

EMBARGOED UNTIL FRIDAY 19 SEPTEMBER, 6pm

THE
ILSE SCHWEPCKE
PRIZE



Shortlists announced for the world's most valuable travel writing prize for women

The finalists for the inaugural Ilse Schwepcke Prize, a new award for the year's best travel book in English written by a woman, have been chosen. Two winning authors, chosen by an English- and a German-speaking panel of writers and booksellers, will receive £5,000 or 6.000 Euros respectively in a ceremony at the Frankfurt Book Fair 2025.

The jury for the English language has selected four titles:

- Victoria Whitworth, *Dust and Pomegranates* (Apollo)
- Viv Groskop, *One Ukrainian Summer* (Ithaka Press)
- Kapka Kassabova, *Anima* (Penguin / Vintage)
- Ursula Martin, *One Woman Walks Europe* (Honno Welsh Women's Press)

In statement released to announce the shortlist, the UK Jury said 'It has been a great honour to be on the judging panel for the first Ilse Schwepcke Prize, and an inspiration to read our way through such a strong and varied selection of writing by women of all ages. Taken together, the books had much to teach us about courage, resilience and determination. They captured the many and varied creative responses of women to the world. Some interrogated the same important themes, such as climate change, pandemic and sadly, trauma and sexual violence, as well as reminding us of the thrill of a first foreign adventure and the enduring beauty of the natural world. It was a struggle to draw up a short list from this rich mix, but nevertheless we were unanimous in our choices.'

The inaugural English-language prize was judged by: Helena Attlee, travel writer and author of the acclaimed

The Land Where Lemons Grow; Arabella Friesen, bookseller at John Sandoe Books; and author and style and travel blogger Stephanie Yeboah.

The German-speaking jury also selected four titles for their shortlist:

- Maike Albath, *Bitteres Blau* (Berenberg Verlag)
- Regina Hilber, *Am Rande* (Theodor Kramer Gesellschaft)
- Millay Hyatt, *Nachtzugtage* (Friedenauer Presse)
- Birgit Lutz, *Mein Spitzbergen* (mareverlag)

The German-language prize was judged by Antje Rávik Strubel, author of *Blaue Frau*, Maria Klöcker, founder of the Weltenleser bookshop in Frankfurt am Main, and Martina Wimmer, who regularly contributes to *Merian* und *mare* magazines.

The two shortlists will be celebrated at an event on Saturday, September 20th at John Sandoe Books in London.

Both prizes will be awarded at a ceremony during the Frankfurt Book Fair on Friday, 17 October at 5.30pm on the Leseinsel der unabhängigen Verlage (Hall 3.1 C105).

Barbara Schwepcke, with her uncle Karl-Burkhard Haus, set up the prize in memory of her mother, Ilse, a devotee of travel writing and founding editor of the Armchair Traveller series produced by Barbara's company Haus Publishing, based in London. Honouring Ilse's roots in both Germany and the UK, the Ilse Schwepcke Prize has a German-language sister prize (Der Ilse-Schwepcke-Preis) awarded alongside it for the best travel book by a woman writing in German.

The two Ilse Schwepcke Prizes are administered by the Society of Authors in London and Kirchner Kommunikation in Berlin respectively.

For more information about the prizes please visit:
<https://www.ilseschwepckeprize.co.uk/>
<https://www.ilseschwepckepreis.de/>

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