



Slumberland: A Novel

By Paul Beatty

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The hip break-out novel from 2016 Man Booker Prize winning author, Paul Beatty, about a disaffected Los Angeles DJ who travels to post-Wall Berlin in search of his transatlantic doppelganger.

Hailed by the *New York Times* and the *Los Angeles Times* as one of the best writers of his generation, Paul Beatty turns his creative eye to man's search for meaning and identity in an increasingly chaotic world.

After creating the perfect beat, DJ Darky goes in search of Charles Stone, a little know avant-garde jazzman, to play over his sonic masterpiece. His quest brings him to a recently unified Berlin, where he stumbles through the city's dreamy streets ruminating about race, sex, love, Teutonic gods, the prevent defense, and Wynton Marsalis in search of his artistic-and spiritual-other.

Ferocious, bombastic, and laugh-out-loud funny, *Slumberland* is vintage Paul Beatty and belongs on the shelf next to Jonathan Lethem, Colson Whitehead, and Junot Diaz.

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Slumberland: A Novel By Paul Beatty Bibliography

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Editorial Review

From Publishers Weekly

The narrator of Beatty's late '80s picaresque, Ferguson W. Sowell—aka DJ Darky—is so attuned to sound that he claims to have a phonographic memory. Ferguson, who does porno film scores for the money in L.A., has a cognoscenti's delight in jazz, and he's close to obsessed with Charles Stone, aka the Schwa, a musician who apparently disappeared into East Germany in the '60s. Ferguson receives an already-scored tape whose soundtrack is so rich and strange and transformative that it must be by Schwa. Ferguson is soon on his way to Slumberland, a bar in West Berlin to which he sources the tape. He arrives just in time to experience the sexual allure black men exercise on Cold War Berliners, and stays long enough to watch the city's culture fall apart after the fall of the Wall. With its acerbic running commentary on race, sex and Cold War culture, the latest from Beatty, author of *Tuff* and editor of *The Anthology of African American Humor*, contains flashes of absurdist brilliance in the tradition of William Burroughs and Ishmael Reed. But the plot seems little more than an excuse to set up a number of comic routines, denying the story a driving, unifying plot. (July)

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From [Booklist](#)

Ferguson Sowell, aka DJ Darky, has created what his fellow L.A. turntablists proclaim is the perfect beat, a synthesis of life itself. All that remains is for the beat to be ratified by finding legendary avant-garde jazzman Charles Stone and convincing him to solo over the beat. Stone, however, is as mysterious as he is legendary, and no one knows if he's even alive. Then a clue, in the form of a porn tape, arrives mysteriously, and DJ Darky travels to Berlin in the months before the Wall comes down to find Stone. Beatty's freestyle prose is a writerly equivalent of John Coltrane's reinvention of My Favorite Things—by turns lyrical and edgy, playful, passionate, deeply hip, and endlessly inventive. As he searches the city for Stone, DJ Darky ruminates on race, German culture, music, sex, the destruction of the Wall, life in L.A., and dozens of other subjects; some of his thoughts are harsh (e.g., his withering critique of Wynton Marsalis), but they all are memorable. --Thomas Gaughan

Review

“What Gore Vidal did for sex and gender constructs, Beatty does for race and prominent black Americans, with sacred cow-tipping on nearly every page. Waterfalls of wordplay that pool and merge like acid jazz on the page.” *Washington Post*

“A remarkably strange and funny meditation...revelatory and mind-blowing.” *Seattle Times*

Users Review

From reader reviews:

Ann Bland:

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