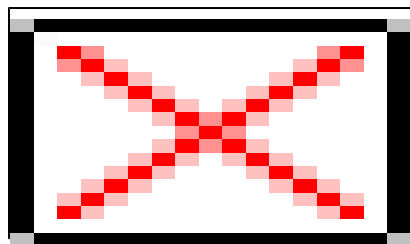




COSTA CHILDREN'S BOOK AWARD 2019: SHORTLIST FEATURES

Former Children's Laureate Malorie Blackman and acclaimed author Jenny Downham are on the shortlist for the **2019 Costa Children's Book Award** alongside newcomers Jasbinder Bilan and Nicholas Downing.



Click the links below to read new Books for Keeps feature articles on each of the shortlisted authors.

The 2019 Costa Children's Award shortlist

[Asha & the Spirit Bird](#) [1] by Jasbinder Bilan (Chicken House)

The judges described the book which is Bilan's debut and winner of the **2017 The Times Children's Fiction Competition** as: 'Imaginative, magical, heartrending and hopeful.'

[Read our interview with Jasbinder](#) [2].

[Crossfire](#) [3] by Malorie Blackman (Penguin Books)

Crossfire is the fifth novel in the **Noughts & Crosses** series shortly to become a BBC TV series. The judges said: 'A punchy, pacey, relevant and thought-provoking book for young and old alike.'

[Judge Bali Rai appraises Crossfire.](#) [4]

[In the Shadow of Heroes](#) [5] by Nicholas Bowling (Chicken House)

This is Bowling's second book and follows **Witch Born**. The judges described it as: 'a richly-observed and intriguing rip-roaring ancient world adventure.'

[Read our interview with Nicholas](#) [6].

[Furious Thing](#) [7] by Jenny Downham (David Fickling Books)

The judges said: 'A fantastic British YA novel - real, honest and occasionally harrowing, but never without humanity.'

[Jenny describes the process of writing Furious Thing](#) [8].

The winner will be announced on Monday 6th January 2020 and receives £5,000. The winning book will then be considered for the **2019 Costa Book of the Year** and a chance of winning a further £30,000 alongside the winners in the four other categories. The Book of the Year has twice been won by a children's book: Philip Pullman's **The Amber Spyglass** in 2001, and **The Lie Tree** by Frances Hardinge in 2015.

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Links:

- [1] <http://mail.booksforkeeps.co.uk/childrens-books/asha-and-the-spirit-bird>
- [2] <http://mail.booksforkeeps.co.uk/issue/239/childrens-books/articles/featured-author/an-interview-with-costa-shortlisted-author-jasbin>
- [3] <http://mail.booksforkeeps.co.uk/childrens-books/crossfire>
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