

GRAHAM MASTERTON ‘WRITTEN IN PRISON’ AWARD
PRESS RELEASE

Inmates of all of Poland’s prisons are being invited to write a short story. The best will win an engraved plaque and a hamper of fruits and sweets. The second and third best will receive certificates and hampers. They will also be given books by Rebis Publishing House.

The idea for the contest came from British author Graham Masterton after he visited Wołów prison early in October, 2016. He was on a promotional tour of the towns around Wrocław, accompanied by Marcin Dymalski of the Union of Municipalities and Communes of Wrocław Agglomeration.

Graham is a popular novelist of horror and crime fiction. His great-grandfather was Polish and emigrated to England in the 1890s to avoid being enlisted in the Russian Imperial Army. He swam the Wisla to escape and eventually became a theatrical agent in London.

Graham first visited Poland in 1989 with his Polish wife Wiescka, and he has been a frequent visitor ever since. His novel *The Manitou* was the first Western horror novel to be published in Poland since World War Two. A former editor of the men’s magazine *Penthouse*, he is also known for his bestselling sex guides such as *Magia Seksu*.

He was so impressed by the interest shown in his books by the inmates of Wołów Prison and by the intelligence of their questions that it occurred to him that they might not only enjoy writing fiction themselves, and that they might derive considerable benefit from it, too.

“Most people have some kind of a story to tell, but prison inmates never get the chance to express their ideas and their emotions to the outside world,” said Graham. “By entering the Graham Masterton ‘Written In Prison’ contest, they can feel that their stories are being given attention beyond the walls of their cells.”

The response from Wołów's Warden and the Wrocław Agglomeration was immediate and positive, and the contest will also have the strong support of Graham's publishers in Poznan, Rebis, and the Wrocław public library.

"The prisoners can write about anything they like," said Graham. "Even though they're locked up, I want to see them setting their imagination free."

The deadline for entries will be March 31, 2017. In May, representatives of the Wrocław Agglomeration and Rebis Publishing House will select the best stories and translate them so that Graham can read them for himself and pick the winner and the runners-up. In June, he will come to Poland to present the prizes and certificates personally to the winners.

All entrants will receive a souvenir pen and a letter of thanks for their participation.

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