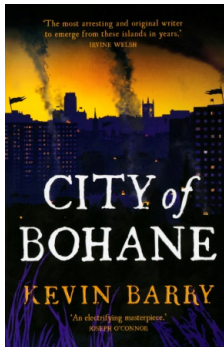


SHORTLIST FOR THE 2011 COSTA FIRST NOVEL AWARD

Judges

Henry Layte
Emma Lee-Potter
Jojo Moyes

Owner, The Book Hive Bookshop, Norwich
Journalist
Author



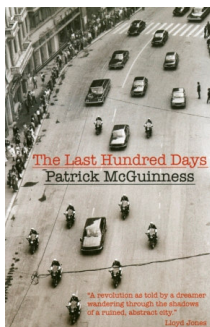
City of Bohane by Kevin Barry (*Jonathan Cape*)

Forty years in the future. The once-great city of Bohane on the west coast of Ireland is on its knees, infested by vice and split along tribal lines. There are the posh parts of town, but it is in the slums and backstreets of Smoketown, the tower blocks of the Northside Rises and on the eerie bogs of Big Nothin' that the city really lives. For years,

the city has been in the cool grip of Logan Hartnett, the dapper godfather of the Hartnett Fancy gang. But there's trouble in the air: they say his old nemesis is back in town; his trusted henchman are getting ambitious; and his missus wants him to give it all up and go straight... And then there's his mother.

Kevin Barry's story collection, *There Are Little Kingdoms*, won the Rooney Prize in 2007. His short stories have appeared in, amongst other journals, *The New Yorker*, the *Granta Book of the Irish Short Story*, and *Best European Fiction 2011*. He previously worked as a columnist at the *Irish Examiner* and the *Glasgow Sunday Herald* and he now divides his time between County Sligo and Dublin. *City of Bohane* was named one of the Waterstone's best first novels of 2011 and has been optioned for film by Parallel Productions.

Judges: "Startlingly original – a tour de force of language and imagination."



The Last Hundred Days by Patrick McGuinness (*Seren*)

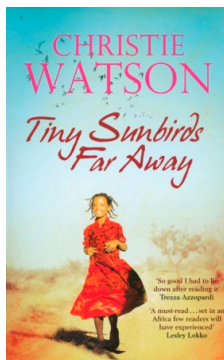
A young English student arrives in Bucharest to take up a job he never applied for and whose duties are unclear. He soon finds himself uncomfortably, and often dangerously, close to the eye of the storm. He learns the uncertainty of friendships in a surveillance society: friendships that are

compromised and riddled with danger and duplicity. He encounters dissidents, party apparatchiks, black-marketeers, diplomats, spies and ordinary Romanians, their lives all

intertwined against a background of severe poverty and repression as Europe's most paranoid regime plays out its bloody endgame.

Patrick McGuinness was born in Tunisia in 1968 and lived in Bucharest in the years leading up to the Romanian revolution. He is a Professor of French and Comparative Literature at Oxford University and a Fellow of St Anne's College where he has taught since 1998. He has won several awards for his poetry and contributes regularly to the *TLS* and *The London Review of Books*, as well as reading and speaking at literary festivals around the world. He lives between Oxford and North West Wales.

Judges: "Drags you through the smoky backrooms of the dying days of Communist Romania. Funny, insightful and compelling."



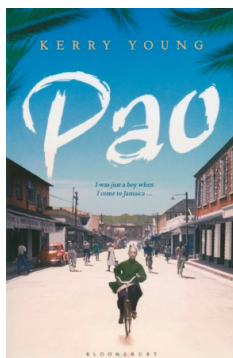
Tiny Sunbirds Far Away by Christie Watson (*Quercus*)

Blessing and her brother Ezikiel adore their larger-than-life father, their glamorous mother and their comfortable life in Lagos. But all that changes when their father leaves them for another woman. Their mother is fired from her job at the Royal Imperial Hotel – only married women can work there – and soon they have to quit their air-conditioned

apartment to go and live with their grandparents in a compound in the Niger Delta. Adapting to life with a poor countryside family is a shock beyond measure.

Christie Watson trained as a paediatric nurse at Great Ormond Street Hospital and worked as a nurse, educator and senior sister for over ten years before joining UEA for her MA in Creative Writing, where she won the Malcolm Bradbury Bursary. Christie lives in South London with her Nigerian Muslim partner and their large dual heritage, multi-faith family.

Judges: "Funny, heartbreaking and utterly real: the characters lodge in your imagination long after you finish the book."



Pao by Kerry Young (*Bloomsbury*)

Kingston, 1938. Fourteen-year-old Yang Pao steps off the ship from China with his mother and brother, after his father has died fighting for the revolution. They are to live with Zhang, the 'godfather' of Chinatown, who mesmerises Pao with stories of glorious Chinese socialism on one hand, and the reality of his protection business on the other. When

Pao takes over the family's affairs he becomes a powerful man. He sets his sights on



marrying well, but when Gloria Campbell, a black prostitute, comes to him for help he is drawn to her beauty and strength. As the political violence escalates in the 1960s, the lines between Pao's socialist ideals and private ambitions become blurred. Jamaica is transforming, the tides of change are rising, and the one-time boss of Chinatown finds himself cast adrift.

Kerry Young was born in Kingston, Jamaica to a Chinese father and mother of mixed Chinese-African heritage. She came to England in 1965 at the age of ten. Kerry's early life with her father, a businessman who operated within Kingston's shadow economy, provided the inspiration for Pao. She lives in Leicestershire.

Judges: "A dazzling multi-cultural story that gives a real insight into growing up in pre-independence Jamaica and beyond."