

Media Release

The Hon Danny Pearson MP
Assistant Treasurer
Minister for Regulatory Reform
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Tuesday, 7 December 2021

VICTORIAN PREMIER'S LITERARY AWARDS SHORTLIST ANNOUNCED

Victoria's most exceptional writers have been showcased with the announcement of 26 works shortlisted for the 2022 Victorian Premier's Literary Awards, Australia's richest single literary prize.

The hotly anticipated shortlist comprises 2021's top titles spanning fiction, non-fiction, Indigenous writing, drama, poetry, writing for young adults and unpublished manuscripts.

Spanning the breadth of human experience by telling stories of resilience, the works explore hope, family secrets, motherhood, trauma, survival and love.

Winners in each of the award categories will receive \$25,000, with one selected for the coveted Victorian Prize for Literature – the most valuable literary recognition in the country with a \$100,000 prize.

Alongside these awards is the \$15,000 prize for an unpublished manuscript, which has previously uncovered new talent – including literary sensation and now a major film, *The Dry* by Jane Harper and Victoria Hannan's *Kokomo*.

The People's Choice Award encourages readers to participate in the awards by voting for their favourite book published in 2021, the winner is recognised alongside category accolades and receives a \$2,000 prize.

Recipients will be announced and presented with their awards on Thursday, 3 February 2022 at MPavilion.

The Victorian Premier's Literary Awards were established by the Victorian Government in 1985 to honour and promote Australian writing and are run by the Wheeler Centre.

To view the full shortlist and vote for the People's Choice Award, visit wheelercentre.com.

Quotes attributable to Minister for Creative Industries Danny Pearson

"These awards celebrate rich, diverse and exceptional writing across Victoria and Australia, showcasing high-calibre talent and providing us with a captivating reading list to explore this summer."

"Being shortlisted for these awards is a fantastic achievement. Congratulations to all of the writers who have been recognised this year – thank you for sharing your stories with us."

Quotes attributable to CEO of The Wheeler Centre Caro Llewellyn

"The Victorian Premier's Literary Awards are a highlight of the Australian literary calendar and the Wheeler Centre is proud to be involved in an event that can quite literally change the lives of its recipients."

"The Australian literary scene is vibrant and inspiring, and the final shortlist of twenty-six works represents just some of the breadth of talent this nation's writing community has to offer."

2022 Victorian Premier's Literary Awards Shortlist

Prize for Fiction

Echolalia by Briohny Doyle (Penguin Random House)

Bodies of Light by Jennifer Down (Text Publishing)

The Dogs by John Hughes (Upswell Publishing)

After Story by Larissa Behrendt (University of Queensland Press)

Smokehouse by Melissa Manning (University of Queensland Press)

Permafrost by SJ Norman (University of Queensland Press)

Prize for Non-Fiction

The Mother Wound by Amani Haydar (Pan Macmillan Australia)

Another Day in the Colony by Chelsea Watego (University of Queensland Press)

Summertime: Reflections on a vanishing future by Danielle Celermajer (Penguin Random House)

Buried Not Dead by Fiona McGregor (Giramondo Publishing)

Coming of Age in the War on Terror by Randa Abdel-Fattah (NewSouth)

Black and Blue: A Memoir of Racism and Resilience by Veronica Gorrie (Scribe Publications)

Prize for Drama

Milk by Dylan Van Den Berg (Currency Press in association with Street Theatre)

Archimedes War by Melissa Reeves (Darebin Speakeasy)

Return to the Dirt by Steve Pirie (Queensland Theatre)

Prize for Poetry

Human Looking by Andy Jackson (Giramondo Publishing)

Trigger Warning by Maria Takolander (University of Queensland Press)

How Decent Folk Behave by Maxine Beneba Clarke (Hachette Australia)

Prize for Indigenous Writing

Dropbear by Evelyn Araluen (University of Queensland Press)

Black and Blue: A Memoir of Racism and Resilience by Veronica Gorrie (Scribe Publication)

The Boy from the Mish by Gary Lonesborough (Allen & Unwin)

Another Day in the Colony by Chelsea Watego (University of Queensland Press)

Prize for Writing for Young Adults

Girls in Boys' Cars by Felicity Castagna (Pan Macmillan Australia)

The Gaps by Leanne Hall (Text Publishing)

Tiger Daughter by Rebecca Lim (Allen & Unwin)

Prize for Unpublished Manuscript

Lead Us Not by Abbey Lay

Fauna of Mirrors by Keshe Chow

The Albatross by Nina Wan