

Award Nominations and Literary Fiction

~~Lowlands~~ If we were to believe the media, summer reading is a time for light beachy reads. Thrillers, romance and other guilty pleasures seem to fall in this category. I fall strictly into the camp that you can read anything you want at any time, but one thing we can agree on? It isn't summer anymore! So maybe it is the perfect time for a literary read. Literary fiction is often denser, more lyrical and the characters spend less time doing things and more time reflecting or reacting to things. They can be beautiful to read, have complex issues, but also sometimes dark and sad. Warning: literary fiction books often have open or ambiguous endings! You will be in for a surprise if you normally read romance or mysteries.

Literary fiction fans often refer to awards lists ? and two of my go-to lists have recently announced their nominees. The Man Booker prize is awarded to British authors and those from the Commonwealth of Nations. Their recently announced short list is very diverse ? four of the six are women and are from the far reaches of Zimbabwe, New Zealand, India, and Canada. The entire list:

We Need New Names by NoViolet Bulawayo

The Luminaries by Eleanor Catton

Harvest by Jim Crace

The Lowland by Jhumpa Lahiri

A Tale for the Time Being by Ruth Ozeki

The Testament of Mary by Colm Tóibín

The National Book Awards fiction nominees are:

The Flamethrowers by Rachel Kushner

The Lowland by Jhumpa Lahiri

The Good Lord Bird by James McBride

Bleeding Edge by Thomas Pynchon

Tenth of December by George Saunders

The full list of Young Adult, Poetry and Nonfiction nominees can be found at the [National Book Awards website](#).

While maybe not gripping and gritty, these literary fiction titles each look thought-provoking and full of life. I know my to-read list just got a little bit longer!

Posted by sbowman on October 21, 2013

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