

Special Issue

Contemporary Scottish Fiction

Message from the Guest Editor

It is commonplace to state that Alasdair Gray's *Lanark* (1981) marked the starting point of a renewed, invigorated Scottish culture. The obituaries that followed his death in 2019 make this abundantly clear. Its publication confirmed the idea that there really was a distinctive item called the contemporary Scottish novel that could retain its sense of place while incorporating all those fantastical elements that made up the postmodern novel. Here, was a major publication whose magic realism put Scottish fiction on the map.

Over forty years later, the moment has come to assess what Scottish literature has achieved since that auspicious beginning. Whereas Gray had a distinctive political profile, as evident in his other prose works, his writing brought in an era that has produced an enormous range of works that swept across the spectrums of class, gender and identity politics, sometimes incorporating the most innovative stylistic approaches and, at other times, sticking to more conventional narrative modes.

This Special Issue of *Humanities* is dedicated to an assessment of what these four decades have achieved and where they might take us in the future. It is, of course, not restricted to fiction, but invites contributions focusing on drama and poetry as well; after all, what can be greater evidence of this renewal than the figure of the Scottish Makar?

Guest Editor

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