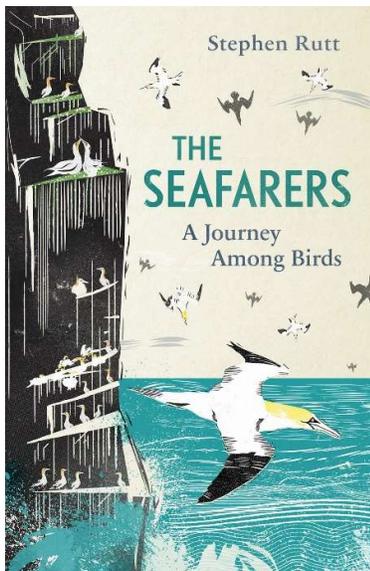


## LOGLIST FOR 2019 HIGHLAND BOOK PRIZE

The Highland Book Prize, established in 2017, celebrates the finest published work that recognises the rich talent, landscape and cultural diversity of the Highlands. This annual prize is open to work in fiction, non-fiction and poetry, and aims to bring recognition to books created in or about the Highlands.

Presented by the Highland Society of London and facilitated by Moniack Mhor Creative Writing Centre, the winner of the Highland Book Prize 2019 will be announced at the Ullapool Book Festival on 9th May 2020 and receive prize money of £1000 and a writing retreat at Moniack Mhor. The William Grant Foundation provides funding to encourage public engagement with the Highland Book Prize.

The 2019 Highland Book Prize saw over 88 books by 50 different publishers submitted and reviewed by a panel of 105 volunteer readers comprised of industry professionals and avid readers. The longlist for the 2019 Highland Book Prize was recently announced as follows (in no specific order):



**The Seafarers: A Journey Among Birds** by Stephen Rutt (Elliott & Thompson Limited)

In 2015, Stephen Rutt escaped his hectic, anxiety-inducing life in London for the bird observatory on North Ronaldsay, the most northerly of the Orkney Islands. In thrall to these windswept havens and the people and birds that inhabit them, he began a journey to the edges of Britain. From Shetland, to the Farnes of Northumberland, down to the Welsh islands off the Pembrokeshire coast, he explores the part seabirds have played in our history and what they continue to mean to Britain today.

The Seafarers is the story of those travels: a love letter, written from the rocks and the edges, for the salt-stained, isolated and ever-changing lives of seabirds. This beguiling book reveals what it feels like to be immersed in a completely wild landscape, examining the allure of the remote in an over-crowded world.

**Spring** by Ali Smith (Hamish Hamilton)

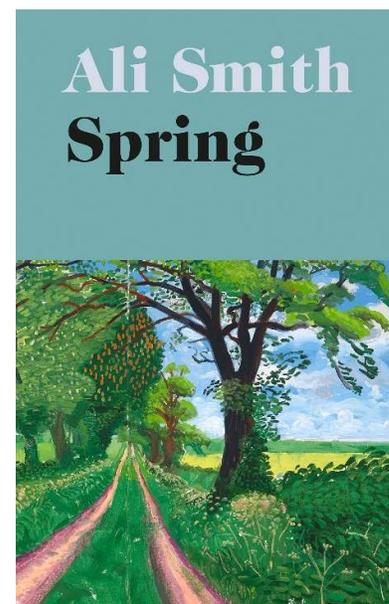
From the bestselling author of Autumn and Winter, as well as the Baileys Prize-winning How to be both, comes the next installment in the remarkable, once-in-a-generation masterpiece, the Seasonal Quartet

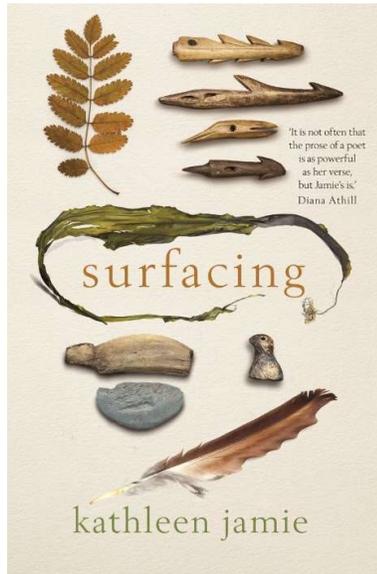
What unites Katherine Mansfield, Charlie Chaplin, Shakespeare, Rilke, Beethoven, Brexit, the present, the past, the north, the south, the east, the west, a man mourning lost times, a woman trapped in modern times?

