

Media Release

The Hon Danny Pearson MP
Assistant Treasurer
Minister for Regulatory Reform
Minister for Government Services
Minister for Creative Industries



Thursday, 3 February 2022

VICTORIAN PREMIER'S LITERARY AWARDS WINNERS ANNOUNCED

The Andrews Labor Government is supporting emerging and established writers with the presentation of the Victorian Premier's Literary Awards, which recognise the best talent in Australian literature.

Gunai/Kurnai writer Veronica Gorrie has been honoured with the \$100,000 Victorian Prize for Literature for *Black and Blue: A Memoir of Racism and Resilience*. The book also won the \$25,000 Prize for Indigenous Writing.

Sharing her powerful story as an Aboriginal woman working in the police force, Gorrie reflects on the racism and sexism experienced and fought during her career in uniform – alongside the impact of racism on her family and life.

Victorian-based writer Melissa Manning won the Prize for Fiction for *Smokehouse*, a collection of inter-linked stories following characters from a small town in southern Tasmania who are each facing a turning point in their lives.

Amani Haydar's personal account of domestic violence in *The Mother Wound* received the non-fiction prize, while Dylan Van Den Berg's play *Milk* took out the Prize for Drama, for the story of a young Palawa man's journey of self-discovery.

Victorian poet Maria Takolander's work *Trigger Notes* tackles everything from climate change to violence in the home and was awarded the Poetry Prize, while Felicity Castagna's wild-ride novel *Girls in Boys' Cars* was awarded the Prize for Writing for Young Adults.

Malaysian-born, Melbourne-based author Keshe Chow received the coveted award for an Unpublished Manuscript for *Fauna of Mirrors* – a fantasy novel about love and betrayal.

The Unpublished Manuscript accolade has launched the careers of celebrated writers including Jane Harper (*The Dry*), Maxine Beneba Clarke (*Foreign Soil*) and Graeme Simsion (*The Rosie Project*).

The publicly voted 2022 People's Choice Award went to Rebecca Lim for *Tiger Daughter*, a coming-of-age novel about a young girl of Chinese heritage growing up in Australia.

Winners of the Fiction, Non-Fiction, Indigenous Writing, Poetry, Young Adult and Drama categories each received \$25,000, while \$15,000 is attached to the Unpublished Manuscript category. The People's Choice award comes with a \$2,000 prize.

The Victorian Premier's Literary Awards are delivered by The Wheeler Centre on behalf of the Victorian Government. For more information, visit wheelercentre.com.

Quotes attributable to Minister for Creative Industries Danny Pearson

"The Victorian Premier's Literary Awards amplify and celebrate important voices in Australian writing, and this year provides even more reasons to explore our emerging and established authors."

"The winning works tell stories that are urgent, eye-opening, poignant and powerful, and reflect the extraordinary talent we have here in Victoria and across the country. Congratulations to all the winners and finalists."

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2022 VICTORIAN PREMIER'S LITERARY AWARDS – WINNERS

Winner of the Victorian Prize for Literature:

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

Winner of the Prize for Fiction:

Smokehouse by Melissa Manning (UQP)

Winner of the Prize for Non-Fiction:

The Mother Wound by Amani Haydar (Pan Macmillan)

Winner of the Prize for Indigenous Writing:

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

Winner of the Prize for Drama:

Milk by Dylan Van Den Berg (Currency Press and The Street Theatre)

Winner of the Prize for Poetry:

Trigger Warning by Maria Takolander (UQP)

Winner of the Prize for Writing for Young Adults:

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

Winner of the Unpublished Manuscript Award:

Fauna of Mirrors by Keshe Chow (Melbourne)

People's Choice Award:

Tiger Daughter by Rebecca Lim (Allen & Unwin)