



Media Release

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2024 Victorian Premier's Literary Awards shortlists celebrate books for all ages

The Wheeler Centre is proud to announce 31 Australian writers have been shortlisted among a record-breaking field of entrants for the [2024 Victorian Premier's Literary Awards](#) – which includes Australia's richest single literary prize.

Chosen from 807 submissions, the works span eight award categories comprising fiction, non-fiction, drama, poetry, Indigenous writing, writing for young adults, children's literature and unpublished manuscripts.

Shortlisted authors include established voices such as poet and writer Maxine Beneba Clarke, Miles Franklin Award-winning author Melissa Lucashenko and Stella Prize-winning novelist Charlotte Wood, alongside emerging storytellers such as Jessica Zhan Mei Yu, Hossein Asgari and Eugen Bacon.

Award contenders take inspiration from sources including Chinese mythological ghost tales, the Greek legend of Antigone, Vyasa's epic poem the *Mahābhāratha*, and the Sri Lankan civil war. Other works explore Australia's refugee detention policies, the Ben Roberts-Smith defamation case, and a creative non-fiction work about queerness and sport.

In 2024 the Awards will distribute more than \$292,000 to Australia's best and brightest literary talent. This includes the prestigious \$100,000 Victorian Prize for Literature, the richest literary prize in the country, which is contested by the winners of the seven major categories. For the first time, the 2024 Awards include a new children's literature category which recognises high-calibre works for readers up to age 12.

Independent publishers are well represented in the shortlist, with books from Text Publishing, University of Queensland Press, Transit Lounge, Magabala Books and Puncher & Wattmann.

Voting is now open for the People's Choice Award, a \$2000 prize which is decided by the public. Previous People's Choice Award winners include Karlie Noon and Krystal De Napoli in 2023 for *Astronomy: Sky Country* and Rebecca Lim in 2022 for *Tiger Daughter*.

The winners of the 2024 Victorian Premier's Literary Awards will be announced at a ceremony in Melbourne at The Edge, Fed Square on Thursday 1 February.

Quotes attributable to CEO of The Wheeler Centre Erin Vincent

'The Victorian Premier's Literary Awards are highly prestigious and can be life-changing for writers. The Wheeler Centre has a long and proud association with the awards, and I congratulate all the shortlisted and highly commended writers who have been recognised among a record field of entrants this year.'



She continues, 'These are compelling works, exploring nuanced and complex issues through exceptional storytelling. I encourage all readers to support these writers by reading a shortlisted or highly commended work over summer.'

Inaugurated by the Victorian Government in 1985, the Awards recognise both emerging and established writers. The Awards are administered by the Wheeler Centre on behalf of the Victorian Government.

To explore all shortlisted entrants and highly commended works, and to vote for the People's Choice Award, visit wheelercentre.com.

[Access hi res images of shortlisted book covers, author bios and headshots here](#)

Victorian Premier's Literary Award Shortlists 2024

Children's Literature

Ghost Book by Remy Lai (Allen & Unwin)

It's the Sound of The Thing: 100 new poems for young people by Maxine Beneba Clarke (Hardie Grant Children's Publishing)

Who's Afraid of the Light? by Anna McGregor (Scribble)

Drama

Jacky by Declan Furber Gillick (Currency Press in association with Melbourne Theatre Company)

Loaded by Christos Tsiolkas and Dan Giovannoni (originally commissioned by Malthouse Theatre)

The Jungle and the Sea by S. Shakthidharan and Eamon Flack (Currency Press in association with Belvoir St Theatre)

Fiction

But the Girl by Jessica Zhan Mei Yu (Hamish Hamilton)

Edenglassie by Melissa Lucashenko (University of Queensland Press)

Only Sound Remains by Hossein Asgari (Puncher & Wattmann)

Serengotti by Eugen Bacon (Transit Lounge)

Stone Yard Devotional by Charlotte Wood (Allen & Unwin)

Wall by Jen Craig (Puncher & Wattmann)

Indigenous Writing

Close to the Subject by Daniel Browning (Magabala Books)

Firelight by John Morrissey (Text Publishing)

Personal Score: Sport, culture, identity by Ellen van Neerven (University of Queensland Press)

Non-fiction

Cruel Care: A History of Children at Our Borders by Jordana Silverstein (Monash University Publishing)

Fat Girl Dancing by Kris Kneen (Text Publishing)

Flawed Hero: Truth, lies and war crimes by Chris Masters (Allen & Unwin)

Killing for Country by David Marr (Black Inc.)

Personal Score: Sport, culture, identity by Ellen van Neerven (University of Queensland Press)



The Palestine Laboratory: How Israel exports the technology of occupation around the world by Antony Loewenstein (Scribe Publications)

Poetry

Chinese Fish by Grace Yee (Giramondo Publishing)
Kangaroo Paw by Claire Miranda Roberts (Vagabond Press)
The Body Country by Susie Anderson (Hachette Australia)

Unpublished Manuscript

Garbage by Hayley Elliott-Ryan
Laughing River by N. J. Madden
Panajachel by Rachel Morton

Young Adult Writing

A Hunger of Thorns by Lili Wilkinson (Allen & Unwin)
The Quiet and the Loud by Helena Fox (Pan Australia)
We Could Be Something by Will Kostakis (Allen & Unwin)

Highly Commended Works 2024

Children's Literature

Australia: Country of Colour by Jess Racklyeft (Affirm Press)
The Goodbye Year by Emily Gale (Text Publishing)

Drama

Nosferatu by Keziah Warner (originally commissioned by Malthouse Theatre and first published by Currency Press)
Telethon Kid by Alistair Baldwin (originally commissioned by Malthouse Theatre)
The Dictionary of Lost Words by Verity Laughton (State Theatre Company South Australia)

Fiction

Burn by Melanie Saward (Affirm Press)
Paradise Estate by Max Easton (Giramondo Publishing)
Southern Aurora by Mark Brandi (Hachette Australia)

Indigenous Writing

Dirrarn by Carl Merrison and Hakea Hustler (Magabala Books)
Etta and the Shadow Taboo by JM Field and Jeremy Worrall (Hardie Grant Children's Publishing)

Young Adult

We Didn't Think It Through by Gary Lonesborough (Allen & Unwin)

The 2024 Victorian Premier's Literary Awards ceremony is presented with the support of Fed Square.

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