



THIRD NATIONAL LITERARY CONTEST FOR THE GRAHAM MASTERTON AWARD

"WRITTEN IN PRISON", Wołów 2019

The third edition of the nationwide literary competition for prisoners under the aegis of Graham Masterton has already started. A well-known British author of horrors, thrillers and detective stories, just like in previous years, will choose the winners himself, and in September he will fly to Poland to give them prizes personally.

The competition is the aftermath of a meeting with the prisoners of the Wołów Priory during the writer's visit to the Wrocław Agglomeration as part of the project Aggregated Agglomeration in 2016. At that time, Masterton was not only impressed by the insight of questions asked by prisoners, but also by the fact that most of them were asked in English.

In the two previous editions of the competition, 235 stories have been received from prisoners of penitentiary institutions from all over Poland. The English writer is impressed by this number:

“On my very first visit to Wołów Prison, it became clear to me that although the inmates were interested in reading books and writing, and had a very good library, they lacked any way of expressing their feelings to the outside world.

I thought that it would give their self-esteem a boost if they could write stories that they knew were going to be read by people beyond the prison walls. It would also give them a therapeutic outlet for all their frustrations and their anger and their feeling of failure and disappointment.

This turned out to have an even better effect than I had hoped. Although some of the stories were fantasies, many of them had a deep core of painful reality.

The contest is obviously popular amongst inmates, because we have had 235 entries in the first two years, and we are hoping for even more in this third year. I am also hoping that we can put together an anthology so that even more readers will be able to share the extraordinary insight that these stories give us into the minds of offenders.”

The deadline for entries to the competition is the end of May 2019. After pre-selection, the best stories will be translated into English and sent to the writer who will choose the winners

- the main prize and 9 runner-up prizes will be awarded. The winner will receive a special trophy, and the entire awarded ten will lay their hands on prizes in the form of portable DVD players. In September, Masterton will fly to Poland to give the prizes personally. However, there are no losers in the competition - as before, all participants will receive souvenir pens and letters designed by the writer himself as well as personalized letters of gratitude.

The organisers of the competition, along with the writer, are: Wrocław Agglomeration Association, Wołów Penitentiary, REBIS Publishing House, Albatros Publishing House and the Municipal and Communal Public Library in Wołów.

Caption for the photo:

Graham Masterton (second from the right) during the solemn announcement of the results of the second edition of the competition, next to Katarzyna Janusik, translator of works into English, Robert Kuczera, director of the Prison in Wołów and Tomasz Szponder, president of Rebis Publishing House.

Photo: Marta Boska