

Press Release

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## Geetanjali Shree and Daisy Rockwell win The 2022 International Booker Prize with *Tomb of Sand*

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#2022InternationalBooker #FinestFiction

- *Tomb of Sand* is the first book originally written in any Indian language to win the prize, and the first novel translated from Hindi to be recognised
- The novel is published by Tilted Axis Press, which was founded by Deborah Smith, winner of the 2016 Man Booker International Prize for her translation of *The Vegetarian* by Korean author Han Kang
  - *Tomb of Sand* is Geetanjali's first novel to be published in the UK
- Daisy Rockwell's English translation won one of English PEN's flagship translation awards in 2019
  - Find out more information about The 2022 International Booker Prize at <https://thebookerprizes.com/IBP2022>

[Imagery can be downloaded here](#)

*Tomb of Sand*, written by Geetanjali Shree and translated from Hindi by Daisy Rockwell, is today, 26 May, announced as the winner of the 2022 International Booker Prize. The £50,000 prize will be split between Geetanjali Shree and Daisy Rockwell, giving the author and translator equal recognition. The winner was announced by chair of the judges, Frank Wynne, this evening, at a ceremony at One Marylebone in London.

Originally published in Hindi in 2018, *Tomb of Sand* was awarded one of English PEN's coveted translation awards, which encourages UK publishers to acquire more books from other languages by helping them to meet the costs of translating new works into English. It was published in English by Tilted Axis Press in August 2021.

*Tomb of Sand* is the first book in any Indian language to win The International Booker Prize, and the first novel translated from Hindi to be recognised by the award.

The author of three novels and several story collections, Geetanjali Shree has been translated into English, French, German, Serbian, and Korean. She was born in Mainpuri,

India, in 1957. This is the first of her books to be published in the UK. She has received and been shortlisted for a number of awards and fellowships, and lives in New Delhi.

Daisy Rockwell is a painter, writer and translator living in Vermont, US. She was born in 1969 in Massachusetts. She has translated a number of classic works of Hindi and Urdu literature, including Upendranath Ashk's *Falling Walls*, Bisham Sahni's *Tamas*, and Khadija Mastur's *The Women's Courtyard*. Her 2019 translation of Krishna Sobti's *A Gujarat Here, a Gujarat There* was awarded the Modern Language Association's Aldo and Jeanne Scaglione Translation Prize.

*Tomb of Sand* is set in northern India, and follows an 80-year-old woman who slips into a deep depression at the death of her husband, then resurfaces to gain a new lease on life. Her determination to fly in the face of convention - including striking up a friendship with a hijra person - confuses her bohemian daughter, who is used to thinking of herself as the more 'modern' of the two.

To her family's consternation, Ma insists on travelling to Pakistan, simultaneously confronting the unresolved trauma of her teenage experiences of Partition, and re-evaluating what it means to be a mother, a daughter, a woman, a feminist.

Rather than respond to tragedy with seriousness, Geetanjali Shree's playful tone and exuberant wordplay results in a book that is engaging, funny, and utterly original, at the same time as being an urgent and timely protest against the destructive impact of borders and boundaries, whether between religions, countries, or genders.

*Tomb of Sand* was chosen from a shortlist of six books during a lengthy and rigorous judging process, by a panel of five judges, chaired by translator, Frank Wynne. The panel also included author and academic, Merve Emre; writer and lawyer, Petina Gappah; writer, comedian and TV, radio and podcast presenter, Viv Groskop; and translator and author, Jeremy Tiang. This is the first time a translator has chaired the panel.

**Frank Wynne, chair of the judges, says:**

*"This has been an exceptionally strong shortlist, and it was gradually, regretfully, that we winnowed these six down to one after a long and impassioned debate. Ultimately, we were captivated by the power, the poignancy and the playfulness of "Tomb of Sand", Geetanjali Shree's polyphonic novel of identity and belonging, in Daisy Rockwell's exuberant, coruscating translation. This is a luminous novel of India and partition, but one whose spellbinding brio and fierce compassion weaves youth and age, male and female, family and nation into a kaleidoscopic whole."*

Geetanjali Shree and Daisy Rockwell will be appearing at Hay Festival on 29 May. In their first public event since the announcement, the pair will be in conversation with Viv Groskop. More information is available on Hay Festival's [website](#).

The International Booker Prize is awarded every year for a single book that is translated into English and published in the UK or Ireland. It aims to encourage more publishing and reading of quality fiction from all over the world and to promote the work of translators. Both novels and short-story collections are eligible. The contribution of author and translator is given equal recognition, with the £50,000 prize split between them. In addition, for the first time in 2022, the shortlisted authors and translators each received

£2,500, increased from £1,000 in previous years - bringing the total value of the prize to £80,000.

This year the judges considered 135 books, with a record number of submissions received.

Together, the two Booker Prizes reward the best fiction from around the globe that is published in English in the UK and Ireland.

The Booker Prizes online - the [website](#) and our channels on [Twitter](#), [Facebook](#), [Instagram](#), [TikTok](#) and [You Tube](#) - is the home for the Booker Prizes past and present. As well as a full history of our previous winners, nominated authors and judges, it is also a hub for year-round editorial content around our 500 or so books and authors, designed to engage readers with both prizes and to foster a lifelong love of reading.

