



## *The Sellout* wins 2016 Man Booker Prize

- Paul Beatty becomes first American writer to win prestigious prize
- Second consecutive win for independent publisher Oneworld

[www.themanbookerprize.com](http://www.themanbookerprize.com)

#FinestFiction

*The Sellout* by Paul Beatty is tonight, Tuesday 25 October, named winner of the 2016 Man Booker Prize for Fiction. *The Sellout* is published by small independent publisher Oneworld, who had their first win in 2015 with Marlon James' *A Brief History of Seven Killings*.

The 54-year-old New York resident, born in Los Angeles, is the first American author to win the prize in its 48-year history. US authors became eligible in 2014. The 2016 shortlist included two British, two US, one Canadian and one British-Canadian writer.

*The Sellout* is a searing satire on race relations in contemporary America. *The Sellout* is described by *The New York Times* as a 'metaphorical multicultural pot almost too hot to touch', whilst the *Wall Street Journal* called it a 'Swiftian satire of the highest order. Like someone shouting fire in a crowded theatre, Mr. Beatty has whispered "Racism" in a postracial world.'

The book is narrated by African-American 'Bonbon', a resident of the run-down town of Dickens in Los Angeles county, which has been removed from the map to save California from embarrassment. Bonbon is being tried in the Supreme Court for attempting to reinstitute slavery and segregation in the local high school as means of bringing about civic order. What follows is a retrospective of this whirlwind scheme, populated by cartoonish characters who serve to parody racial stereotypes. The framework of institutional racism and the unjust shooting of Bonbon's father at the hands of police are particularly topical.

Amanda Foreman, 2016 Chair of judges, comments: '*The Sellout* is a novel for our times. A tirelessly inventive modern satire, its humour disguises a radical seriousness. Paul Beatty slays sacred cows with abandon and takes aim at racial and political taboos with wit, verve and a snarl.'

Though Beatty cites satirists Joseph Heller and Kurt Vonnegut as formative influences, he remarked to *The Paris Review* that he was 'surprised that everybody keeps calling this a comic novel... I'm not sure how I define it.'

This is the second consecutive Man Booker Prize success for independent publisher Oneworld, following Marlon James' win with *A Brief History of Seven Killings* in 2015.

[Amanda Foreman](#) was joined on the 2016 panel of judges by [Jon Day](#), [Abdulrazak Gurnah](#), [David Harsent](#) and [Olivia Williams](#). The judges considered 155 books for this year's prize, including a total of 11 call-ins.

In addition to his £50,000 prize and trophy, Beatty also receives a designer bound edition of his book and a further £2,500 for being shortlisted.

On winning the Man Booker Prize, an author can expect international recognition, plus a dramatic increase in book sales. Last year's winning novel, *A Brief History of Seven Killings* by Marlon James, has gone on to sell over 360,000 copies in the UK and Commonwealth, as well as 120,000 in the US. When accepting his prize, James said, 'I just met Ben Okri and it just reminded me of how much of my literary sensibilities were shaped by the Man Booker Prize... It suddenly increases your library by 13 books.'

Other recent winners have included Hilary Mantel (2012 and 2009), whose *Wolf Hall* and *Bring Up the Bodies* have led to award-winning adaptations on stage and screen, and Julian Barnes (2011), whose *The Sense of an Ending* will soon be adapted for film. Other winning novels that have gone on to have second or third lives on stage and screen include *Schindler's Ark* (directed by Steven Spielberg as *Schindler's List*), *The Remains of the Day* and *The English Patient*.

This is the third year that the prize has been open to writers of any nationality, writing originally in English and published in the UK. Previously, the prize was open only to authors from the UK & Commonwealth, Republic of Ireland and Zimbabwe. The 2016 shortlist included two British, two US, one Canadian and one British-Canadian writer.

First awarded in 1969, the Man Booker Prize is recognised as the leading award for high quality literary fiction written in English. Its list of winners features many of the giants of the last four decades: from [Salman Rushdie](#) to [Margaret Atwood](#), [Iris Murdoch](#) to [JM Coetzee](#).

Paul Beatty's win was announced by Amanda Foreman at a black-tie dinner at London's Guildhall, where he was presented with a trophy from HRH The Duchess of Cornwall and a £50,000 cheque from Luke Ellis, Chief Executive of Man Group. Guests at the event, which was broadcast live on the BBC News Channel, included the

shortlisted authors, well-known figures from the literary world and VIPs including AS Byatt, Ben Okri, Karen Bradley, John Hurt and Fiona Shaw.

Paul Beatty will take part in will take part in his first public event as winner at a *New Statesman*-partnered event at Foyles on Friday 28 October 2016.

