Dinaw Mengestu, a recipient of the 2012 MacArthur Foundation Genius Award, was born in Ethiopia and raised in Illinois. He graduated from Georgetown University and received his MFA degree from Columbia University. His fiction and journalism have been published in The New Yorker, Granta, Harper’s, Rolling Stone, and The Wall Street Journal. Mengestu was chosen for the 5 Under 35 Award by the National Book Foundation in 2007 and was named on The New Yorker’s “20 Under 40” list in 2010. He is also the recipient of a Lannan Fiction Fellowship, The Guardian First Book Award, The Los Angeles Times Book Prize, and the Prix du Premier Meilleur Roman Etranger, among other awards. He is the author of three novels: All Our Names (2014), The Beautiful Things That Heaven Bears (2008), and How to Read the Air (2010). His work has been translated into more than fifteen languages.

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