



Sebastian Barry and Eoin Colfer Win Independent Booksellers' Prize

Independent Bookshop Customers vote for their
Favourite Book of the Year
Part of Independent Booksellers' Week 2009

Adult category winner: Sebastian Barry, *The Secret Scripture* (Faber & Faber)
Children's category winner: Eoin Colfer, *Artemis Fowl and The Time Paradox* (Puffin)

Under Embargo until: 2200 Hours, Thursday, 17th September, 2009

London, 17th September, 2009—The Booksellers Association of the UK and Ireland tonight announced *The Secret Scripture* (Faber) by Sebastian Barry and *Artemis Fowl and The Time Paradox* (Puffin) by Eoin Colfer as winners of the nationwide Independent Booksellers' Book Prize 2009, as voted for by independent bookshop customers, in support of Independent Booksellers' Week which ran from 15th to 22nd June 2009.

The Independent Booksellers' Book Prize - which is organised by The Booksellers Association, the national trade association for booksellers, and is now in its third year of existence - was supported by hundreds of independent bookshops throughout the country. The prizes were presented this evening at The Bookseller Retail Awards at The Natural History Museum, London.

Independent bookshop customers were invited to vote for their favourite book of the year from a shortlist of ten adult and ten children's books - which were voted for by Booksellers Association members from a long list derived from sales data that specifically relates to independent bookshops. Votes to choose the winners were cast in independent bookshops, by post or by email between mid June and the end of August 2009.

Meryl Halls, Head of Membership Service at The Booksellers Association, comments:

“Independent Booksellers Week celebrates quality, talent, creativity and passion for books and reading, and we are delighted that it sparked such energy and enthusiasm from local book shops and readers in picking their Favourite Book of the Year. We would like to congratulate both Sebastian and Eoin and thank everyone who voted.”

On discovering that *The Secret Scripture* had won the adult category, Sebastian Barry said: “This is very wonderful news indeed because the independent booksellers are the Buzz Aldrins, the Daniel Boones of the trade. They really are they heart of the matter. They keep things where they should be and I’m deeply moved that readers in Great Britain voted for my book.”

On winning the children’s category, Eoin Colfer commented: “I am delighted to have won this award for *Artemis*, especially when it comes from the independent booksellers who know what they’re talking about. This award will take pride of place on the mantelpiece where I used to keep my youngest son.”

Last year, *Notes from an Exhibition* (HarperPerennial) by Patrick Gale won the adult prize and the children’s award went to Robert Muchamore for his book *The Sleepwalker* (CHERUB).

Notes to Editors:

Independent Booksellers Book Prize 2009 Shortlists:

Adults Independent Booksellers’ Book of the Year shortlist

Title	Author	Publisher
Child 44	Tom Rob Smith	Pocket Books
The Guernsey Literary and Potato Peel Pie Society	Mary Ann Shaffer	Bloomsbury
Musicophilia	Oliver Sacks	Picador
The Secret Scripture	Sebastian Barry	Faber
Somewhere Towards the End	Diana Athill	Granta
Spilling the Beans	Clarissa Dickson-Wright	Hodder
The Suspicions of Mr. Whicher	Kate Summerscale	Bloomsbury
A Thousand Splendid Suns	Khaled Hosseini	Bloomsbury
When Will There be Good News?	Kate Atkinson	Black Swan
The White Tiger	Aravind Adiga	Atlantic

Children's Independent Booksellers' Book of the Year shortlist

Title	Author	Publisher
The Crossing of Ingo	Helen Dunmore	HarperCollins
Running on the Cracks	Julia Donaldson	Egmont
The Dragonfly Pool	Eva Ibbotson	Macmillan
Tiddler	Julia Donaldson	Scholastic
Mr Gum and the Dancing Bear	Andy Stanton	Egmont
Skulduggery Pleasant: Playing with Fire	Derek Landy	HarperCollins
Then	Morris Gleitzman	Puffin
Artemis Fowl and the Time Paradox	Eoin Colfer	Puffin
By Royal Command	Charlie Higson	Puffin
Kaspar	Michael Morpurgo	HarperCollins

Voting:

The public were able to vote for their favourite book of the year in both the adult and children's categories by picking up a postcard from one of the participating independent bookshops or by emailing their votes to a dedicated email address. Voting ran from mid June until the end of August 2009.

Shortlists

The Shortlists for both categories were voted for by Booksellers Association members from a long list derived from sales data that specifically relates to independent bookshops. The ten shortlisted children's and adults titles will feature in this year's Booksellers Association Christmas Books catalogue.

Sebastian Barry

Sebastian Barry was born in Dublin in 1955. His plays include *Boss Grady's Boys* (1988), *The Steward of Christendom* (1995), *Our Lady of Sligo* (1998) and *The Pride of Parnell Street* (2007). His novels include *The Whereabouts of Eneas McNulty* (1998), *Annie Dunne* (2002), *A Long Long Way* (2005) and *The Secret Scripture* (2008). He has won, among other awards, the Irish-America Fund Literary Award, the Christopher Ewart-Biggs Prize, the London Critics Circle Award and the Kerry Group Irish Fiction Prize. *A Long Long Way*, which was also shortlisted for the Man Booker Prize and the Dublin International Impac Prize, was the Dublin: One City One Book choice for 2007.

The Secret Scripture won the Costa Book of the Year award and the Irish Book Awards for Best Novel. It was shortlisted for the Man Booker Prize, Kerry Group Irish Fiction Award, Christopher Ewart-Biggs award and the James Tait Black Memorial Prize. He lives in Wicklow with his wife and three children.

Eoin Colfer

EOIN (pronounced 'Owen') COLFER was a primary school teacher in Wexford, Ireland up until he secured the largest ever advance for a children's novel by an unknown author in October 2000. He cast a spell on the publishing and film industries with his fantastically original novel, Artemis Fowl, and hasn't looked back since. Miramax and Tribeca productions teamed up for a film option before the book had even been auctioned at the Frankfurt Book Fair that year. The film is now slated to go into production next year.

Total UK sales of Artemis Fowl titles now exceed a staggering 4.5 million copies in the UK and Ireland and over 18 million worldwide. His work is published in 44 countries. He has achieved huge international critical acclaim in the media and the book trade and is ranked alongside Philip Pullman, Jacqueline Wilson and Anthony Horowitz as one of the UK's most popular and best-selling children's authors.

Independent Booksellers' Book Prize 2010

Next year's Independent Booksellers' Book prize will be announced during Independent Booksellers' Week (IBW) which will take place from 14th - 21st June 2010. More information about IBW can be found at: www.independentbooksellersweek.org.uk

About The Booksellers Association

The Booksellers Association of the United Kingdom and Ireland Limited, representing over 90% of stockholding booksellers in the UK and Ireland, is committed to providing the widest possible range of services to its membership, the value of which far outweighs the cost of being a member.

Its services range from the commercial, such as selling and exchanging National Book Tokens, paying suppliers electronically through the 'batch' service, offering reduced rates on credit and debit cards and a tailor made insurance scheme, to the practical, such as promoting World Book Day, publishing the 'Christmas Books' catalogue and offering carrier bags, to the intangible but invaluable, such as representation to Government and the EU.

The Booksellers Association offers advice and information in a multitude of areas, from book prize winners to price marking legislation; it runs conferences, meetings and events across the country with its Small Business Forums and throughout the year; helps market bookshops through co-operative action; publishes invaluable trade directories of publishers, booksellers and suppliers to the trade; talks to other organisations; provides financial advice through a network of independent financial advisors and runs a stockists scheme with the Open University.

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