Spring. The great connective.

With an eye to the migrancy of story over time, and riffing on Pericles, one of Shakespeare's most resistant and rollicking works, Ali Smith tells the impossible tale of an impossible time. In a time of walls and lockdown Smith opens the door.

The time we're living in is changing nature. Will it change the nature of story? Hope springs eternal.





### **Surfacing** by Kathleen Jamie (Sort of Books)

Under the ravishing light of an Alaskan sky, objects are spilling from the thawing tundra linking a Yup'ik village to its hunter-gatherer past. In the shifting sand dunes of a Scottish shoreline, impressively preserved hearths and homes of Neolithic farmers are uncovered. In a grandmother's disordered mind, memories surface of a long-ago mining accident and a 'mither who was kind'.

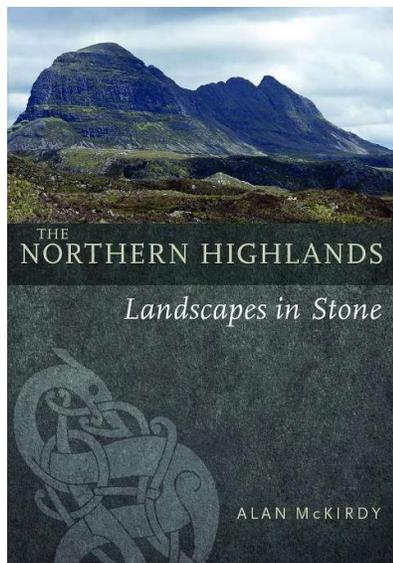
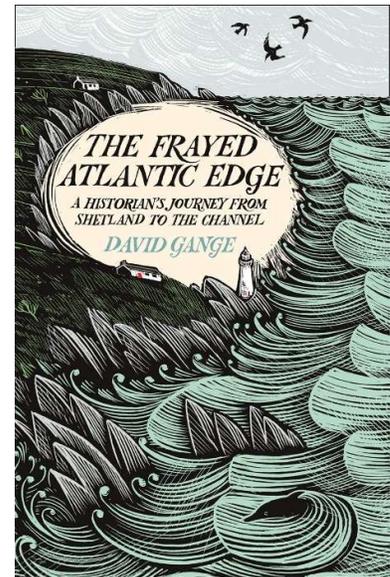
In this luminous new essay collection, acclaimed author Kathleen Jamie visits archaeological sites and mines her own memories - of her grandparents, of youthful travels - to explore what surfaces and what reconnects us to our past. As always, she looks to the natural world for her markers and guides. Most movingly, she considers, as her father dies and her children leave home, the surfacing of an older, less tethered sense of herself.

### **The Frayed Atlantic Edge** by David Gange (William Collins)

Over the course of a year, leading historian and nature writer David Gange kayaked the weather-ravaged coasts of Atlantic Britain and Ireland from north to south: every cove, sound, inlet, island.

The idea was to travel slowly and close to the water: in touch with both the natural world and the histories of communities on Atlantic coastlines. For too long, Gange argues, the significance of coasts has been underestimated, and the potential of small boats as tools to make sense of these histories rarely explored. This book seeks to put that imbalance right.

Paddling alone in sun and storms, among dozens of whales and countless seabirds, Gange describes, in captivating prose and loving detail, the experiences of kayaking, coastal living and historical discovery. It is a history of Britain and Ireland like no other.