Royal Mail is issuing a congratulatory postmark featuring the winner's name, which will be applied to millions of items of stamped mail nationwide from Wednesday 26 to Saturday 29 October 2016. It will say 'Congratulations to Paul Beatty, winner of the 2016 Man Booker Prize'.

Man Group has sponsored the prize since 2002. One of the world's largest independent alternative investment managers, Man Group is a partner that mirrors the quality, integrity and longevity of the prize.

For a look back at this year's prize, listen to the Man Booker Prize Podcast series or visit the Man Booker Prize online:



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For further information about the prize please visit [www.themanbookerprize.com](http://www.themanbookerprize.com)

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## The Winner

### ***The Sellout***

**Paul Beatty**

Published by Oneworld (£12.99 Paperback Original)

Born in the 'agrarian ghetto' of Dickens on the southern outskirts of Los Angeles and raised by a single father, a controversial sociologist, the narrator of *The Sellout* spent his childhood as the subject in racially charged psychological studies. He is led to believe his father's pioneering work will result in a memoir that will solve his family's financial woes. But when his father is killed in a police shoot-out, he realises there never was a memoir. All that's left is the bill for a drive-through funeral.

Fuelled by this deceit and the general disrepair of his hometown, the narrator sets out to right another wrong: Dickens has literally been removed from the map to save California from further embarrassment. Enlisting the help of the town's most famous resident – Hominy Jenkins – he initiates the most outrageous action conceivable: reinstating slavery and segregating the local high school, which lands him in the Supreme Court.

What follows is a satire worthy of Jonathan Swift, a remarkable journey that challenges the sacred tenets of the United States Constitution: urban life, the civil rights movement and the holy grail of racial equality – the black Chinese restaurant.

**Paul Beatty** was born on 9 June 1962 in Los Angeles, California, USA. *The Sellout* won the National Book Critics Circle Award for Fiction in 2016. He is the author of three novels – *Slumberland*, *Tuff* and *The White Boy Shuffle* – and two books of poetry: *Big Bank Take Little Bank* and *Joker, Joker, Deuce*. He is the editor of *Hokum: An Anthology of African-American Humor*. He lives in New York City.

### Notes to Editors

- Paul Beatty is available for interview. To arrange, please contact Margot Weale at Oneworld: 0207 307 8908 / [mweale@oneworld-publications.com](mailto:mweale@oneworld-publications.com)
- The winner of the 2016 Man Booker Prize was chosen from 155 entries, including 11 called in by the judges. The 2016 shortlisted titles were:

<b>Author (nationality)</b>	<b>Title (imprint)</b>
Paul Beatty (US)	<i>The Sellout</i> (Oneworld)
Deborah Levy (UK)	<i>Hot Milk</i> (Hamish Hamilton)
Graeme Macrae Burnet (UK)	<i>His Bloody Project</i> (Contraband)
Ottessa Moshfegh (US)	<i>Eileen</i> (Jonathan Cape)
David Szalay (Canada-UK)	<i>All That Man Is</i> (Jonathan Cape)
Madeleine Thien (Canada)	<i>Do Not Say We Have Nothing</i> (Granta Books)

- The special designer bound edition of the book was created by Christopher Shaw, a Fellow of the UK's principal bookbinding society, Designer Bookbinders
- For the Man Booker Prize, UK publishers may submit novels written in English and published in the UK between 1 October 2014 and 30 September 2015. The number of books a publisher can submit will depend on that publisher's inclusion in longlists over the previous five years, as follows:
  - 1 submission – publishers with no longlistings
  - 2 submissions – publishers with 1 or 2 longlisting(s)
  - 3 submissions – publishers with 3 or 4 longlistings
  - 4 submissions – publishers with 5 or more longlistings

This means that the number of submissions for each publisher may change from year to year. A new work by any author who has previously been shortlisted for the Booker (pre-2002) or Man Booker Prize is automatically eligible

- In addition, the judges 'call in' a number of novels each year: in addition to their main submission, a publisher may submit up to five titles for consideration, accompanied by a justification from the editor. The judges are required to call in no fewer than eight and no more than 12 of these titles. The judges are also permitted to call in other books published within the requisite dates, even if the book has not been submitted through any other route
- Four Colman Getty handles PR and event management for the prize and provides all events and administrative back-up
- The Literary Director of the Booker Prize Foundation is Gaby Wood. The Administrator of the Man Booker International Prize is Fiammetta Rocco – Culture Editor of *The Economist* and *1843*
- Marlon James won the 2015 Man Booker Prize for Fiction with *A Brief History of Seven Killings* (Oneworld). To date, over 360,000 copies of the book have been sold in the UK and Commonwealth
- The Man Booker Prize for Fiction was first awarded in 1969 and has been sponsored by Man

