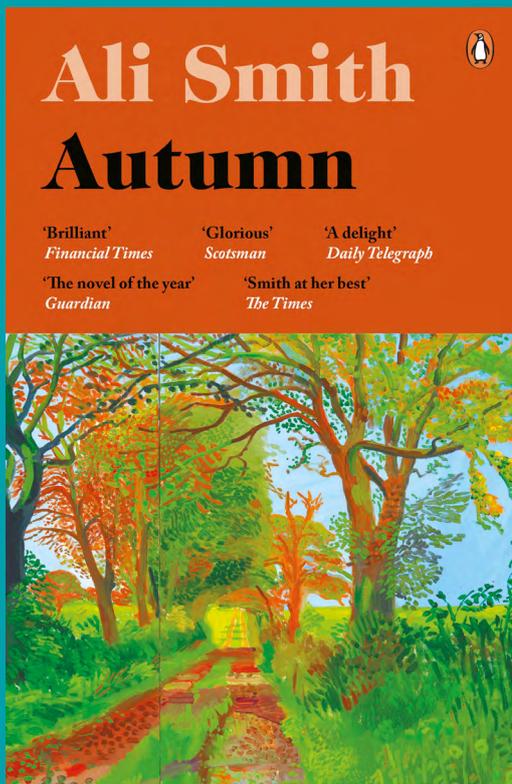


Reader's Guide



Other novels by Ali Smith
The Accidental (2005)
There But For The (2011)
How to be Both (2014)
Public Library and Other Stories (2015)

Autumn Ali Smith

Hamish Hamilton

www.themanbookerprize.com
#FinestFiction #ManBooker2017

THE
READING
AGENCY

M
Man

The
Booker
Prize
Foundation

About the author

Ali Smith was born in Inverness in 1962. She is the author of *Free Love and Other Stories*, *Like, Other Stories and Other Stories*, *Hotel World*, *The Whole Story and Other Stories*, *The Accidental*, *Girl Meets Boy*, *The First Person and Other Stories*, *There but for the, Artful*, *How to be both*, and *Public Library and Other Stories*. *Hotel World* was shortlisted for the 2001 Booker Prize and the Orange Prize and *The Accidental* was shortlisted for the 2005 Man Booker and the Orange Prize. *How to be Both* won the Baileys Women's Prize for Fiction, the Goldsmiths Prize and the Costa Novel Award and was shortlisted for the 2014 Man Booker and the Folio Prize. Ali lives in Cambridge.

About the book

Autumn. Season of mists and mellow fruitfulness. That's what it felt like for Keats in 1819.

How about autumn 2016? Daniel is a century old. Elisabeth, born in 1984, has her eye on the future. The United Kingdom is in pieces, divided by a historic once-in-a-generation summer.

Autumn is a meditation on a world growing ever more bordered and exclusive, on what richness and worth are, on what harvest means. This first in a seasonal quartet casts an eye over our own time. Who are we? What are we made of? Shakespearian jeu d'esprit, Keatsian melancholy, the sheer bright energy of 1960s pop art: the centuries cast their eyes over our own history-making.

What the judges thought

The judges admired Ali Smith's 'great verbal and imaginative energy' in this 'searching, post-Brexit novel with a bifurcated story'. They considered it to be 'humane, zany, delightful, optimistic'.

Discussion points

This novel is the first in a quartet of books about the seasons – why do you think the author started with autumn?

Describe the friendship between Elisabeth and Daniel and how it evolves throughout the novel.

The novel features real-life artist Pauline Boty – what is the impact of mixing real and fictional characters in the novel?

Autumn has been referred to as a 'post-Brexit' novel – what does this mean, and how does it relate to real world politics?

How does *Autumn* fuse the present with the past?

On what note, despair or hope, does the novel end and why?

Useful links

www.theguardian.com/books/2016/oct/16/ali-smith-autumn-interview-how-can-we-live-in-a-world-and-not-put-a-hand-across-a-divide-brexit-prof

www.independent.co.uk/arts-entertainment/books/reviews/autumn-ali-smith-book-review-hamish-hamilton-a7369711

www.theatlantic.com/entertainment/archive/2017/02/ali-smiths-autumn-is-a-post-brexit-masterpiece/516660/