

Eleanor Thom - Biography

Writer Eleanor Thom was born in London in 1979. She grew up amongst extended Scottish family in the Greek roads of NW6 – Achilles, Ajax, Ulysses and Agamemnon.

Words interested Eleanor from an early age, but music and foreign languages were her first loves. Every day in school she would scrawl French and Italian verbs all over her left hand. It was a sixth form English teacher that reignited Eleanor's interest in her mother tongue. After university, Eleanor secretly wrote short stories while working as a policy planner, a research assistant and a nanny. She took in a stray colour-point cat, two fan-tail fishes, and an injured pigeon. Eleanor returned to university to study creative writing and the science of language. Her linguistics research, *The Gaelic Gasp and it's North Atlantic Cousins*, was the first of its kind conducted in Britain. It can be downloaded free from archive.org

Eleanor's debut novel, *The Tin-Kin* (Duckworth, 2009) is out now. *The Tin-Kin* is a fictional novel based on photos, artefacts and memories of Eleanor's mother's Travelling family. A chapter of the novel won the 2006 New Writing Ventures Award for fiction, and reviews have appeared in *The Independent*, *The Scotsman*, and *The Sunday Herald*.

In 2008, Eleanor was awarded a Robert Louis Stevenson Fellowship by The Scottish Arts Council and The National Library of Scotland. The fellowship allowed Eleanor to travel to France for six weeks, researching and writing about a derelict liquorice factory she had discovered on holiday. "It was a place so sticky with stories I felt I could peel sentences from the walls."

Returning to Scotland, Eleanor was Honorary Writer in Residence for the French Department at Glasgow University 2008-2009. Eleanor lives in Ayr with her husband and son, and Gus the colour-point cat.

See overleaf for publications and awards.

Publications

1. *Sassuolo* - short story commission by Edinburgh Book Festival 2010
2. *The Tin-Kin*, (Duckworth, 2009)
3. *Burns*, (an early chapter from *The Tin-Kin*) was published in the anthology *Outside of a Dog* (CHROMA, 2006)
4. *Is the Viking in you Gasping for Attention?* A non-fiction article (*The New Shetlander*, issue 234)

Awards and Shortlists

1. 2010 – Shortlist for Scottish Variety Award – Best New Scottish Writer
2. 2009 - Shortlisted for the Aeon Award with *The Den Ghost*
3. 2007 - Winner of a Scottish Arts Council & National Library of Scotland Robert Louis Stevenson Fellowship for 2008
4. 2006 - Winner of the New Writing Ventures Award for fiction with *Burns*
5. 2006 - Shortlisted for the Fish Short Story Prize with *Italian Verbs*
6. 2001 - Shortlisted for a David St John Thomas Charitable Trust competition on people and places with *Diamond Geezer*

