

Slightly Foxed



The Biographers' Club
Supporting, promoting and connecting
biographers at all levels

The Biographers' Club and Slightly Foxed are delighted to announce that the winner of the 2018 prize, chosen by judges Anne Chisholm, Rachel Cooke and Andrew O'Hagan, is *The Cut Out Girl* by Bart van Es, already winner of the Costa Book of the Year Award

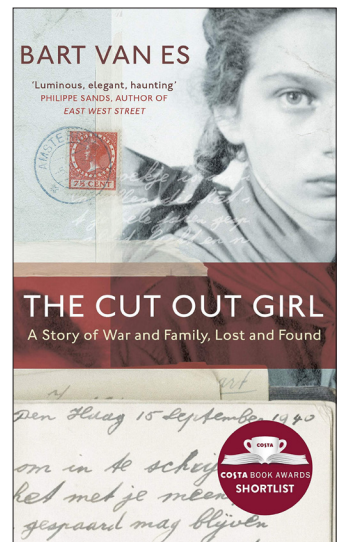
Bart van Es

The Cut Out Girl (Penguin Fig Tree)

The extraordinary true story of a young Jewish girl in Holland during World War II, who hides from the Nazis in the homes of an underground network of foster families, one of them the author's grandparents.

Bart van Es left Holland for England many years ago, but one story from his Dutch childhood never left him. It was a mystery of sorts: a young Jewish girl named Lientje had been taken in during the war by relatives and hidden from the Nazis, handed over by her parents, only too aware of the danger they were in. The girl was raised by her foster family as one of their own, but well after the war there was a grave rift, and they were no longer in touch. What was the girl's side of the story, Bart wondered? What really happened during the war, and after? So began an investigation that would consume the author's life, and change it irrevocably.

The Cut Out Girl is a deeply moving reckoning with a young girl's struggle for survival during war, and a triumphant marriage of many keys of writing, ultimately blending them into an extraordinary new harmony, and a deeper truth.



BART VAN ES

Bart van Es is a Professor of English Literature at the University of Oxford and a Fellow of St. Catherine's College. He is the author of *Spenser's Forms of History*, *Shakespeare in Company*, and *Shakespeare's Comedies*. He was born in the Netherlands and now lives with his family in England.

THE SHORTLIST

Bart van Es, *The Cut Out Girl* (Penguin, Fig Tree)
Michèle Mendelssohn, *Making Oscar Wilde* (OUP)
Roland Philipps, *A Spy Named Orphan* (Bodley Head)
Fiona Sampson, *In Search of Mary Shelley* (Profile)
Tara Westover, *Educated* (Hutchinson)

THE JUDGES

Anne Chisholm is a writer and critic, and has written biographies of Nancy Cunard and Frances Partridge. She is former Chair of the Royal Society of Literature.

Rachel Cooke is a prize-winning journalist, writer and columnist at the *Observer* and television critic at the *New Statesman*.

Andrew O'Hagan is Editor-at-Large of the *London Review of Books* and *Esquire*. He writes fiction and non-fiction, and his most recent book is *The Secret Life: Three True Stories*.

'The winner, *The Cut Out Girl* by Bart van Es, was chosen unanimously but not without passionate debate. This book, with its delicate interweaving of history, family memoir and personal encounters, succeeds in conveying the harsh reality of holocaust survival through one young girl's experience, in occupied Holland, of the extremes – good as well as evil – of which ordinary people are capable.'

Anne Chisholm, for the judges

THE PRIZE

The Prize is awarded to the best book published by a first-time biographer or memoirist. The 2018 winner was announced at the Awards Ceremony, at Maggs Bros. Bedford Square. This is the fifth year of the literary quarterly and independent publisher Slightly Foxed's sponsorship of the *Slightly Foxed Best First Biography Prize*, with a winner's award of £2,500. Previous winners: Edmund Gordon, *The Invention of Angela Carter*; Hisham Matar, *The Return*; Alan Cumming, *Not My Father's Son*; Claudia Renton, *Those Wild Wyndhams*; Charles Moore, *Margaret Thatcher: The Authorized Biography*; Thomas Penn, *Winter King: The Dawn of Tudor England*; and Matthew Hollis, *Now All Roads Lead to France*.

THE BIOGRAPHERS' CLUB

Founded in 1997, the Club is committed to supporting, promoting and connecting biographers at all levels. It offers three prizes each year: the *Slightly Foxed Best First Biography Prize*; the *Tony Lothian Prize* and the *Exceptional Contribution to Biography Award*. President: Andrew Lownie. Committee & Associates: Jane Ridley (Chairman); Sarah Anderson; Nicholas Clee; Caroline Knox; Anne de Courcy; Ariane Banks (Prize Administrator) and Jane Mays. www.biographers.club

'The Biographers' Club [keeps] our genre thriving despite the pressures exerted by changes in literary fashion, publishing and bookselling.' *Fiona Sampson*

SLIGHTLY FOXED

Slightly Foxed: The Real Reader's Quarterly and its acclaimed list of classic limited-edition memoirs have become something of an institution in the literary world. Contributors to the magazine include: Diana Athill, Quentin Blake, Ronald Blythe, Margaret Drabble, Adam Foulds, Melissa Harrison, Michael Holroyd, Amy Liptrot, Penelope Lively, Richard Mabey, Robert Macfarlane, Dervla Murphy, Sarah Perry, Jane Ridley, Christopher Rush, Posy Simmonds, Adam Sisman and Ali Smith

'A wonderful publication, at once unpretentious and lively, edifying and fun. It manages to be not only a superb guide to many excellent books but also to offer writing of its own that is remarkably entertaining.' *The Author*

The Slightly Foxed series of memoirs includes works by: Edward Ardizzone, Adrian Bell, Jennie Erdal, Graham Greene, Diana Holman-Hunt, Michael Holroyd, Hilary Mantel, Gavin Maxwell, Jan Morris, Eric Newby, Ernest Shepard and Rosemary Sutcliff

'The business of reading should please the hand and eye as well as the brain, and Slightly Foxed editions – books or quarterly – are elegant creations. Content follows form, offering new discoveries and old favourites to curious and discriminating readers.' *Hilary Mantel*

Single issues from £12.50; Subscriptions from £48; Books from £17 • Worldwide shipping • www.foxedquarterly.com



For more information about Slightly Foxed, the literary quarterly and publisher, go to www.foxedquarterly.com

For more information about the Biographers' Club go to www.biographersclub.co.uk

For a review copy of *The Cut Out Girl* or for extract or interview requests contact Assallah Tahir / Juliet Annan atahir@penguinrandomhouse.co.uk / jannan@penguinrandomhouse.co.uk

'Deeply moving . . . van Es writes with an almost Sebaldian simplicity and understatement.' *Guardian*