

# THE WORLD, IN WORDS

CHARLOTTE SQUARE GARDENS  
EDINBURGH  
[www.edbookfest.co.uk](http://www.edbookfest.co.uk)  
13 – 29 AUGUST 2011

## NEWS RELEASE



in association with

**theguardian**

Friday 19 August 2011

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For further information on the James Tait Black Memorial Prizes please go to: [www.ed.ac.uk/james-tait-black/](http://www.ed.ac.uk/james-tait-black/)

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CHARLOTTE SQUARE GARDENS  
EDINBURGH  
[www.edbookfest.co.uk](http://www.edbookfest.co.uk)  
13 – 29 AUGUST 2011

## NEWS RELEASE



Friday 19 August 2011

### New Writer Wins Oldest Book Prize At Edinburgh International Book Festival

Debut novelist Tatjani Soli and theatre critic Hilary Spurling have joined the list of acclaimed authors who have won the James Tait Black Prizes, Britain's oldest literary awards. American author Tatjani Soli is the recipient of the fiction prize for her first novel *The Lotus Eaters*. Hilary Spurling, former literary editor of *The Spectator* claims the biography prize for her book *Burying the Bones: Pearl Buck in China*. They join the ranks of acclaimed previous winners such as Ian McEwan, Cormac McCarthy and A.S Byatt.

The winners of the prizes – awarded annually by the School of Literatures, Languages and Cultures at the University of Edinburgh – were announced this evening at the Edinburgh International Book Festival. The prizes are for the best work of fiction and the best biography published during the previous calendar year. They are the only major British book awards judged by scholars and students of literature.

Tatjani Soli said: "The lineage of the James Tait Black Prizes speaks for itself, and I am humbled and so proud to be part of it. This award is an undreamed of honour that I will always treasure."

Hilary Spurling said: "I'm proud and pleased to be in the company of so many of my favourite writers, who've already won this first and most elegant of book prizes."

Nick Barley, Director of the Edinburgh International Book Festival said "We are delighted to welcome back this prestigious prize to Charlotte Square Gardens. Tatjani Soli is a worthy winner, and we were privileged to enjoy her reading at the event this evening. Hilary Spurling enthralled our audience with *Burying the Bones: Pearl Buck in China* at the Book Festival last year, and we are thrilled that she has been awarded the Biography prize."

Dr James Loxley, Head of English of Literature at the University of Edinburgh said: "We're delighted to be honouring such outstanding works. The readers and judges have once again shown the acumen of the knowledgeable booklover and literary critic, which has been the hallmark of these prizes for more than ninety years."

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