



Booker Prizes Pushes Into Original Content with Actor Readings directed by Kevin Thomas with Mermade



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The Booker Prize has commissioned Mermade, digital sister company of Merman, to create a series of short films to promote this year's shortlist before the winner is announced on 17th October at The Roundhouse, Camden.

The 12 films, directed by Kevin Thomas, feature six well-known performers, including the actors David Harewood and Anna Friel, musician and broadcaster Jarvis Cocker, as well as Merman's very own Sharon Horgan, with each performing two excerpts from one of the six shortlisted books. Actors Nikki Amuka-Bird and Prasanna Puwanarajah complete this year's extraordinary list of readers.

The films will be shared on YouTube (<https://www.youtube.com/c/TheBookerPrizes>) and The Booker Prizes website (<https://thebookerprizes.com>) as well as the Booker's various social channels (@TheBookerPrizes) and [newsletters](#). They are an example of how the Booker Prizes is becoming an ambitious digital publisher, with a redesigned, features-driven editorial website and

a greater focus on social video content to help serve new audiences with content around the two annual prizes and the Booker Library (the 600+ books that have been nominated over the years).

Kevin Thomas, Director, Merman says: *'Booker Prize represents the cream of fiction. So as films, these had to be powerful, or I'd be doing a disservice to the authors, the publishers and to Booker. I wanted them to be proper films. Not just talking heads reading off an autocue. I wanted the films to have drama, humour and emotion. I really wanted to capture the tone of each book. When we had just finished filming Anna Friel there wasn't a dry eye in the room. Then came Jarvis Cocker. We had a chat and I told him about how great all the performances had been. He quietly said "I'm not an actor". And I immediately saw that the way to get this one great was to just embrace Jarvis and who he is, not to try to force anything else out of him. For his reading of 'Treacle Walker' I can't think of anyone more appropriately whimsical. I love how they are all so different, yet the same. How they stand alone but belong together.'*

Paul Davies, Head of Editorial, Booker Prize Foundation says; *'In addition to awarding the annual Booker Prize and International Booker Prize, the primary aim of the Booker Prize Foundation is to encourage more people to read and enjoy quality fiction. We are immensely proud of these films and hugely grateful to all the performers for taking part, as well as to Kevin Thomas and the brilliant Mermade team for making them. The films really bring this year's Booker shortlist to life and will no doubt help these wonderful works of fiction reach a much bigger and broader audience. After watching these films, who wouldn't want to rush out and buy all six books?'*



VIEW FILMS HERE:

<https://thebookerprizes.com/the-booker-library/features/watch-leading-performers-read-extracts-from-the-booker-prize-2022>