

David Szalay — *Flesh*: Booker Prize 2025

1. Winner: *Flesh* by David Szalay

- **Date & place of announcement:** Awarded at a ceremony in London on **Monday, 10 November 2025**
- **Prize: £50,000** and the Booker trophy (presented by Samantha Harvey, the 2024 winner)
- **Publishing/time eligibility:** Prize covers long-form fiction in English published in the UK and/or Ireland between **1 Oct 2024 - 30 Sep 2025**. (Used by the 2025 judges.)

2. About *Flesh* — form, content and themes (pointwise)

- **Form & style:** Written in **spare, minimalist prose**; notable for restraint and precise language.
- **Narrative scope:** Spans decades and settings — from a **Hungarian housing estate** to the mansions of Britain's elite — following one central, emotionally detached man.
- **Central character:** A working-class Hungarian (named István in some coverage) whose life is shown through events that unravel him; the book foregrounds physical experience and emotional passivity.
- **Major themes:** Masculinity, class mobility, migration, trauma, alienation, power and the moral ambiguity of ascent into wealth.

3. Author background & literary context

- **David Szalay:** Hungarian-British author, aged 51 at time of award; *Flesh* is his **sixth work of fiction**.
- **Previous Booker recognition:** Szalay was **previously shortlisted** in 2016 (*All That Man Is*).

4. Significance of the win (why it matters for literature/policy exams)

- **Literary culture:** The Booker Prize influences UK and global literary attention — winners often shape publishing trends and critical debates about style, form and topicality.
- **Cultural diplomacy & identity:** A Hungarian-British winner highlights transnational literary identities and migration of voices in contemporary Anglophone fiction.
- **Prize governance:** Roddy Doyle's role as the first former Booker winner to chair signals institutional continuity and raises questions about diversity of judging perspectives.

5. Exam-oriented bullet points (memorise for prelims and use in mains)

- *Flesh* — Winner, **Booker Prize 2025** (10 Nov 2025).

- **Prize money:** £50,000; trophy presented by 2024 winner Samantha Harvey.
- **Chair of judges:** Roddy Doyle (first ex-winner to chair).
- **Judges included:** Ayòbámi Adébáyò, Sarah Jessica Parker, Chris Power, Kiley Reid.
- **Themes:** Migration, class, masculinity, alienation; minimalist prose.

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