



Strictly confidential

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Anna Burns wins 50th Man Booker Prize with *Milkman*

- First Northern Irish author to win
- 17th woman to claim the prize since it began in 1969
- ‘Tale of a paramilitary sexual predator would be a worthy winner’, *Irish Times*

www.themanbookerprize.com
#FinestFiction #ManBooker2018

Milkman by Anna Burns is tonight, Tuesday 16 October, named winner of the 2018 Man Booker Prize for Fiction. It is her third full-length novel and her first major award.

Burns, 56, who was born in Belfast and lives in East Sussex, drew on the experience of Northern Ireland during the Troubles to write *Milkman*. Her first acclaimed novel, *No Bones*, was also set in this period. She saw off competition from two British writers, two American writers and one Canadian writer.

Kwame Anthony Appiah, 2018 Chair of judges, comments:

‘None of us has ever read anything like this before. Anna Burns’ utterly distinctive voice challenges conventional thinking and form in surprising and immersive prose. It is a story of brutality, sexual encroachment and resistance threaded with mordant humour. Set in a society divided against itself, *Milkman* explores the insidious forms oppression can take in everyday life.’

Set in an unnamed city, *Milkman* focuses on middle sister as she navigates her way through rumour, social pressures and politics in a tight-knit community. Burns shows the dangerous and complex outcome that can happen to a woman coming of age in a city at war.

[The Telegraph](#) described the novel as ‘viciously funny’, praising Burns for her ability ‘to paint a colourful social scene’. Meanwhile, the [Irish Times](#) wrote that Burns has created a novel that is ‘an impressive, wordy, often funny book and confirms Anna Burns as one of our rising literary stars’.

In the book the characters have designations rather than names. When interviewed for the [Man Booker Prize website](#), Burns said: ‘The book didn’t work with names. It lost power and atmosphere and turned into a lesser – or perhaps just a different – book. In the early days I tried out names a few times, but the book wouldn’t stand for it. The narrative would become heavy and lifeless and refuse to move on until I took them out again. Sometimes the book threw them out itself’.

Milkman is published by Faber & Faber, making it the fourth consecutive year the prize has been won by an independent publisher. Faber & Faber has the second highest number of winning titles of any publisher, with six winners that include: *Something to Answer For* (1969), *Rites of Passage* (1980), *Oscar and Lucinda* (1988), *The Remains of the Day* (1989), *True History of the Kelly Gang* (2001), *Vernon God Little* (2003).

Luke Ellis, CEO of Man Group, comments:

‘My colleagues and I at Man Group would like to congratulate Anna Burns, as well as each of the shortlisted authors. The six shortlisted novels this year explored particularly diverse and wide-ranging experiences and themes, and were linked by their brilliant use of language and creativity. We are honoured to support the Man Booker Prize for the sixteenth year, as it continues in its fiftieth year to champion literary excellence and the power of the novel on a global scale.’

Kwame Anthony Appiah was joined on the 2018 judging panel by the crime writer, Val McDermid; cultural critic Leo Robson; feminist writer and critic Jacqueline Rose; and artist and graphic novelist Leanne Shapton. The judges considered 171 submissions for this year’s prize.

Anna Burns’ win was announced by Kwame Anthony Appiah at a dinner at London’s Guildhall. She was presented with a trophy from HRH The Duchess of Cornwall and a £50,000 cheque by Luke Ellis, Chief Executive of Man Group. Burns also receives a designer bound edition of her book and a further £2,500 for being shortlisted. The book binding will be on display to the public, alongside the shortlist, for two weeks from tomorrow at Bonhams Auction House, Montpelier Street, London SW7 1HH.

The event was broadcast live on the BBC News Channel in the UK, on BBC World TV News internationally, and streamed online for international audiences via www.bbc.co.uk/arts. Actors Adetomiwa Edun, Amy Morgan and Claire Rafferty read extracts from the shortlisted books at the ceremony. All the shortlisted authors attended alongside a number of former winners, including A.S. Byatt, Kazuo Ishiguro, Howard Jacobson, Ben Okri and Jennifer Croft (Man Booker International 2018).

Anna Burns will take part in her first official public event as winner in a *New Statesman*-partnered event at Foyles Charing Cross Road on Thursday 18 October 2018. Tickets can be bought [here](#).

Royal Mail is issuing a congratulatory postmark featuring the winner's name, which will be applied to millions of items of stamped mail nationwide for six days from 17 October. It will read 'Congratulations to Anna Burns, winner of the 2018 Man Booker Prize'.

