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The Man Booker International Prize

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The Man Booker International Prize 2005

A new literary prize

A major new literary prize is being launched, which will extend the scope of the Man Booker Prize for fiction internationally.

The Man Booker International Prize will recognize one writer for their achievement in fiction. The prize will be awarded once every two years to a living author who has published fiction either originally in English, or generally available in translation in the English language.

The Man Booker International Prize will echo and reinforce the annual Man Booker Prize for Fiction in that literary excellence will be its sole focus. This new prize goes a step further in highlighting one writer's continued creativity, development and overall contribution to world fiction.

The prize, sponsored by the Man Group, will be £60,000 and an author can only win the award once.

The first winner will be announced in mid 2005.

John Carey, chair of the judges for the inaugural prize, comments:

"This new prize will reward high international achievement, but unlike other global prizes, it will target fiction in English, or translated into English, and so will celebrate English-language fiction as a major cultural force in the modern world."

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The judging

For a prize of such scope, it is of great importance to have a panel with a deep knowledge and love of fiction writing. The panel for the new prize will be made up of international experts in literature.

It will consist of three people, a chair and two judges, who will be chosen by the advisory committee of the Man Booker Prize. In deciding on the winner, the judges will meet on a number of occasions and in different parts of the world.

The chair for the 2005 Man Booker International Prize is John Carey, the UK's most eminent literary critic. A broadcaster and the author of many books, he was Merton Professor of English Literature at the University of Oxford from 1976–2001. He chaired the Booker Prize in 1982, and the Man Booker Prize in 2003. The two other judges will be announced shortly.

The judging panel will initially produce its own reading list of international writers. These will remain confidential. A shortlist of fifteen contenders will be announced early in 2005. The winner will be selected from this list.

To put the decision of the panel into context, the chair of the judges will write an appreciation of the work of the winning author, to be delivered at the awards ceremony. The worldwide publisher(s) of the winning author will be encouraged to publish this appreciation.

The awards ceremony

The announcement of the winner of the first Man Booker International Prize will be made at a press conference in London in mid 2005. It will be paralleled by press activity in the winner's home country.

Two months later the prize will be presented at an awards ceremony. This high-profile event will be an opportunity to celebrate the winner in the company of his or her publishers and agents worldwide.

The chair of the judges will deliver his or her appreciation before an invited audience. The winner will also be invited to make a speech. Harvey McGrath, chairman of the Man Group, will present the award.

“The heritage and history of the Man Booker Prize mean that it has always generated extensive debate and discussion, not only within the Commonwealth but also in countries that do not meet the criteria for eligibility. The Man Booker International Prize will extend this influence worldwide, recognising the most important writers in contemporary fiction in the English language, and creating a new benchmark in the search for literary excellence. Man Group is delighted to support this exciting development.”

Harvey McGrath
Chairman
Man Group

Unique in the world of literature

The Man Booker International Prize is unique in the world of literature in that it can be won by an author of any nationality, providing that his or her work is available in the English language. It will be awarded every second year.

The timescale of the award allows the panel time to study in depth the work of those authors under consideration.

Continuing the leading role Man Booker plays in the world of literature, the Man Booker International Prize is a significant new initiative, destined to become a key date in the literary calendar.

The Man Group

Man Group plc is a leading global provider of alternative investment products and solutions as well as one of the world's largest futures brokers. The Group employs over 2,800 people in 15 countries and is listed on the London Stock Exchange (EMG.L) and is a constituent of the FTSE 100 Index.

The Booker Prize Foundation

The Booker Prize Foundation (BPF) is a registered charity which in 2002 took over from the Big Food Group responsibility for the organisation and operation of the prize and for the securing of a new commercial sponsor.

In April 2002 the Booker Prize Foundation announced that the Man Group had secured the coveted sponsorship for an initial period of five years, during which time the prize would be known as The Man Booker Prize for Fiction.

Booker

Booker, which originally set up the Booker Prize for Fiction in 1969, is part of the Big Food Group.

The Man Booker Prize for Fiction

The Man Booker Prize represents the very best in contemporary fiction, and is awarded each year for a novel published in the previous twelve months. From 1969 until the present day the prize continues to be the pinnacle of ambition for every fiction writer and is one of the world's most prestigious awards.

Over the years the Man Booker Prize has shortlisted authors from all corners of the Commonwealth – from Africa to Australasia, the Americas to India – whose writing reflects the diversity and richness of their cultural background.

The Man Booker International Prize will complement the annual prize by recognising one writer's achievement in literature and their significant influence on writers and readers worldwide.

“The Booker Prize Foundation has been looking for some time at ways of extending the scope of the prize to reward international excellence in literature. This new prize offers us a unique opportunity to reinforce the values of the Man Booker Prize throughout the English speaking world.”

Jonathan Taylor
Chair of the Booker
Prize Foundation

Practicalities

The Administrator of the Man Booker International Prize is Ion Trewin, currently Deputy Administrator of the Man Booker Prize for Fiction.

Colman Getty PR handle PR and event management for the prize and provide administrative back-up.

All enquiries

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Telephone +44 (0)20 7631 2666

The website will include detailed information about all aspects of the prize and will run regular news bulletins.

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