# SAMANTHA J.HAYWOOD

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***The Selector of Souls* by Shauna Singh Baldwin**

World rights available ex:

* Canada: Knopf, September 2012
* UK & Commonwealth, including India: Simon & Schuster, September 2012
* Turkey: Epsilon Yayincilik

**Praise for *The Selector of Souls:***

“Baldwin has never been accused of lacking ambition in her novels, and it’s a charge unlikely to be levelled this time either. ***The Selector of Souls*** strides boldly through the minefields of religion, political corruption, abortion, AIDS, caste and the Indo-Pakistani arms race along the way...a detailed, wrenching account of an entrenched cultural issue that, 20 years later, continues to make disturbing headlines...illuminating.” - **Toronto Star**

“***The Selector of Souls*** neatly inverts the usual pattern of the immigrant novel. ...Although her outspokenness has made her controversial in the traditional society that produced her this author remains fiercely political. The fact that few want to talk about the epidemic of anti-female sex selection that is distorting Indian society is precisely why she does...After novels like ***The Selector of Souls***, one doubts they will remain [silent] for long.” - **The Globe and Mail**

"Haunting and beautiful... [Baldwin] chronicles the bitter histories of scores of characters which contain lingering colonial attitudes, the devastations of Partition, the brutal anti-Sikh riots, and accounts of young men caught up in terrorism. Always and in everything are the precarious lives of girls and women." - **National Post**

“Baldwin’s prose is precise, illuminating and insightful as she explores cultural practices in India that ruin — and end — lives. [She] offers hope that attitudes are changing so more families will celebrate, rather then mourn, the birth of a girl.” - **Ottawa Citizen**

"Many South Asians can easily relate to the challenges faced by Damini and Anu ...has many different voices... discrimination against gender, race and class exists in various forms and across borders... ‘***The Selector of Souls*** raises burning questions... (and) disturbing issues of caste, contrasting religious beliefs and intolerance, abortion and political corruption."

- **CanIndia News**

“***The Selector of Souls*** illustrates the profound frustration experienced by many women in India when it comes to not being allowed to make their own decisions about whom to marry and how to lead their lives.” - **Brandon Sun**

"Lyrical and lushly-detailed...explores with unblinking honesty the challenges women endure. . . The book is filled with dark humor, and the characters in ***The Selector of Souls*** become so real, it’s difficult to leave them behind at the final page. Because Shauna Singh does not shy away from difficult situations, from horror or harsh realities, her vivid detail, polished, lyrical and sensual language, chronicles those realities and lures readers into a rich, multicultural world. This book must rank at the top of everyone’s reading list. It illuminates the matters that foster confusion, misunderstandings, hurt feelings and physical pain between men and women, between people of various faiths and cultures, between the classes, between parents and children, between neighbors and friends. From its opening with Damini’s haunting sacrifice to its very end, the book consistently surprises and keeps the reader gripped for what comes next. " - **Sikhchic.com**

"In her poetic prose, the author of “What the Body Remembers” (some of whose characters reappear here though both novels stand alone) weaves history and current affairs, psychology and a good yarn to create a gripping piece of art. If the Partition riots play a big role in the earlier work, it is the 1984 carnage following Indira Gandhi’s assassination that has irreversibly touched the characters in “***The Selector of Souls***”. The Babri Masjid demolition, the rise of Right wing politics and its penetration into the middle, upper middle and impoverished strata of society, as well as the role of the Church, all loom into view by turns as the drama unfolds on a stage that swings between the capital city of New Delhi and the Himachal Pradesh hamlet of Gurkot, occasionally shifting scene to Rajasthan or Punjab. The dilemma of its women characters though, seems timeless." - **Anjana Rajan, The Hindu**

“***The Selector of Souls*** is a bold and vivid dramatization of the charged choices shaping women’s lives in 1990s India. Shauna Singh Baldwin has a gift for warm-hearted and incisive storytelling. This is a novel expansive in its vision and defiantly human in its embrace of the contradictions that animate us all.”- **Catherine Bush, author of *The Rules of Engagement* and *Claire’s Head***