### **The Northern Highlands: Landscapes in Stone** by Alan McKirdy (Birlinn)

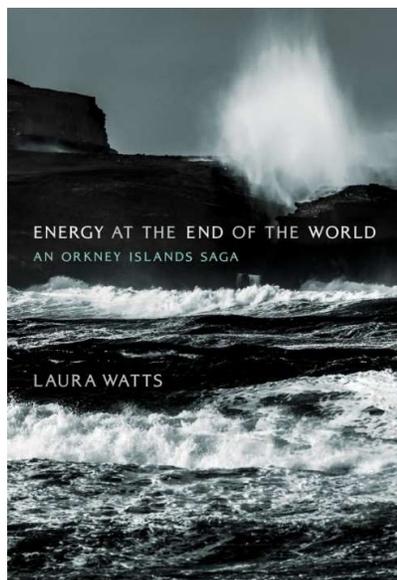
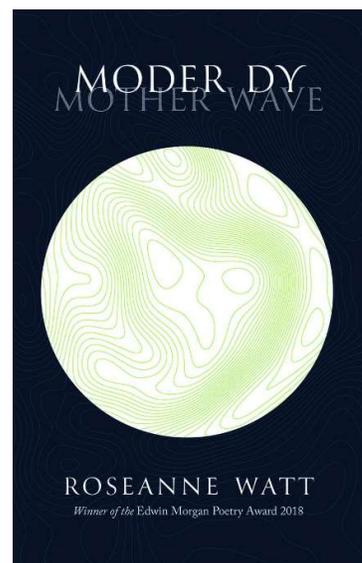
The rocks of northern Scotland tell of turbulent events involving continental collisions that unleashed cataclysmic forces, creating a chain of mountains, the remnants of which we see today on both sides of the Atlantic. Geologists from Victorian times onwards have studied the area, and some of the most important geological phenomena have been established and described from the rocks that built these stunning landscapes. In this book, Alan McKirdy makes sense of the many and varied episodes that shaped the familiar landscape we see today. He highlights a number of fascinating geological features, including the fossil-bearing strata which hugs the coast from Golspie to beyond Helmsdale that dates back to Jurassic times and which records the time when dinosaurs roamed the Earth.

**Moder Dy: Mother Wave** by Roseanne Watt (Polygon)

'The old Shetland fishermen still speak with something like reverence of the forgotten art of steering by the moder dy (mother wave), the name given to an underswell which it is said always travels in the direction of home.'

Written in English, interspersed with Shetlandic dialect throughout, this eagerly awaited debut collection from Shetland poet Roseanne Watt contains profound, assured and wilfully spare poems that are built from the sight, sound and heartbeat of the land as much as from the sea.

In rigorously controlled, concise, and vivid language Watt offers glimpses of the landscape alongside which we find the most complex and mysterious of human experiences.



**Energy at the End of the World: An Orkney Island Saga** by Laura Watts (MIT Press)

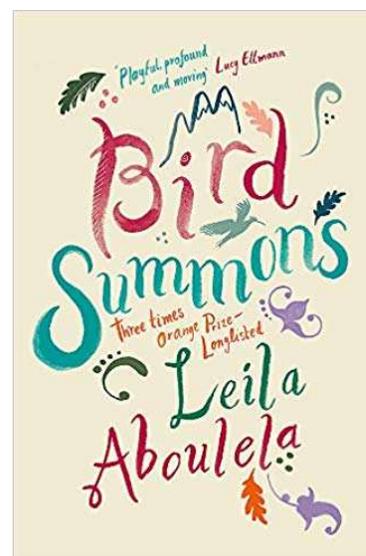
The islands of Orkney are closer to the Arctic Circle than to London. Surrounded by fierce seas and shrouded by mist, the islands seem to mark the edge of the known world. And yet they are a centre for energy technology innovation, from marine energy to hydrogen fuel networks, attracting the interest of venture capitalists and local communities.

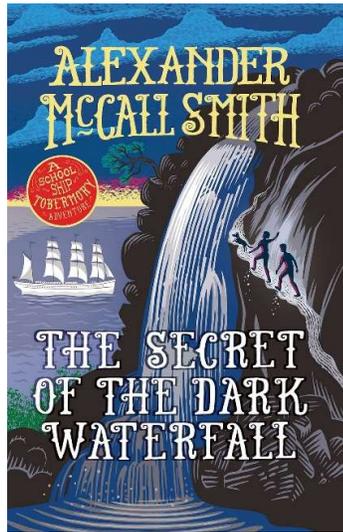
Orkney, Watts tells us, has been making technology for six thousand years, from arrowheads and stone circles to wave and tide energy prototypes. Mixing storytelling and ethnography, empiricism and lyricism, Watts tells how the islands are creating their own low-carbon future in the face of the seemingly impossible. The Orkney Islands, Watts shows, are playing a long game, making energy futures for another six thousand years.

**Bird Summons** by Leila Aboulela (Weidenfeld & Nicolson)

Salma, happily married, tries every day to fit into life in Britain. When her first love contacts her, she is tempted to risk it all and return to Egypt. Moni gave up a career in banking to care for her disabled son, but now her husband wants to move to Saudi Arabia - where she fears her son's condition will worsen. Iman feels burdened by her beauty. In her twenties and already in her third marriage, she is treated like a pet and longs for freedom.

