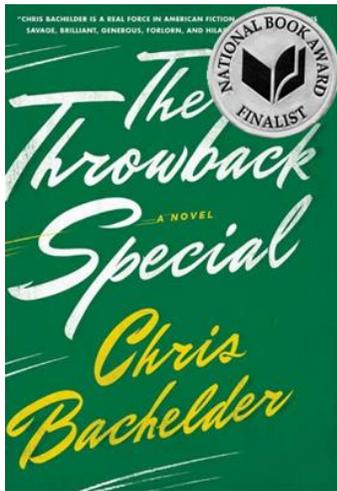


ALUMNUS CHRIS BACHELDER FINALIST FOR THE NATIONAL BOOK AWARDS



MFA@FLA alumnus Chris Bachelder (MFA, 2002) has been shortlisted for the 2016 National Book Awards. His novel [The Throwback Special](#) is one of five finalists for the prestigious award in fiction. Bachelder's novel was serialized in four issues of *The Paris Review* beginning in summer 2015, and won the Terry Southern Prize for Humor earlier this year.

The Throwback Special (W. W. Norton) was praised in the [New York Times Book Review](#), the [Los Angeles Times](#), and called by the [Minneapolis Star Tribune](#) "2016's first Great Book" and "transcendentally tender."

"If I might stoop to sincerity," said Padgett Powell, who recruited Bachelder to MFA@FLA, "I believe Chris Bachelder to be the wickedest literary writer in the country. His subject is the spectacular and spectacularly nuanced boob that is the American man today."

According to the National Book Awards, "Here is the absorbing story of twenty-two men who gather every fall to painstakingly reenact what ESPN called 'the most shocking play in NFL history' and the Washington Redskins dubbed the 'Throwback Special': the November 1985 play in which the Redskins' Joe Theismann had his leg horribly broken by Lawrence Taylor of the New York Giants live on Monday Night Football."

In the story, each fall twenty-two men reenact "the most shocking play in NFL history," the "Throwback Special." In 1985, Redskins' Joe Theismann's leg was horribly broken by Lawrence Taylor of the New York Giants live on Monday Night Football. "Over the course of a weekend," says the NBA, "the men reveal their secret hopes, fears, and passions as they choose roles, spend a long night of the soul preparing for the play, and finally enact their bizarre ritual for what may be the last time. Along the way, mishaps, misunderstandings, and grievances pile up, and the comforting traditions holding the group together threaten to give way."

Bachelder is also the author of *Bear v. Shark, U.S.!*, and *Abbott Awaits*. His fiction and essays have appeared in *McSweeney's*, *The Believer*, and the *Paris Review*. He lives with his wife and two daughters in Cincinnati, where he teaches at the University of Cincinnati.

An interview with Bachelder on NPR's Weekend Edition is available [here](#).

The winners of the National Book Awards will be announced November 16.