

The Outlaw Ocean Project wins 2024 Asia Society Osborn Elliott Prize for Excellence in Journalism on Asia



On the high seas in the South Atlantic, The Outlaw Ocean Project's Ian Urbina boarded a boat to get closer to a Chinese squid ship. Photo by James Glancy for The Outlaw Ocean Project

NEW YORK, June 20, 2024 — Asia Society is pleased to announce that the 2024 **Osborn Elliott Prize for Excellence in Journalism on Asia** is being awarded to **The Outlaw Ocean Project**, a nonprofit journalism outlet based in Washington, D.C., for "China: The Superpower of Seafood." The \$10,000 cash award is given annually by an independent jury to the best example of journalism about Asia during the previous calendar year.

In announcing the award, the Osborn Elliott Prize Jury issued the following statement:

"The Outlaw Ocean Project's extraordinary series of reports, in multiple formats and published in media around the world, tells a complex story of China's domination of the global seafood industry. Through years of diligent and at times perilous high-seas reporting, the Outlaw Ocean Project team tracked more than 700 vessels as far afield as Gambia and the Galapagos, staffed by workers who were in some cases virtual hostages, sending their haul back to factories where forced labor wasn't uncommon. Their meticulous work exposed the environmental and human costs of this vast global enterprise, tracing fish from the depths of the ocean to consumers' plates. The project was a model of transparency, too: The reporters made their exchanges with stakeholders public; produced videos tracing seafood; and explained how they were able to find and interview workers aboard ships half a world away."

The project team included: **Ian Urbina**, founder and director of The Outlaw Ocean Project; **Joe Galvin**, OSINT Editor of the team; **Maya Martin**, research editor; **Susan Ryan**, **Daniel Murphy**, and **Austin Brush**, research and investigations editors; and **Jake Conley**, research editor.

The award this year recognizes The Outlaw Ocean Project's reporting—including two in-depth articles, two videos, and a slate of online interactive tools—published in *The New Yorker*, *TIME Magazine*, *Politico*, and made available via a hundred other news organizations worldwide. The Outlaw Ocean Project's journalism is unique not just in its focus, but also in how reporting is conducted, with most stories reported at least partially at sea. The reporting is also distinctive in the way it is presented and distributed, translated into a half dozen languages and further disseminated abroad in partnership with dozens of foreign newspapers, magazines, on radio and television, as well as via non-news and interactive platforms, with a goal of educating and informing the public at large.

The Outlaw Ocean Project's prize-winning reporting may be accessed [here](#).

The jury praised the entries submitted for the prize this year, noting, "The quality and range of entries this year was especially impressive from media outlets in Asia. *The Print* in India reported on the abuse of girls and women in a society where issues such as child—and even infant—brides and the control of a woman's body and life are unsettled. Environmental crises, especially around the availability of water, an increasingly scarce and precious resource globally, featured in outstanding projects by *Nikkei*, *Bloomberg*, *Rappler*, and the independent outlet *Mongabay*. The continuing fallout of Myanmar's civil disorder, including on the Rohingya, was the subject of illuminating reporting by the *Associated Press* and *The Diplomat*."

The jury for the Osborn Elliott Prize is chaired by **Marcus Brauchli**, managing partner of North Base Media and the former top editor of both *The Washington Post* and *The Wall Street Journal*. Jurors for the 2024 prize are: **Barbara Demick**, journalist, author, and 2006 Osborn Elliott Prize winner; **Dorinda Elliott**, Executive Director of the Fairbank Center for Chinese Studies at Harvard University and formerly with *Newsweek*; **Glenda Gloria**, Executive Editor, *Rappler*; **Nisid Hajari**, author, member of the Bloomberg editorial board and a former top editor at *Newsweek*; **Zuraidah Ibrahim**, Executive Managing Editor, *South China Morning Post*; and **Norman Pearlstine**, media executive and advisor and former top editor at the *Los Angeles Times*, *Time Inc.*, and *The Wall Street Journal*.

The Osborn Elliott Prize for Excellence in Journalism on Asia, affectionately referred to as the "Oz Prize," honors the late **Osborn Elliott**, legendary journalist, author and former editor-in-chief of *Newsweek*. Elliott was a leading figure in the field of journalism who became one of the earliest practitioners of "civic journalism"—the deliberate focusing of the journalistic enterprise on urgent issues of public policy.

Recent winners of the prize include **Sue-Lin Wong** and **David Rennie**, *The Economist* (2023) for their China coverage, **Mathieu Aikins** and **Jim Huylebroek**, *New York Times Magazine* (2022) for "Inside the Fall of Kabul," and **Alice Su**, *Los Angeles Times* (2021) for China coverage.

Find out more about the Oz Prize and prior winners at AsiaSociety.org/OzPrize.

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