

(1)

[The 2018 Pulitzer Prize Winner \(/prize-winners-by-year/2018\) in Music \(/prize-winners-by-category/225\)](#)

*For distinguished musical composition by an American that has had its first performance or recording in the United States during the year, Fifteen thousand dollars (\$15,000).*

## *DAMN.*, by Kendrick Lamar

Recording released on April 14, 2017, a virtuosic song collection unified by its vernacular authenticity and rhythmic dynamism that offers affecting vignettes capturing the complexity of modern African-American life.



Kendrick Lamar accepts the 2018 Pulitzer Prize for Music from Columbia University President Lee Bollinger. (Photo: Eileen Barroso/Columbia University)

WINNING WORK

# DAMN.

By Kendrick Lamar

Storytelling has been Lamar's greatest skill and most primary mission, to put into (lots of) words what it's like to grow up as he did—to articulate, in human terms, the intimate specifics of daily self-defense from your surroundings. Somehow, he's gotten better.

-- *Matthew Trammell, Pitchfork* (<https://pitchfork.com/reviews/albums/23147-damn/>).

## BIOGRAPHY



Photo: Batiste Safont/Wikipedia

Platinum-selling, Grammy-nominated rapper **Kendrick Lamar** is one of the rare artists who has achieved critical and commercial success while earning the respect and support of those who inspired him.

-- *Andy Kellman, All Music Guide*  
(<https://www.allmusic.com/artist/kendrick-lamar-mn0002709646/biography>)

## FINALISTS

*Nominated as finalists in Music in 2018:*

***Quartet*, by Michael Gilbertson (/finalists/michael-gilbertson)**

***Sound from the Bench*, by Ted Hearne (/finalists/ted-hearne)**

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## THE JURY

**Regina Carter** (Chair)

Violinist, Maywood, NJ

**Paul Cremo**

Dramaturg/Director of Opera Commissioning Program, The Metropolitan Opera

**Farah Jasmine Griffin**

William B. Ransford Professor of English and Comparative Literature and African-American Studies, Columbia University

**David Hajdu**

Professor of Journalism, Columbia University

**David Lang (/winners/david-lang)\* (Past Pulitzer Prize winner)**

Composer, New York, NY

\* Past Pulitzer  
Prize winner

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## WINNERS IN MUSIC

2024 (/prize-winners-by-year/2024)

***Adagio (For Wadada Leo Smith)*, by Tyshawn Sorey (/winners/tyshawn-sorey)**

2023 (/prize-winners-by-year/2023)

***Omar*, by Rhiannon Giddens and Michael Abels (/winners/rhiannon-giddens-and-michael-abels)**

2022 (/prize-winners-by-year/2022)

***Voiceless Mass*, by Raven Chacon (/winners/raven-chacon)**

2021 (/prize-winners-by-year/2021)

***Stride*, by Tania León (Peermusic Classical) (/winners/tania-leon)**

[See All Music \(/Prize-Winn...](#)

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## 2018 PRIZE WINNERS

General Nonfiction (</prize-winners-by-category/223>)

***Locking Up Our Own: Crime and Punishment in Black America***, by James Forman Jr. (Farrar, Straus and Giroux) (</winners/james-forman-jr>)

International Reporting (</prize-winners-by-category/210>)

**Clare Baldwin, Andrew R.C. Marshall and Manuel Mogato of Reuters** (</winners/clare-baldwin-andrew-rc-marshall-and-manuel-mogato-reuters>)

Drama (</prize-winners-by-category/218>)

***Cost of Living***, by Martyna Majok (</winners/martyna-majok>)

Investigative Reporting (</prize-winners-by-category/206>)

**Staff of The Washington Post** (</winners/staff-80>)

[See All 2018 Winners \(/Pri...](#)

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