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SALT HOUSES BY HALA ALYAN**AND WE WERE EIGHT YEARS IN POWER BY TA-NEHISI COATES****NAMED WINNERS OF 2018 DAYTON LITERARY PEACE PRIZE**

***Pachinko* by Min Jin Lee and *Reading with Patrick* by Michelle Kuo named runners-up**

Dayton, OH (September 17, 2018) – *Salt Houses*, Hala Alyan's debut novel about a displaced Palestinian family, and *We Were Eight Years in Power*, Ta-Nehisi Coates's exploration of race and identity through the lens of the Obama presidency, today were named the winners of the 2018 Dayton Literary Peace Prize for fiction and nonfiction, respectively.

Pachinko, Min Jin Lee's debut novel following four generations of a Korean-Japanese family, was named runner-up for fiction, while *Reading with Patrick*, Michelle Kuo's memoir of mentoring a teenager from one of the poorest counties in the U.S, was named the nonfiction runner-up.

Inspired by the 1995 Dayton Peace Accords that ended the war in Bosnia, The Dayton Literary Peace Prize is the only international literary peace prize awarded in the United States. The Prize celebrates the power of literature to promote peace, social justice, and global understanding. This year's winners will be honored at a gala ceremony hosted by journalist and author Wil Haygood (*The Butler* and *Showdown*, a 2016 finalist for the Dayton Literary Peace Prize in nonfiction) in Dayton on October 28th. Winners receive a \$10,000 honorarium and runners-up receive \$5,000.

"This year's winners and runners-up remind us just how much individual lives are shaped by broader political circumstances – and how abruptly those circumstances can change," said Sharon Rab, founder and co-chair of the Dayton Literary Peace Prize Foundation. "From Alyan's portrait of characters repeatedly displaced by an age-old conflict to Coates's incisive analysis of the modern US presidency, these books help us view politics through both an emotional and an intellectual lens, strengthening our empathy while sharpening our powers of political perception."

The 2018 Dayton Literary Peace Prize in Fiction:

Hala Alyan's heartbreaking debut novel, [Salt Houses](#) (Houghton, Mifflin, Harcourt), follows three generations of a Palestinian family as they are uprooted by one military clash after another, giving up their home, their land, and their story as they know it and scattering throughout the world. A lyrical examination of displacement, belonging, and family, the book humanizes an age-old conflict, illuminating the experiences of all refugees and challenging readers to confront that most devastating of all truths: you can't go home again.

On receiving the prize, Alyan said: "One of my earliest memories is watching my father's face light up as I chatted excitedly about the first book I read on my own. It's taken me years to truly understand that moment—that, in that instant, my father witnessed my foray into the sacred world of fiction, of perspective-taking and erasing borders, of understanding the complexity of others. He watched me untangle from the confines of immigration, the Gulf War we'd just fled from, and the ensuing otherness, and when I began to write my own stories, that sense of freedom magnified. Writing has taught me to pay homage to my ancestors and envision the world after I am long gone; it has empowered me to tell stories of oppression and restoration, to envision peace as something tangible. I am my most human when I am writing, my most alert and engaged and compassionate. To have my novel seen as a conduit for peace-building is remarkably humbling. Thank you for the honor of the Dayton Literary Peace Prize."

The 2018 Dayton Literary Peace Prize in Nonfiction:

[We Were Eight Years in Power](#) (One World PRH) is a collection of essays by Ta-Nehisi Coates, one of America's most influential voices. Revisiting each year of the Obama administration through Coates's own experiences, observations, and intellectual development, the book offers a vital account of eight years that began with great hope of black progress and ended with an election and vicious backlash that fully illuminated the tragedy of the Obama era.

The 2018 Dayton Literary Peace Prize Runner-Up in Fiction:

In [Pachinko](#) (Grand Central), Min Jin Lee brings the historical sweep of Dickens and Tolstoy to the saga of four generations of a poor Korean immigrant family who, exiled from a homeland they never knew, fight to control their destinies in 20th-century Japan. As they encounter both catastrophes and great joy, the novel's exceptional protagonists confront enduring questions of faith, family, and identity.

