

Press Release
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The
American
Library
in Paris



WILD THING: A LIFE OF PAUL GAUGUIN BY SUE PRIDEAUX WINS THE 2025 AMERICAN LIBRARY IN PARIS BOOK AWARD

The original and revealing portrait of the misunderstood French Post Impressionist artist wins the 13th edition of the Award.

PARIS, FRANCE. On 7 November, the American Library in Paris announced *Wild Thing: A Life of Paul Gauguin* by Sue Prideaux as the winner of the 2025 Book Award. The jury, composed of last year's laureate Adam Shatz, as well as Claire Messud and Ruth Reichl, said:

“Sue Prideaux’s vibrant and rich biography of Gauguin is an extraordinary achievement: rigorously researched; magisterial in its command of the subject; at once an engrossing narrative and a reappraisal of an artist whom, it turns out, we knew far less well than we imagined. To read Prideaux’s biography is to vicariously experience the life of Gauguin, the many worlds he inhabited, from his early childhood in Peru to his last years in Tahiti, and, not least, the adventure of his art. Prideaux portrays Gauguin in all his moral complexity, refusing to judge him, and thus never allowing us to do so either. Most importantly, she powerfully illuminates his painting, and the struggles that brought it into being, in elegant, often strikingly sensuous prose.”

The 2025 jury also made special mention of Francesca Wade’s biography *Gertrude Stein: An Afterlife*, “an ingenious and incisive work of intellectual history, written with unusual flair and brio.”

The announcement was made at a ceremony at the Hôtel de Talleyrand, in Paris, where Prideaux was presented with one of two hand-bound Book Award Special Editions of the winning title, crafted by the atelier Bougogne Reliure. The second copy will join the Library’s Special Collections. Prideaux also received a \$5,000 prize, generously funded by the Florence Gould Foundation.

The American Library in Paris Book Award celebrates works of literature, both fiction and nonfiction, that draw on France as a timeless source of inspiration. Created in 2013, the Book Award builds on the Library’s century-long tradition of bringing France, its culture, and its history into dialogue with the wider world. It is open to books in all genres, originally published in English.

[More about the 2025 Book Award](#)
[Press kit and photo gallery](#)

About the American Library in Paris

The American Library in Paris is the largest English-language lending Library on the European continent, with a print collection of over 100,000 volumes. Since its establishment in 1920, the Library has been a meeting place for internationals and locals alike seeking to broaden their horizons and nurture their imagination. Every year, hundreds of events, lectures, and workshops bring together leaders in literature, arts, politics, and philosophy at the Library. Through its fellowships and social impact programs, the Library also supports emerging artists and young writers in their creative pursuits.

Press contact

Communications Department communications@americanlibraryinparis.org