

### **Su Tong's *The Boat to Redemption* Wins the 2009 Man Asian Literary Prize**

**Hong Kong, 16 November 2009** – A panel of three internationally acclaimed authors and experienced literary judges named Chinese author Su Tong the winner of the 2009 Man Asian Literary Prize for his work, *The Boat to Redemption*, a novel about a disgraced party official forced to make a new life amongst the boat people resulting in revolutionary impulse.

The Man Asian Literary Prize was established in 2006 to bring greater worldwide attention to Asian writing and authors. The inaugural prize was awarded in 2007 to *Wolf Totem* by Jiang Rong, which was published in English to great acclaim in early 2008. Miguel Syjuco's *Ilustrado* won the 2008 prize and will be published in 2010. Many of the short- and longlisted works from 2007 and 2008 have also been published.

The distinguished panel of judges includes Irish novelist Colm Tóibín, Chinese American author Gish Jen and Indian writer Pankaj Mishra, who was also a judge of the 2008 Prize.

The panel of judges for the 2009 prize praised the winning novel:

“*The Boat to Redemption* by Su Tong is a picaresque novel of immense charm. It is a story about obsessive love, the story of the relationship between a father and a son, and a story about the revolutionary impulse. It is also a political fable with an edge which is both comic and tragic, and a parable about the journeys we take in our lives, the distance between the boat of our desires and the dry land of our achievement.”

The prize winner was announced at a celebratory dinner at The Peninsula Hong Kong and Su Tong was awarded USD 10,000. The translator for *The Boat to Redemption*, Howard Goldblatt, was also awarded USD 3,000.

The shortlist of five from which the winner was chosen included Indian writer Omair Ahmad for *Jimmy the Terrorist*, Indian writer Siddharth Chowdhury for *The Descartes Highlands*, Filipino author Eric Gamalinda for *Day Scholar*, Indian writer Nitasha Kaul for *Residue* and Chinese author Su Tong for *The Boat to Redemption*.

Pankaj Mishra commented on the shortlist: “The Man Asian prize this year yet again reveals the intellectual and literary ferment of contemporary Asia: how its hectically modernizing societies are generating some of most interesting art and the most intense reckoning with history in the world today.”

Man Group plc is the sponsor of the Man Asian Literary Prize, in cooperation with Asian Literary Prize Ltd. Man Group also supports a variety of other programmes as well as charities aimed at furthering literature and literacy, including the Man Hong Kong International Literary Festival, a 10-day event that attracts authors from around the world and thousands of attendees. Separately, Man Group also sponsors the annual Man Booker Prize and the bi-annual Man Booker International Prize, in conjunction with the Booker Prize Foundation.

**For further information about the Man Asian Literary Prize and press enquiries please contact:**

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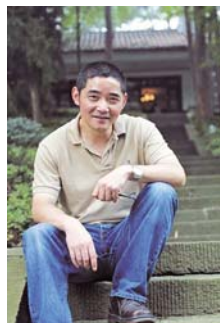
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**Additional information on the website:**

[www.manasianliteraryprize.org](http://www.manasianliteraryprize.org)

**Biography for Su Tong**



**Su Tong's** prolific and provocative *oeuvre* – six novels including *Rice* (2004) and *My Life as Emperor* (2006), a dozen novellas and more than 120 short stories – have earned him a place at the centre of China's literary scene. His best-known work abroad is the novella *Wives and Concubines*, which was made into an Academy Award-nominated film, *Raise the Red Lantern*. *Binu – The Myth Of Meng Jiang Nu* (2006) was sold into 15 countries and is scheduled for publication in Britain.

**Synopsis of *The Boat to Redemption***

In *The Boat to Redemption* disgraced Secretary Ku has been banished from the Party – it has been officially proved that he does not have a fish-shaped birthmark on his bottom and is therefore not the son of a revolutionary martyr, but the issue of a river pirate and a prostitute. He and his son, Dongliang, make a new life among the boat people where they meet Huixian. Soon Dongliang is obsessed with her and takes on life, fate and the Party in the only way he knows.

**Notes to Editors**

**The Man Asian Literary Prize** is awarded annually in November. This major literary prize aims to recognize the best of new Asian literature and to bring it to the attention of the world literary community. A distinguished panel of judges selects a single work of fiction to be awarded the prize each year. The first Prize was awarded to the Chinese writer Jiang Rong for his novel *Wolf Totem* on 10 November 2007. The 2008 Prize was awarded to Miguel Syjuco, for *Ilustrado*.

Works submitted for consideration must not yet have been published in English, although they may have been published in other languages. The prize is jointly administered by representatives of the Man Hong Kong International Literary Festival, the University of Hong Kong and the Chinese University of Hong Kong, and is sponsored by Man Group plc, a leading global financial services firm based in London.

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