Group since 2002. The long-term future of the prize was secured in 2011 with the announcement of a renewed 10-year sponsorship from Man Group. The title 'Booker Prize' therefore only applies to prize years 1969 – 2001, before Man Group plc's sponsorship began, and since 2002 it has been called The Man Booker Prize for Fiction. It would be greatly appreciated if you could ensure that your editorial is factually correct by referring to the prize's full title at least once, if not in the headline, then in your next subsequent mention. For a full history of the prize including previous winners, shortlisted authors and judges visit the website: [www.themanbookerprize.com](http://www.themanbookerprize.com)

- The Man Booker International Prize is awarded annually in May for the best single work of fiction translated into English and published in the UK. The £50,000 prize is divided equally between the author and the translator. Each shortlisted author and translator receives £1,000. The 2016 winner was *The Vegetarian* by Han Kang, translated by Deborah Smith. 2016 was the first year of the newly evolved prize, which was originally established in 2005 as a biennial prize awarded to an author for an achievement in fiction
- The trustees of the Booker Prize Foundation are: Baroness Kennedy QC – Chair, former Chair of the British Council and Principal of Mansfield College, Oxford; Lord Baker of Dorking CH; Bidisha – writer, critic and broadcaster; Victoria Glendinning CBE – biographer; James Naughtie – broadcaster; Ben Okri – writer and 1991 Booker Prize winner; Christopher Pearce – former Finance Director of Rentokil plc; Professor Louise Richardson – Vice Chancellor of the University of Oxford. Jonathan Taylor CBE is President of the Foundation; Sir Ronald Harwood, Baroness Neuberger and Baroness Nicholson of Winterbourne are Vice Presidents of the Foundation
- The Booker Prize Foundation Advisory Committee, which advises on any changes to the rules and on the selection of the judges, represents all aspects of the book world. Its members are: Mark Chilton – Company Secretary and General Counsel of Booker Group plc; Jonty Claypole – Head of Arts, BBC; James Daunt – Managing Director of Waterstones; Jonathan Douglas – Director of the National Literacy Trust; Maggie Fergusson – writer and Secretary of the Royal Society of Literature; Adam Freudenheim – publisher, Pushkin Press; Derek Johns – Author & Literary Agent; Peter Kemp – Chief Fiction Reviewer, *The Sunday Times*; Rosanna Konarzewski – Man Group plc; Nigel Newton – publisher, Bloomsbury; Fiammetta Rocco – Culture Editor, *The Economist* and *1843* and Man Booker International Prize Administrator; Michal Shavit – publishing director, Jonathan Cape; Eve Smith – Secretary, the Booker Prize Foundation; Boyd Tonkin – Writer and Critic. It is chaired by Gaby Wood, Literary Director, Booker Prize Foundation
- Man Group has sponsored the Man Booker Prize since 2002. A leading alternative investment management firm founded in 1783, Man Group was recognised as a partner who mirrored the quality, integrity and longevity of the Booker Prize. The prize underscores Man Group's charitable focus on literacy and education as well as the firm's commitment to excellence and entrepreneurship. Together with the wider charitable activities of the Booker Prize Foundation, the prize plays a very important role in promoting literary excellence on a global scale that the firm is honoured to support
- Man Group is one of the world's largest independent alternative investment management groups. Man Group's managers (Man AHL, Man FRM, Man GLG and Man Numeric) have diverse long/short and long only strategies spanning equity, credit, managed futures, convertibles, emerging markets and multi-managers. At 30 September 2016, Man Group's funds under management were \$80.7 billion.

The original business was founded in 1783. Today, Man Group plc is listed on the London Stock Exchange under the ticker EMG.L and is a constituent of the FTSE 250 Index.

Man Group also supports many awards, charities and initiatives around the world, including sponsorship of the Man Booker literary prizes. Further information can be found at [www.man.com](http://www.man.com)

- Booker is the UK's leading food wholesaler with over 170 branches nationwide. It serves over 350,000 independent businesses
- The Booker Prize Foundation has a longstanding partnership with RNIB (Royal National Institute of Blind People). The Foundation funds the production of the shortlisted titles in braille, giant print and audio, which the sight loss charity produces by the date the winner is announced. Accessible versions are then made available to the tens of thousands of blind and partially sighted members of the RNIB Library. People with sight loss have a limited choice of books in accessible formats and often have to wait much longer than their sighted peers for titles to be made available to them - and there are many more books that they will never have the chance to read. The Foundation is working with RNIB to change this story. For further information contact the RNIB PR Team on 020 7391 2223 or [pressoffice@rnib.org.uk](mailto:pressoffice@rnib.org.uk)
- The Booker Prize Archive was given on loan in 2003 to Oxford Brookes University where it now resides

Four Colman Getty,  
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