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For press enquiries please contact Four Culture:

Julie Holman | [Julie.Holman@fourcommunications.com](mailto:Julie.Holman@fourcommunications.com) | 07841 672 393

Olivia Riggon | [Olivia.Riggon@fourcommunications.com](mailto:Olivia.Riggon@fourcommunications.com) | 020 3920 9108

Please find images for authors, translators and book jackets [here](#).

## Notes to Editors

- The 2022 winner was chosen from a shortlist of six books:

Title	Author	Translator	Original language	Author residence	UK Publisher or Imprint
<i>Cursed Bunny</i>	Bora Chung	Anton Hur	Korean	South Korea	Honford Star
<i>A New Name: Septology VI-VII</i>	Jon Fosse	Damion Searls	Norwegian	Norway	Fitzcarraldo Editions
<i>Heaven</i>	Mieko Kawakami	Sam Bett and David Boyd	Japanese	Japan	Pan Macmillan, Picador
<i>Elena Knows</i>	Claudia Piñeiro	Frances Riddle	Spanish	Argentina	Charco Press

<i>Tomb of Sand</i>	Geetanjali Shree	Daisy Rockwell	Hindi	India	Tilted Axis Press
<i>The Books of Jacob</i>	Olga Tokarczuk	Jennifer Croft	Polish	Poland	Fitzcarraldo Editions

- The International Booker Prize is awarded annually for the best single work of fiction translated into English and published in the UK. It was known until 2019 as the Man Booker International Prize when sponsored by Man Group. The £50,000 prize is divided equally between the author and the translator. From 2022, each shortlisted author and translator receives £2,500. The announcement of the 2021 winner, *At Night All Blood Is Black*, written by David Diop and translated by Anna Moschovakis, was met with both public and critical acclaim. The book's publisher, Pushkin Press, ordered a five-figure reprint the day after the winner announcement. The week following the winner announcement, sales of *At Night All Blood Is Black* saw a 477% sale increase on the week before. President Barack Obama, a keen follower of both of The Booker Prizes, listed *At Night All Blood Is Black* at the top of his summer reading list.
- The Booker Prize for Fiction was first awarded in 1969 and was called The Man Booker Prize for Fiction when sponsored by Man Group from 2002 - 2018. The winner receives £50,000. The 2021 winner was Damon Galgut with *The Promise*. The morning after the announcement, the book was number one on Amazon's bestseller chart. Two weeks after the win, Chatto & Windus announced that it had reprinted 153,000 copies of *The Promise*, having sold 23,878 copies in hardback, 14,622 of which sold in the two weeks following the news, a 1,925% jump in volume compared with the two weeks before.
- The 2022 Booker Prize judging panel is chaired by cultural historian, writer and broadcaster Neil MacGregor, and consists of: academic and broadcaster Shahidha Bari; historian Helen Castor; novelist and critic M John Harrison; and novelist, poet and professor Alain Mabanckou.
- The Booker Prize Foundation is a registered charity (no 1090049) established in 2002. It is responsible for the award of The Booker Prize for Fiction and for The International Booker Prize. The trustees of the Booker Prize Foundation are: Mark Damazer (chair) - freelance journalist and former broadcast executive; Tony Damer (treasurer) - member of the Institute of Chartered Accountants; Nick Barley - director, Edinburgh International Book Festival; Carol Lake - President of the JPMorgan Chase Foundation; Ben Okri - poet and author; MT Rainey - strategist, agency founder and social entrepreneur; Professor Louise Richardson - vice chancellor of the University of Oxford; Nicki Sheard - chief marketing officer, BBC Studios; The Rt Hon. Lord David Willetts - writer, ex-minister and advocate of fairness between the generations. The Booker Prize Foundation Secretary is Eve Smith.
- 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: Nic Bottomley - co-founder, Mr B's Emporium of Reading Delights; Jamie Byng - publisher, Canongate Books; James Daunt - managing director of Waterstones; Jonathan Douglas CBE - director of the National Literacy Trust; Adam Freudenheim - publisher, Pushkin Press; Daniel Hahn OBE - writer and translator; Sharmaine Lovegrove - publisher, Dialogue Books; Emma Paterson - agent, Aitken Alexander Associates; Fiammetta Rocco - senior editor and culture correspondent, *The Economist* and The International Booker Prize Administrator; Eve Smith - Secretary, Booker Prize Foundation; Boyd Tonkin - writer and critic; Helen Williams - Legal Counsel of Booker Group plc. It is chaired by Gaby Wood - Director, Booker Prize Foundation.

- Crankstart, a charitable foundation, is the exclusive funder of The Booker Prize and The International Booker Prize.
- The Director of the Booker Prize Foundation is Gaby Wood. The Administrator of The International Booker Prize is Fiammetta Rocco - senior editor and culture correspondent, *The Economist*.
- Four Culture handles PR, comms and event management for the prizes and provides all events and administrative back-up.
- Booker Group is the UK's leading food & drink wholesaler with branches nationwide and a delivery network. It serves over 400,000 catering customers and 100,000 independent retailers.
- The Booker Prize Foundation has a longstanding partnership with RNIB (Royal National Institute of Blind People). The Foundation funds the production of The Booker Prize for Fiction shortlisted titles in braille, giant print and audio, which the RNIB produces by the date the winner is announced. It also funds the production of the winner of the International Booker Prize in these formats. The 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 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 The Booker Prize for Fiction and International 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. Since 1993, the National

Literacy Trust 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/](https://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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