NUMBER ONE
SUNDAY TIMES BESTSELLER

1989



THERE'S NOTHING LIKE
A KILLER STORY . . .

1989 by Val McDermid