

Media Release

Martin Foley MP
Minister for Creative Industries



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PLAYWRIGHT SCOOPS TOP PRIZE AT 2016 VICTORIAN PREMIER'S LITERARY AWARDS

Mary Anne Butler has become the first playwright to win Australia's richest literary award, the Victorian Prize for Literature, for her emotionally charged play *Broken*.

Minister for Creative Industries Martin Foley announced the win, worth \$125,000, at the 2016 Premier's Literary Awards in Melbourne tonight. The Darwin-based writer also took out the Drama category.

A three-time winner of the Northern Territory Literary Award for scriptwriting, Mary Anne is also co-Artistic Director of Darwin's Knock-em-Down Theatre Company.

Broken tells the story of three complex lives as they unfold on a single fateful night in the heart of the Northern Territory's desert country. The play wrestles with matters of chance, choice, hope and fate.

Selected from a strong field of 21 finalists across five categories, the judges described *Broken* as an extremely well-crafted work that brings alive Australia's top end – the land and its people – with tension, sadness and humour.

The other category winners, each awarded \$25,000, were:

- **PRIZE FOR FICTION:** *The World Without Us* by Mireille Juchau (Sydney, NSW)
- **PRIZE FOR NON-FICTION:** *Something for the Pain* by Gerald Murnane (Goroke, Vic)
- **PRIZE FOR POETRY:** *Crankhandle* by Alan Loney (Malvern East, Vic)
- **PRIZE FOR WRITING FOR YOUNG ADULTS:** *Welcome to Orphancorp* by Marlee Jane Ward (Brunswick West, Vic)

Miles Allinson, who won the 2014 award for an Unpublished Manuscript, was announced as winner of the People's Choice Award for *Fever of Animals*.

The Victorian Premier's Literary Awards were established in 1985 to honour literary achievement by Australian writers. They are administered by The Wheeler Centre on behalf of the Premier of Victoria.

Quotes attributable to the Minister for Creative Industries Martin Foley

"This year's winners reflect the richness and diversity of contemporary Australian writing – from sharp edged storytelling to spellbinding memoir, evocative theatre and dazzling poetry."

"At a challenging time for our local literary and publishing industries, these winners demonstrate that local writers and writing are worth celebrating and protecting. The Andrews Labor Government backs a continuing cultural discussion about how best to support Australian voices to tell Australian stories."

Quotes attributable to Catherine Andrews

"I've been mesmerised throughout the summer by hundreds of thousands of carefully crafted words written by gifted and dedicated wordsmiths."

"We are blessed to have such diverse talent in this country and I encourage everyone to get reading. The shortlist is a gift to us all."

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