On a road trip to the Scottish Highlands, the women are visited by the Hoopoe, a sacred bird whose fables from Muslim and Celtic literature compel them to question the balance between faith and femininity, love, loyalty and sacrifice. Brilliantly imagined, intense and haunting, Bird Summons confirms Leila Aboulela's reputation as one of our finest contemporary writers.





**The Secret of the Dark Waterfall: A *School Ship Tobermory* Adventure (Book 4)** by Alexander McCall Smith (Birlinn)

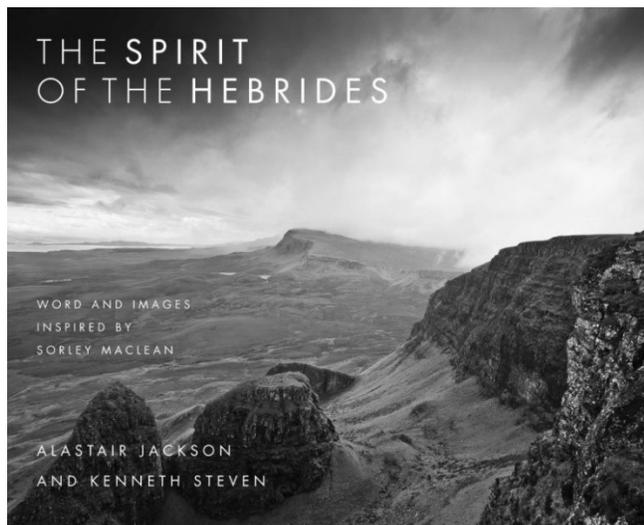
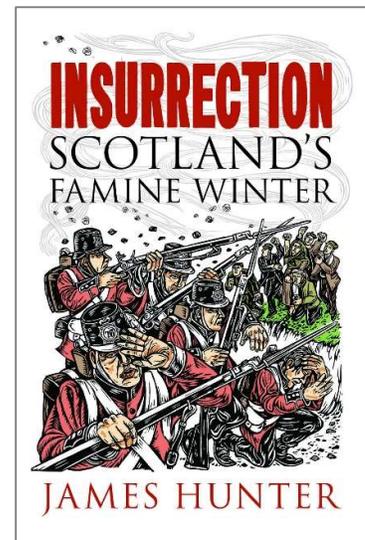
The *School Ship Tobermory* and its intrepid young crew are back in Hebridean waters. When a violent storm blows them off course to a remote island, they discover a fisherman's journal written a hundred years ago which tells of a mysterious shipwreck crammed with treasure.

But without a precise location, where do they start looking? An extraordinary chance encounter gives them a valuable clue.

Before long, Ben, Fee and their friends realize they are not the only ones searching for the lost wreck and must face a ruthless and determined adversary who will stop at nothing to seize the prize.

**Insurrection: Scotland's Famine Winter** by James Hunter (Birlinn)

When Scotland's 1846 potato crop was wiped out by blight, the country was plunged into crisis. In the Hebrides and the West Highlands, a huge relief effort came too late to prevent starvation and death. Further east, meanwhile, towns and villages from Aberdeen to Wick and Thurso, rose up in protest at the cost of the oatmeal that replaced potatoes as people's basic foodstuff. Oatmeal's soaring price was blamed on the export of grain by farmers and landlords cashing in on even higher prices elsewhere. As a bitter winter gripped and families feared a repeat of the calamitous famine then ravaging Ireland, grain carts were seized, ships boarded, harbours blockaded, a jail forced open, the military confronted. The army fired on one set of rioters. Savage sentences were imposed on others. But thousands-strong crowds also gained key concessions. Above all they won cheaper food. The story he tells is moving, anger-making and inspiring.



**The Spirit of the Hebrides: Word and Images inspired by Sorley MacLean** by Alastair Jackson and Kenneth Steven (Saint Andrew Press)

The Spirit of the Hebrides combines the poetry of Kenneth Steven with the photography of Alastair Jackson and features images of Skye and Raasay in homage to one of Scotland's leading 20th century poets, Sorley MacLean. Kenneth Steven's poetry reflects on the link between people and the land; how identity is shaped by wild places; the passing of many of the old ways of the Hebrides; the enduring beauty of these islands; the hospitality of their people and the depth of their

spiritual awareness. Alastair Jackson's photography captures the wilder and remoter parts of Skye and Raasay, often in bad weather, offer a glimpse into both the turbulent past and the deep spirituality of the Hebrides. This book uniquely captures the spirit of the Hebrides.