Japan, after suffering from a massive irreparable disaster, cuts itself off from the world. Children are so weak they can barely stand or walk: the only people with any get-go are the elderly. Mumei lives with his grandfather Yoshiro, who worries about him constantly. They carry on a day-to-day routine in what could be viewed as a post-Fukushima time, with all the children born ancient—frail and gray-haired, yet incredibly compassionate and wise. Mumei may be enfeebled and feverish, but he is a beacon of hope, full of wit and free of self-pity and pessimism. Yoshiro concentrates on nourishing Mumei, a strangely wonderful boy who offers “the beauty of the time that is yet to come.”
On March 15, 1950, a consortium of book publishing groups sponsored the first annual National Book Awards Ceremony and Dinner at the Waldorf Astoria Hotel in New York City. Their goal was to enhance the public’s awareness of exceptional books written by fellow Americans, and to increase the popularity of reading in general.

Since then, The National Book Awards have become the nation’s preeminent literary prizes, and The National Book Awards Ceremony and Dinner the most important event on our literary calendar. Today, the Awards are given to recognize achievements in four genres: Fiction, Nonfiction, Poetry, and Young People’s Literature. In 2018, a fifth category, Translated Literature, was introduced. The Winners, selected by five-member, independent judging panels for each genre, receive a $10,000 cash award and a crystal sculpture.

Awards are announced in November of each year.

**WINNERS 2018**

**THE EMISSARY**
Yoko Tawada; Margaret Mitsutani (Translator)

NOTE: This award category began in 2018

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**2018 FINALISTS**

**Dixoriental**
by Négar Djavadi; Tina Kover (Translator)

Kimiâ Sadr fled Iran at the age of ten in the company of her mother and sisters to join her father in France. Now twenty-five and facing the future she has built for herself as well as the prospect of a new generation, Kimiâ is inundated by her own memories and the stories of her ancestors, which come to her in unstoppable, uncontainable waves. In the waiting room of a Parisian fertility clinic, generations of flamboyant Sadr's return to her, including her formidable great-grandfather Montazemolmolk, with his harem of fifty-two wives, and her parents, Darius and Sara, stalwart opponents of each regime that befalls them.

**Trick**
by Domenico Starnone; Jhumpa Lahiri (Translator)

Imagine a duel. A face-off between a man and a boy. The same blood runs through their veins. One, Daniele Mallarico, is a successful illustrator at the peak of his career. The other, Mario, is his four-year-old grandson who has barely learned to talk but has a few tricks up his loose-fitting sleeves all the same. The older combatant has lived for years in almost complete solitude. The younger one has been dumped with a grandfather he barely knows for 72 hours.

Starnone’s sharp novella unfolds within the four walls (and a balcony!) of the apartment where the grandfather grew up, now the home of his daughter and her family, where the rage of an aging man meets optimism incarnate in the shape of a four-year-old child.

Lurking, ever present in the conflict, is the memory of Naples, a wily, violent, and passionate city where the old man spent his youth and whose influence is not easily shaken.

**Flights**
by Olga Tokarczuk; Jennifer Croft (Translator)

A seventeenth-century Dutch anatomist discovers the Achilles tendon by dissecting his own amputated leg. Chopin’s heart is carried back to Warsaw in secret by his adoring sister. A woman must return to her native Poland in order to poison her terminally ill high school sweetheart, and a young man slowly descends into madness when his wife and child mysteriously vanish during a vacation and just as suddenly reappear. Through these brilliantly imagined characters and stories, interwoven with haunting, playful, and revelatory meditations, Flights explores what it means to be a traveler, a wanderer, a body in motion not only through space but through time. Where are you from? Where are you coming in from? Where are you going? we call to the traveler. Enchanting, unsettling, and wholly original, Flights is a master storyteller’s answer.

**Love**
by Hanne Ørstavik; Martin Aitken (Translator)

Love is the story of a single mother, Vibeke, and her son Jon, who have just moved to a remote small town in the north of Norway. It’s the day before Jon’s birthday, but with concerns of her own, Vibeke has forgotten this. With a man on her mind, she ventures to the local library while Jon goes out to sell lottery tickets for his sports club. From here on we follow the two individuals on their separate journeys through a cold winter’s night, their experiences nevertheless linked in seamless narrative. The reader is privy to each character’s intimate thoughts as suspense builds and tragedy looms. Translator Martin Aitken has done a beautiful job of capturing the raw power, rhythms, and electricity of Ørstavik’s prose.