"A canvas of rich images, a cast of memorable characters with all of their strengths and flaws, important moral questions, gripping stories intertwined. Shauna Singh Baldwin has the skill to mix these ingredients, add her humanist touch and come up with a superb novel." - **Frances Itani, author of *Requiem, Remembering the Bones* and *Deafening***

“From its opening lines, in which a mundane scene of domestic life is slowly transformed into horror, ***The Selector of Souls*** catapults the reader into an finely imagined space. Shauna Singh Baldwin writes compellingly of the conventions that curtail and threaten the lives of Indian women. Her polished language and original imagery consistently stir and surprise.” - **Erna Paris, author of *Long Shadows: Truth, Lies, and History***

"In this tender twister of a tale, Shauna Singh Baldwin takes us inside a world where women murder or abort their daughters to help us understand how gender-loathing and its attendant horrors can be transformed by sympathy and love." - **Susan Swan, author of *What Casanova Told Me* and *The Wives of Bath***

"A mesmerizing novel, bravely revealing the harsh realities of an entrenched patriarchy bound by the forces of history. Baldwin's lush details are vivid and luminous, drawing us into the multitude of cultures and religions, the richly-textured worlds of India at the end of the last century. Sweeping and evocative, but most of all: illuminating." - **Sandra Gulland, author of *The Josephine B. Trilogy* and *Mistress of the Sun***

**Prizes**

First chapter (short story *Damini*) longlisted for CBC Literary Award (2011)

Anne Powers Fiction Award (2012) from the Council for Wisconsin Writers

**Further media and press for *The Selector of Souls* by Shauna Singh Baldwin:**

CNN Special Op-Ed:

“Why American Sikhs Will Survive”:

<http://www.cnn.com/2012/08/10/opinion/baldwin-sikh-community/index.html>

As Guest Editor for The National Post in October:

Oct 1 - In that strange between-ness

<http://arts.nationalpost.com/2012/10/01/shauna-singh-baldwin-in-that-strange-between-ness/>

Oct 2 - Reframing our epics

<http://arts.nationalpost.com/2012/10/02/shauna-singh-baldwin-reframing-our-epics/>

Oct 3 - For whom do you write?

<http://arts.nationalpost.com/2012/10/03/shauna-singh-baldwin-for-whom-do-you-write/>

Oct 4 - Don't Blame The Technology

<http://arts.nationalpost.com/2012/10/04/shauna-singh-baldwin-dont-blame-the-technology/>

Globe and Mail profile on Shauna and ***The Selector of Souls***, "I've been a minority in Three Countries." by John Barber.

<http://license.icopyright.net/user/viewFreeUse.act?fuid=MTY2Mzc4MTE%3D>

Surrendering Sweetness: in conversation with Shauna Singh Baldwin. Hazlitt interview by Naheed Mustafa. Sept 2012

<http://www.randomhouse.ca/hazlitt/feature/surrendering-sweetness-conversation-shauna-singh-baldwin>

Bookbits: Interview about The Selector of Souls by Craig Rintoul. Sept, 2012

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=rjOFnY1XTfY>

WUWM Lake Effect: Shauna Singh Baldwin asks, Where are India's missing girls? in new novl.Radio Interview by Mitch Teich -- Sept 2012.

<http://www.wuwm.com/programs/lake_effect/lake_effect_segment.php?segmentid=9677>

TV Ontario - The Power of One -- article on hate crimes Sept 2012. by Shauna Singh Baldwin

<http://theagenda.tvo.org/blog/agenda-blogs/guest-post-power-one>

Writing ***The Selector of Souls***. March 2012 by Shauna Singh Baldwin

<http://www.shaunasinghbaldwin.com/SOS--Writing-Process.html>

Writing from the Heart, Atelier India, January 2013:

<http://www.shaunasinghbaldwin.com/2013-01_Shauna_Singh_Baldwin_-_Selector_of_Souls_-_Atelier_Interview.pdf>

Letter from Milkwaukee, THINK Magazine:

<http://www.shaunasinghbaldwin.com/2013__SSB_THINK_Magazine_article.pdf>

Researcher of Souls, The Hindu:

<http://www.thehindu.com/arts/books/researcher-of-souls/article4385939.ece>