On winning the Man Booker Prize, an author can expect international recognition, plus a dramatic increase in book sales. In the week following the 2017 winner announcement, sales of *Lincoln in the Bardo* by George Saunders increased by 1227%. Bloomsbury has to date sold just under ¼ million copies globally across all formats, 70% of those sales coming after the win.

Other recent winners have included Eleanor Catton's *The Luminaries* (2013), which will be shown by the BBC as a six-part adaptation next year; Marlon James' *A Brief History of Seven Killings* (2015), which will become a TV series by Amazon; 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* was released as a film in 2017.

The leading prize for quality fiction in English

First awarded in 1969, the Man Booker Prize is recognised as the leading award for quality literary fiction written in English. Its list of winners includes many of the giants of the last five decades, from Salman Rushdie to Margaret Atwood, Iris Murdoch to JM Coetzee. The prize has also recognised many authors early in their careers, including Eleanor Catton, Aravind Adiga and Ben Okri.

Man Group, an active investment management firm, has sponsored the prize since 2002.

The rules of the prize were changed at the end of 2013 to embrace the English language 'in all its vigour, its vitality, its versatility and its glory', opening it up to writers beyond the UK and Commonwealth when their novels are published in UK.

To hear the most up-to-date news on this year's prize, listen to the Man Booker Prize Podcast series, or to learn more about the prize's history and share your thoughts online, please visit: www.themanbookerprize.com

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For all press enquiries please contact:

Four Culture on +44(0)20 3697 4200

Hannah Davies Hannah.Davies@FourCommunications.com
Alice Furse Alice.Furse@FourCommunications.com

About the winning book and author

Milkman

Anna Burns

Published by Faber & Faber

Judges' comment:

'The language of Anna Burns' *Milkman* is simply marvellous; beginning with the distinctive and consistently realised voice of the funny, resilient, astute, plain-spoken, first-person protagonist. From the opening page her words pull us into the daily violence of her world – threats of murder, people killed by state hit squads – while responding to the everyday realities of her life as a young woman, negotiating a way between the demands of family, friends and lovers in an unsettled time. The novel delineates brilliantly the power of gossip and social pressure in a tight-knit community, and shows how both rumour and political loyalties can be put in the service of a relentless campaign of individual sexual harassment. Burns draws on the experience of Northern Ireland during the Troubles to portray a world that allows individuals to abuse the power granted by a community to those who resist the state on their behalf. Yet this is never a novel about just one place or time. The local is in service to an exploration of the universal experience of societies in crisis.'

Synopsis

In this unnamed city, to be interesting is dangerous. Middle sister, our protagonist, is busy attempting to keep her mother from discovering her maybe-boyfriend and to keep everyone in the dark about her encounter with Milkman. But when first brother-in-law sniffs out her struggle, and rumours start to swell, middle sister becomes 'interesting'. The last thing she ever wanted to be. To be interesting is to be noticed and to be noticed is dangerous... *Milkman* is a tale of gossip and hearsay, silence and deliberate deafness. It is the story of inaction with enormous consequences.

Biography

Anna Burns is 56 and was born in Belfast, Northern Ireland, in 1962. She is the author of two novels, *No Bones* and *Little Constructions*, and of the novella, *Mostly Hero*. In 2001 she won the Winifred Holtby Memorial Prize, and was shortlisted for the 2002 Orange Prize for Fiction. She lives in East Sussex, England.

Notes to Editors

- Anna Burns is available for interview. To arrange please contact Maria Garbutt-Lucero at Faber & Faber. Tel: 07980 712 120; Email: mariagl@faber.co.uk
- The winner of the 2018 Man Booker Prize was chosen from 171 submissions. The 2018 shortlisted titles were:
 1. Anna Burns (UK) *Milkman* (Faber & Faber)
 2. Esi Edugyan (Canada) *Washington Black* (Serpent's Tail)
 3. Daisy Johnson (UK) *Everything Under* (Jonathan Cape)
 4. Rachel Kushner (USA) *The Mars Room* (Jonathan Cape)
 5. Richard Powers (USA) *The Overstory* (William Heinemann)
 6. Robin Robertson (UK) *The Long Take* (Picador)
- The special designer bound edition of the book was created by Paul C. Delrue

- Please find images of the winning author and [here](#). This Dropbox will be updated by Wednesday morning with images of the winner dinner and press conference.
- UK and Irish publishers may submit novels written in the English language and published in the UK between 1 October 2017 and 30 September 2018. The number of books a publisher can submit will depend on that publisher's inclusion in longlists over the previous five years, as follows:

