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Nielsen Book
3rd Floor, Midas House, 62 Goldsworth Road,
Woking, Surrey GU21 6LQ
www.nielsen.com

Press Release

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BESTSELLING AUTHORS PAULA HAWKINS, J.K. ROWLING AND JOE WICKS HONOURED AT SPECSAVERS BESTSELLER AWARDS, POWERED BY NIELSEN BOOK

London, Wednesday 25 January 2017

The 'Class of 2016' join the Hall of Fame alongside Honorary Platinum authors Martina Cole, Anthony Horowitz and Dame Jacqueline Wilson

The authors of some of the most successful books of recent years have been honoured at the first Specsavers Bestseller Awards, powered by Nielsen Book.

The prestigious event was held at Mayfair's No. 4 Hamilton Place and hosted by the BBC's Kate Silverton. Authors and illustrators, including Caitlin Moran, Axel Scheffler and Jojo Moyes, accepted awards for books which reached significant sales milestones of 250,000 (Silver), 500,000 (Gold) or 1m copies (Platinum) during 2016, as recorded by Nielsen BookScan.

Awards were given in three categories - Non-Fiction, Fiction and Children's. Recently published titles to receive Platinum Awards included body coach Joe Wicks' *Lean in 15*; Paula Hawkins' *The Girl on the Train*, which has gone triple platinum (three million sales) since publication in January 2015; Jojo Moyes' *Me Before You*; and J.K. Rowling with co-authors John Tiffany and Jack Thorne for the script book *Harry Potter and the Cursed Child*.

J.K. Rowling praised her collaborators in a message: *"As an author, the thrill of knowing your latest book is doing well never diminishes, even after 20 years of publishing. The script book of Harry Potter and the Cursed Child, however, was a bit different, because it was a collaboration with the creative team who produced the play: the director John Tiffany and in particular the writer Jack Thorne ... But most of the credit for the success of the script book must go to the booksellers without whom of course there would be no bestsellers. Thank you all for getting behind the script book, and welcoming Harry back as a grown-up!"*



Joe Wicks was equally delighted: *“I can’t believe I’m getting an award for selling one million copies of Lean In 15 in the UK - who would have thought that setting up an Instagram account would lead to this! Never in a million years did I imagine I’d have a book, let alone be given an award and be in the Hall of Fame alongside some amazing people and idols like Jamie Oliver and Delia Smith.”*

Other authors to receive Platinum Bestseller Awards were S.J. Watson for *Before I Go to Sleep*; David Walliams for four of his novels for children, including *Awful Auntie* and *Mr Stink*; and Julia Donaldson and Axel Scheffler for *Monkey Puzzle* and *Stick Man*. David Walliams said: *“I’d like to say a very big thank you to the readers. They are the ones that made this happen and keep me writing.”*

Axel Scheffler commented: *“This award is very special to us. It’s amazing to think of all the people who have bought and (hopefully!) read our books – makes us feel a little dizzy. We’re very proud to receive this award and would like to thank everybody involved in making those books – and, most importantly, all the little (and not so little) readers.”*

Andre Breedt, Managing Director of Nielsen Book Research International, said: *“To sell a million copies of one title is an impressive and relatively rare achievement. The fact that so many authors have achieved this level of sales in such a short time, and in some cases several times over, is quite phenomenal. Our ‘Class of 2016’ books, in Platinum, Gold and Silver, offer a clear view of British readers’ current interests and obsessions, from what makes our children laugh to how we as adults make sense of what is going on around us.”*

Additionally, Honorary Awards were presented to authors who have sold millions of books throughout their careers despite not yet reaching the million copy milestone for an individual title.

Honorary Platinum Awards were presented to: Dame Jacqueline Wilson (over 18 million collective sales for books including the *Hetty Feather* and *Tracy Beaker* series); Martina Cole (nine million sales of novels including *Dangerous Lady*, *The Take* and *The Madam*); and Anthony Horowitz, who has sold over six million copies of books featuring his own creations, such as the teen spy *Alex Rider*, and classic characters *Sherlock Holmes* and *James Bond*.

Dame Mary Perkins, Founder of Specsavers, said: *“These are writers that the entire country knows, both from reading their books and watching the films and television series their characters have inspired – their work has fuelled our imaginations for years, and I am delighted that Specsavers is able to honour them with Bestseller Awards.”*

Satire was also a big winner at the ceremony: Jason Hazeley and Joel Morris received Gold and Silver Bestseller Awards for their satirical titles including *How It Works: The Husband* and *The Ladybird Guide to the Hangover*, inspired by the iconic Ladybird books for Children, and Bruno Vincent’s *Five on Brexit Island* took a Silver Award.

Other authors to win Gold and Silver Awards in Non-Fiction included Caitlin Moran, Professor Steve Peters, Owen Jones, and Millie Morotta, the artist whose books inspired the adult colouring craze. Honoured for their Fiction sales were B. A. Parris, Kate Atkinson and Dinah Jeffries, and in Children’s vlogger-turned-author Zoe Sugg and *Tom Gates* creator Liz Pichon picked up Bestseller Awards.

Notes to editors

Nielsen Book has been the official tracker of print book sales through Nielsen BookScan for the last 19 years. With the addition of e-book tracking through Nielsen PubTrack Digital sales can now be comprehensively measured, making the term ‘bestseller’ more quantifiable and trustworthy for the benefit of readers everywhere.



Details on the Specsavers Bestseller Award winners, powered by Nielsen Book, listings of the latest bestsellers, and features on the authors celebrated at the launch event, can be found at www.specsaversbestsellerawards.com

The Specsavers Bestseller Awards scheme is project managed by Agile Ideas for Nielsen Book in the UK.

For further information, please contact:

Jon Howells:

Email: jon@jonhowellspr.com

Tel: 07766 396 844

Notes to editors

For the full list of authors and books featured in the first Specsavers Bestseller Awards **see accompanying list.**

About Nielsen Book

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About Specsavers

Specsavers is a partnership of almost 2,000 locally-run businesses throughout the world – all committed to delivering high quality, affordable optical and hearing care in the communities they serve. They have long been a champion of books, having sponsored the Specsavers Book Club on More 4, the Specsavers Crime Thriller Book Club and Specsavers Crime Thriller Awards on ITV3 and the National Book Awards. Specsavers also supports the Bord Gais Energy Irish Book Awards.

About Agile Ideas

Launched in Bath in 2004, Agile Ideas is an independent, marketing & project management agency specializing in Book-based Prizes, Awards and Promotions. Since formulating the creation of the commercial platform for the original Richard & Judy Book Club, Agile Ideas has built, administered and event managed many projects and properties including; The Wainwright Golden Beer Literary Prize, The Bord Gais Energy Irish Book Awards, The Specsavers Crime Thriller Awards, The Cross Sports Book Awards, The Books Are My Bag Readers Awards & The Edward Stanford Travel Writing Awards.

The M.D. Alastair Giles jointly founded both The Book Marketing Society & The Independent Publishing Agency Collective.

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