

Yasnaya Polyana Book Prizes for 2019 Announced

The prizes are awarded by the Tolstoy Estate Museum and Samsung Electronics

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This month the Yasnaya Polyana Literary Awards, a joint project of the Tolstoy Estate Museum and Samsung Electronics, announced the 2019 winners.

Sergei Samsonov won the main award in Contemporary Russian Prose for his novel “Hold On To This Land” (“Держаться за землю”). The Foreign Literature Prize went to Hernán Rivera Letelier for his novel “El arte de la resurrección” (“The Art of the Resurrection”) and his translator, Daria Sinitsyna.

Two more awards were conferred: Igor Volgin was recognized for his television show “The Glass Bead Game” in the category of Event, and Grigory Sluzhittel won the special Samsung Reader’s Choice Prize for his novel “Savely’s Days.”

The Yasnaya Polyana literary prizes are awarded to works that follow the traditions of classical Russian literature. This year more than 130 books were nominated, a collection of works that was then winnowed down to a short list of 43 finalists.

The awards are among the newest in Russia — since 2003 — and are the largest in monetary value. The winner of the best book of Contemporary Russian Prose receives 3 million rubles (about \$47,000); the author of the best work of foreign literature receives 1.5 million rubles (about \$23,500); and the translator, winner of the event category, and reader's choice laureate each receive 500,000 rubles (almost \$8,000). In addition, each author on the short list receives 1 million rubles (almost \$16,000).

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