

26 April, 2018

## 2018 black&write! Fellowship winners revealed

A surfer who battled serious illness and a singer from the Stiff Gins are the two **winners** of the 2018 **black&write!** Fellowships for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander writers.

**Lystra Bisschop** from the Gold Coast and Sydney-based **Nardi Simpson** will be awarded the \$10,000 fellowships at a special ceremony at the State Library of Queensland today.

The fellowships include manuscript development with the State Library black&write! editing team and publishing opportunities with Hachette Australia.

The Gold Coast's Lystra Bisschop, a descendent of the Guugu Yimidhirr people (Hope Vale) and Birri Gubba (Mackay), was selected for her Young Adult fiction manuscript ***The Upwelling***, which follows a young surfer named Kirra, who catches a wave and time slips into a land without European influence.

Sydney-based Nardi Simpson, a Yuwaalarayy/Gamilaraay woman from New South Wales and founding member of the Stiff Gins musical group, was recognised for her adult literary fiction manuscript ***Song of the Crocodile***, which explores three generations of a fictional Aboriginal family in a rural township.

The judging panel has also awarded three highly commended entries from the extremely strong field of applicants: **Susie Anderson** from New South Wales for her poetry collection *Revolve*, **Chelinay Gates** from Western Australia for the young adult fiction work *Lucky Child*, and **Kirli Saunders** from New South Wales for her poetry collection *Mother Earth, Child Lover*.

*The black&write! Fellowship program is supported by the Australian Government, through the Australia Council for the Arts, and publishing partner, Hachette Australia.*

### Quotes from Minister for the Arts, Leanne Enoch:

"I look forward to seeing Nardi and Lystra work with the team at State Library to develop their manuscripts,

"The fellowships open the door to exciting new voices in literature, sharing Indigenous stories and serving as inspiration for other aspiring writers.

"The goal of the black&write! Fellowships is to support and expand contemporary Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander writing in Australia and I commend the program for the important contribution it has already made.

"The fellowship program has helped launch the careers of successful Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander voices including **Claire G. Coleman** whose debut novel *Terra Nullius* was recently shortlisted for The Stella Prize and is already on its fourth reprint."

### Quotes from State Librarian and CEO, Vicki McDonald:

"State Library is proud to help foster a significant Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander writing community.

"black&write! is a national project and the first of its kind in Australia. Supporting new talent to share their stories is central to State Library's commitment to nurturing a culture of reading, writing and ideas."

### Quotes from Publisher, Robert Watkins, Hachette Australia:

"We have been thrilled to see literary fans embrace Claire G. Coleman's extraordinary debut novel *Terra Nullius* so warmly and Hachette Australia is pleased to partner with SLQ on black&write! to provide this development platform for powerful emerging writers to extend their talents."

For more information about black&write! visit [slq.qld.gov.au/whats-on/awards](http://slq.qld.gov.au/whats-on/awards).

### Media enquiries

SLQ Marketing & Communications  
communications@slq.qld.gov.au | 07 3842 9847

Interviews and images are available upon request.