



THE CLASSICAL ASSOCIATION PRIZE 2010 LESSONS IN LATIN AND GREEK

On Friday 9th April the prestigious Classical Association Prize will be awarded to Charlotte Higgins. She is the *Guardian's* chief arts writer and author of *Latin Love Lessons* and *It's All Greek to Me*.

The Prize, worth £5,000, aims to encourage all forms of promotion of Classics in the UK. Public interest in the ancient worlds of Greece and Rome is flourishing, as witnessed by any number of TV documentaries, films and popular books on the subject. This is despite the erosion of study of the ancient languages in schools, and an economic climate which is putting the subject under threat even in universities.

The Classical Association is the largest classical organisation in Great Britain, founded in 1903 'to promote the development and maintain the well-being of classical studies'. Today it has a worldwide membership, and unites the interests of all who value the study of the languages, literature and civilisation of ancient Greece and Rome. It produces three academic journals and a biannual newsletter, provides grants and bursaries to support classical projects, and supports classics around the UK via a network of local branches.

Charlotte Higgins has been making an important contribution to the public appreciation of all things classical. In addition to classical allusions in her *Guardian* articles, she has a blog (<http://www.guardian.co.uk/culture/charlottehigginsblog>) which frequently features Greeks and Romans, with recent postings on David Beckham as Achilles, Homer and Wilfred Owen, antiquities in the Fitzwilliam Museum, and Sappho.

The two books provide ample evidence of Charlotte's winning combination of scholarly knowledge and engaging style. *Latin Love Lessons: put a little Ovid in your life* (Short Books 2007) takes the reader on an entertaining tour of Roman views on the subject of romantic love. *It's All Greek to Me* (Short Books 2007) is summed up in its sub-title *From Homer to the Hippocratic Oath: how ancient Greece has shaped our world*. War, politics, religion, morality, attitudes towards women and foreigners, the birth of modern science – it's all here.

The Prize was decided at a meeting of the Classical Association's Council in November. The judges said: 'Ms Higgins is an asset to classics in the UK. Her journalism is helping to keep the Greeks and Roman firmly in the public eye, and the two books are a joy to read. Particularly commendable is the way both books confront the reader with the ancient languages. Extracts from Ovid's *Art of Love*, with lively translations, demonstrate the poem's vibrancy and relevance 2000 years on, while a section on "the Greek in your English" shows that there's nothing "dead" about this language either.'

Charlotte will be the 6th winner of the Classical Association Prize, which was established in 2005. Previous winners include: the children's author Caroline Lawrence, for her detective series *The Roman Mysteries*; Tom Holland for his

critically acclaimed histories *Rubicon* and *Persian Fire*; and Barbara Bell for the *Minimus* series that has introduced Latin into primary schools across the UK.

The prize-giving is to take place at Cardiff's City Hall, on the last night of the Classical Association's annual conference. Being hosted at Cardiff University this year, the conference will run from Wednesday 7th to Saturday 10th April, featuring around 50 panels with a distinguished array of international and national speakers. There will be papers on a wide range of topics relating to the ancient world from literary, historical and archaeological perspectives – everything from Homer to EcoClassics, Wales' Classical heritage and Dr Who. More than 350 delegates are expected, from a broad constituency of academics, postgraduate students, school teachers and other 'friends of Classics', from both the UK and overseas.

For further details of the Classical Association, its Prize and current Council members, see <http://www.classicalassociation.org>, or contact Claire Davenport on 020 7862 8706 (office@classicalassociation.org).

The Cardiff conference programme can be found at:
<http://www.cardiff.ac.uk/hisar/newsandevents/ancienthistory/2010-classical-association-annual-conference.html>

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