

Publicity Contacts:
Holly Watson / 310.390.0591
hwatson@penguinrandomhouse.com

Chris Smith / 212.366.2078
chsmith@penguinrandomhouse.com

An Indie Next Pick for January 2015

WEST OF SUNSET

A Novel

STEWART O'NAN

ADVANCE PRAISE FOR *WEST OF SUNSET*

★ “It would appear to be a daunting task to write a biographical novel of one of our most iconic writers, yet O’Nan avoids every pitfall. . . [He] renders a heartbreaking portrait of an artist soldiering on in the face of personal and professional ruin. . . [His] convincing characterization of a man burdened by guilt and struggling to hold onto his dignity is, at once, a moving testament to grace under pressure and an intimate look at a legend.”

—*Booklist (Starred)*

“O’Nan taps into primary-source material on Fitzgerald to craft a realistic piece of historical fiction. . . We get zinging repartee from the likes of Dorothy Parker, Robert Benchley, and Humphrey Bogart. . . Fitzgerald comes across as a haunting, multifaceted, sympathetic character.”

—*Library Journal*

“O’Nan places Scott back at center stage, with a sympathetic portrayal of a troubled genius, a kind but deeply flawed man. . . O’Nan has crafted an insightful glimpse into a sad period in Fitzgerald’s life.”

—*Kirkus Reviews*

“An achingly nuanced love story and one of the best biographical novels to come along in years. O’Nan’s great achievement here is in so convincingly inhabiting the character of Scott Fitzgerald and of the people surrounding him during his descent into the clarifying depths of 1930s Hollywood.”

—*T.C. Boyle*

“*West of Sunset* is a rich, sometimes heartbreaking journey through the disintegration of an American legend. O’Nan captures the fire and frailty of F. Scott Fitzgerald with an understated grace that would have made Fitzgerald himself stand up and applaud.”

—*Dennis Lehane*

“O’Nan is an incredibly versatile and charming writer. This novel, which imagines F. Scott Fitzgerald’s troubled time in Hollywood (with cameos by Dorothy Parker, Bogie, and Hemingway), takes up (like much of O’Nan’s work) that essential conundrum of grace struggling with paucity. One brilliant American writer meditating on another—what’s not to love?”

—*George Saunders*

Today F. Scott Fitzgerald is widely revered as one of America’s greatest writers, and with recent releases of both books and movies adapting his work or re-imagining his life, his reputation has swelled to almost mythic proportions. While he and his wife Zelda were celebrities in the 1920s, by the late 1930s Fitzgerald had fallen out of the public eye and into harder times. It is this period that critically acclaimed novelist Stewart O’Nan brings vividly to life in **WEST OF SUNSET** (Viking; On Sale: January 13, 2015; \$27.95; ISBN: 9780670785957).

O’Nan is known for his ability to eke drama out of everyday life, whether it is the impending closure of a chain restaurant (*Last Night at the Lobster*) or the life of an elderly woman in Pittsburgh (*Emily, Alone*). Here, he performs a similar magic. Meticulously researched, **WEST OF SUNSET** is an acutely sensitive and moving portrayal of the last three years of Fitzgerald’s life, from 1937 to 1940, when he resided in Los Angeles by himself—in poor health,

struggling with alcoholism, and increasingly despondent over his declining literary reputation. These final years in California saw him sometimes lost and uncertain, trying to maintain a semblance of family life with the absent Zelda and their daughter, Scottie. Despite his distance from his family, Fitzgerald is very aware of his duty as husband and father, striving to make ends meet as a screenwriter and determined to have a fresh start. He is sustained and energized by the presence of many friends in Hollywood, including Dorothy Parker, Humphrey Bogart, and Robert Benchley, and he falls in love with a brassy gossip columnist named Sheilah Graham. Strengthened and encouraged by her, he began work on his fifth and most ambitious novel, *The Last Tycoon*.

A sympathetic and deeply personal portrait of a flawed man, **WEST OF SUNSET** is also a wonderful portrayal of one of the golden ages of Hollywood. Gorgeously written with incredible grace and subtlety, and with striking flashbacks to emblematic moments from Fitzgerald's past, from his boyhood to his first love affair to his various adventures with Zelda, **WEST OF SUNSET** may be O'Nan's finest novel yet.

ABOUT THE AUTHOR:

STEWART O'NAN is the author of fourteen previous novels, including *The Odds*; *Emily, Alone*; *A Prayer for the Dying*; and *Snow Angels*, as well as several works of nonfiction, including, with Stephen King, the bestselling *Faithful*. His novel *Last Night at the Lobster* was a national bestseller and finalist for the *Los Angeles Times* Book Prize. He was born and raised in Pittsburgh where he lives with his family.

WEST OF SUNSET: A Novel
 By Stewart O'Nan
 Viking / On-Sale: January 13, 2015
 ISBN: 9780670785957/ Price: \$27.95

ALSO AVAILABLE AS AN E-BOOK

Stewart O'Nan will be appearing in the following cities in January/February 2015:

New York, NY	Barnes & Noble UWS	January 13	7:00pm
Washington, D.C.	Politics & Prose	January 14	7:00pm
Philadelphia, PA	Philadelphia Free Library	January 15	7:30pm
Boston, MA	Harvard Bookstore	January 20	7:30pm
St. Paul, MN	Common Good Books	January 21	7:00pm
Tulsa, OK	Booksmart Tulsa	January 22	7:00pm
Danville, CA	Rakestraw Books	January 23	7:00pm
Sonoma, CA	Reader's Books	January 24	2:00pm
Alameda, CA	Books, Inc	January 26	7:00pm
Brentwood, CA	Diesel Books	January 27	6:30pm
Pasadena, CA	Vroman's Books	January 28	7:00pm
San Diego, CA	The Santaluz Club	January 29	11:45am
San Diego, CA	Warwick's	January 29	7:30pm
Seattle, WA	The Pub @ Third Place Books	January 30	1:00pm
Seattle, WA	Elliott Bay Book Company	January 30	7:00pm
Bellingham, WA	Village Books	February 1	4:00pm
Beachwood, OH	Cuyahoga Public Library	February 3	7:00pm
Pittsburgh, PA	East End Book Exchange	February 7	7:00pm

For a review copy, please contact:

Holly Watson / 310.390.0591
hwatson@penguinrandomhouse.com
Chris Smith / 212.366.2078
chsmith@penguinrandomhouse.com

Penguin Random House (<http://global.penguinrandomhouse.com/>) is the world's most global trade book publisher. It was formed on July 1, 2013, upon the completion of an agreement between Bertelsmann and Pearson to merge their respective trade publishing companies, Random House and Penguin, with the parent companies owning 53% and 47%, respectively. Penguin Random House comprises the adult and children's fiction and nonfiction print and digital trade book publishing businesses of Penguin and Random House in the U.S., U.K., Canada, Australia, New Zealand, India and South Africa, and Penguin's trade publishing activity in Asia and Brazil; DK worldwide; and Penguin Random House Grupo Editorial's Spanish-language companies in Spain, Mexico, Argentina, Uruguay, Colombia, and Chile. Penguin Random House employs more than 10,000 people globally across almost 250 editorially and creatively independent imprints and publishing houses that collectively publish more than 15,000 new titles annually. Its publishing lists include more than 70 Nobel Prize laureates and hundreds of the world's most widely read authors.