Lee said: "The world is broken because we do not love enough. War, peace, and art require at least three elements: imagination, will, and action – and ironically, all three are enacted because men and women feel love. This is the central paradox – we love – the other, self, family, faith, or nation – and we use that love – of something, or someone, for anything – to justify our violence, compromises, and creation. We know that peace is far more difficult than war or art, because peace requires both forgiveness and restraint; so somehow, we must learn to love peace far more than war. If literature bears witness to true narrative and if it awakens compassion, reconciliation may indeed be possible. Where men and women have failed to love, literature may inspire greater love for all those we'd once thought we feared or hated. I write fiction because I believe that our love can refine our worse nature. I am deeply honored to join the Dayton Literary Peace Prize family of writers as we pursue our collective call toward global peace."

The 2018 Dayton Literary Peace Prize Runner-Up in Nonfiction:

In her stirring memoir [Reading with Patrick](#) (Random House), Michelle Kuo, the child of Taiwanese immigrants, shares the story of her complicated but rewarding mentorship of Patrick Browning, a teenaged student from one of the poorest counties in the U.S., and his remarkable literary and personal awakening.

Kuo said: "By telling the story of an incarcerated person learning to read and write, I hoped to show how books can charge an inner life with imagination and beauty. I sought to grapple openly with the question: What do we owe each other in a world of inequality, and how can we do the hard work of coming to know one another? Reading together is one way to create a shared world. I am deeply grateful to be recognized by the Dayton Literary Peace Prize. In honoring my book, it honors the idea that there can be no peace without economic and racial equality, and no freedom without literacy."

Organizers previously announced that writer John Irving, whose novels champion outsiders and often explore the bigotry, intolerance, and hatred directed at sexual minorities, will receive the 2018 [Ambassador Richard C. Holbrooke Distinguished Achievement Award](#), named in honor of the noted U.S. diplomat who helped negotiate the Dayton Peace Accords.

To be eligible for the 2018 awards, English-language books must have been published or translated into English in 2017 and address the theme of peace on a variety of levels, such as between individuals, among families and communities, or among nations, religions, or ethnic groups.

A [judging panel](#) of prominent writers selected the winners and runners-up, including Lesley Nneka Arimah (*What It Means When a Man Falls from the Sky*), Robin Hemley (*Reply All: Stories; Nola: A Memoir of Faith, Art, and Madness; Invented Eden: The Elusive, Disputed History of the Tasaday*), Susan Southard (*Nagasaki: Life After Nuclear War*), and Alan Taylor (*William Cooper's Town; The Internal Enemy*).

About the Dayton Literary Peace Prize

The Dayton Literary Peace Prize honors writers whose work uses the power of literature to foster peace, social justice, and global understanding. Launched in 2006, it has established itself as one of the world's most prestigious literary honors, and is the only literary peace prize awarded in the United States. As an offshoot of the Dayton Peace Prize, the Dayton Literary Peace Prize awards a \$10,000 cash prize each year to one fiction and one nonfiction author whose work advances peace as a solution to conflict, and leads readers to a better understanding of other cultures, peoples, religions, and political points of view. Additionally, The Ambassador Richard C. Holbrooke Distinguished Achievement Award is bestowed upon a writer whose body of work reflects the Prize's mission; previous honorees include Wendell Berry, Taylor Branch, Geraldine Brooks, Louise Erdrich, Barbara Kingsolver, Nicholas Kristof and Sheryl WuDunn, Tim O'Brien, Marilynne Robinson, Gloria Steinem, Studs Terkel, Colm Tóibín and Elie Wiesel. For more information visit the Dayton Literary Peace Prize media center at <http://daytonliterarypeaceprize.org/press.htm>.

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