Publishers with no longlistings - 1 submission

Publishers with 1 or 2 longlisting(s) - 2 submissions

Publishers with 3 or 4 longlistings - 3 submissions

Publishers with 5 or more longlistings - 4 submissions

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 a list of 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 Culture 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*
- The Man Booker Prize for Fiction was first awarded in 1969 and has been sponsored by Man Group since 2002. The title 'Booker Prize' therefore only applies to prize years 1969 - 2001, before Man Group'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
- 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 2018 winner was *Flights* written by Olga Tokarczuk and translated by Jennifer Croft. Chaired by author and cultural commentator Lisa Appignanesi OBE, the 2018 panel consisted of: translator Michael Hofmann; novelist and essayist Hari Kunzru; critic Tim Martin; and novelist and short story writer Helen Oyeyemi.

- The Booker Prize Foundation is a registered charity (no 1090049) established in 2002. Since then it has been responsible for the award of the Man Booker Prize for Fiction, and for the Man Booker International Prize since its inauguration in 2005. The trustees of the Booker Prize Foundation are: Baroness Kennedy QC (Chair) - former Chair of the British Council and Principal of Mansfield College, Oxford; Nick Barley, Director of the Edinburgh International Book Festival; Bidisha - writer, critic and broadcaster; Carol Lake - Managing Director Philanthropy Executive at JPMorgan Chase; James Naughtie - broadcaster; Ben Okri OBE - writer and 1991 Booker Prize winner; Christopher Pearce - former Finance Director of Rentokil plc; Professor Louise Richardson - Vice Chancellor of the University of Oxford; the Rt Hon. Lord David Willetts - writer, ex-minister, and advocate of fairness between the generations. Jonathan Taylor CBE is President of the Foundation and Sir Ronald Harwood, Baroness Neuberger and Baroness Nicholson of Winterbourne are Vice Presidents
- The Booker Prize Foundation Advisory Committee, which advises on any changes to the rules and on the selection of the judges, reflects 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 - Global Head of Communications and Marketing, Man Group; Nigel Newton - publisher, Bloomsbury; Fiammetta Rocco - Culture Correspondent at 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 is a global active investment management firm, with \$114.1bn of funds under management (as at 30 September 2018) in liquid and private markets, managed by investment specialists based around the world. Man Group has five specialist investment engines, which represent the range of its capabilities: Man AHL, Man Numeric, Man GLG, Man FRM and Man GPM. The teams invest across a diverse range of strategies and asset classes with highly specialised approaches, with long only and alternative strategies run on a discretionary and quantitative basis in single and multi-manager formats. Headquartered in London, the firm has 15 international offices and operates across multiple jurisdictions. Through the Man Charitable Trust and sponsorship of the Man Booker Prizes, Man Group is committed to promoting literacy and numeracy on a global scale, and to supporting charitable causes more broadly. Man Group plc is listed on the London Stock Exchange under the ticker EMG.LN and is a constituent of the FTSE 250 Index. Further information can be found at www.man.com
- Booker is the UK's leading food wholesaler with 198 business centres and a national delivery network. It serves over 441,000 catering customers, 94,000 independent retailers and 641,000 small businesses
- The Booker Prize Foundation has a longstanding partnership with the Royal National Institute of Blind People (RNIB) which in 2018 is marking its 150th anniversary. 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. The accessible versions are then made available to the tens of thousands of blind

and partially sighted people who use RNIB's Library, enabling them to enjoy Man Booker shortlisted titles at the same time as their sighted peers. Often there is a limited choice of books in accessible formats and they are not available to people with sight loss on publication day, but the Foundation is working with RNIB to change this story. For further information, contact RNIB's PR team on 020 7391 2223 or pressoffice@rnib.org.uk

- The Booker Prize Foundation has partnered with the National Literacy Trust since 2012 to deliver Books Unlocked. The Foundation funds the programme, which has transformed the lives of prisoners and young offenders in the UK by helping them develop a love of reading. Prisoners are able to engage with high-quality writing as copies of Man Booker Prize shortlisted titles are sent out to prison reading groups. These same titles are also serialised as audiobooks on National Prison Radio, which is broadcast into c.80,000 cells, enabling still more prisoners to experience these exceptional stories. Authors go into prisons to discuss their writing directly with reading groups and many also record interviews on National Prison Radio. The shared vision for Books Unlocked is to bring about positive change in prisoners' life chances. 2018 is the National Literacy Trust's 25th anniversary. For 25 years the charity has led the campaign to transform the future of the UK's most disadvantaged young people by improving their literacy levels: literacytrust.org.uk/programmes/books-unlocked/
- The Booker Prize Archive was given on loan in 2003 to Oxford Brookes University where it now resides

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