

25 August 2017

## Vote for your Queensland Book of the Year

Voting for *The Courier-Mail* People's Choice Queensland Book of the Year as part of the 2017 Queensland Literary Awards opens today.

The winning author will receive a \$10,000 prize at the Queensland Literary Awards (QLAs) in October, with *The Courier-Mail's* sponsorship matched by funding from the Queensland Government.

Premier and Arts Minister Anastacia Palaszczuk welcomed the announcement of this year's shortlisted books for People's Choice Queensland Book of the year and encouraged Queenslanders to participate and support the wonderful authors vying for the award.

"My Government is pleased to support our talented local writers through the Queensland Literary Awards, and I encourage booklovers to cast their votes for the People's Choice award and champion contemporary Queensland authors," said Ms Palaszczuk.

"It is important we recognise the state's outstanding literary talent, support the telling and celebration of our stories and foster our next generation of writing talent."

Minister for Innovation, Science and the Digital Economy Leeanne Enoch said that the People's Choice Award is one of the prestigious categories of the QLAs and revealed many talented writers.

"Our state has a proud history of producing exceptional literary talent and this award is a wonderful opportunity for Queensland readers to support and celebrate local writers."

State Librarian and CEO, Vicki McDonald today announced the shortlist for the award, which includes popular authors Nick Earls and Mary-Rose MacColl, the recipient of the 2016 award for her novel *Swimming Home*.

"The books nominated for the People's Choice award in 2017 are reflective of the creativity, diversity and tenacity of the people of Queensland," said Ms McDonald.

"The shortlist includes flights of fancy from stifling Brisbane summers to Byzantine adventures, powerful stories of secrets and survival, and connections to community and family."

*The Courier-Mail* editor Lachlan Heywood said the People's Choice award offers everyday Queenslanders the chance to join the judging panel and support local writers.

"*The Courier-Mail* is passionate about promoting literacy and supporting Queensland talent, and is proud to help highlight such an accomplished group of authors" said Mr Heywood.

Amongst this year's nominees is Cathy McLennan's *Saltwater*, previously awarded the 2014 Emerging Queensland Author – Unpublished Manuscript (under the title *We Come From Saltwater People*). The progression of this important true story illustrates the crucial developmental support that the QLAs provide to emerging Queensland authors.

Queenslanders have until Monday 25 September to vote online at [qldliteraryawards.org.au](http://qldliteraryawards.org.au).

The winner of *The Courier-Mail* People's Choice Queensland Book of the Year will be announced at the Queensland Literary Awards ceremony, to be held at State Library of Queensland on Wednesday 4 October.

*The Courier-Mail* People's Choice Queensland Book of the Year Award Shortlist 2017:

- *The Birdman's Wife* by Melissa Ashley (Affirm Press)
- *Vancouver* by Nick Earls (Inkerman & Blunt)
- *Ghost Empire* by Richard Fidler (HarperCollins)
- *A Hundred Small Lessons* by Ashley Hay (Allen & Unwin)
- *Barbed Wire and Cherry Blossoms* by Anita Heiss (Simon & Schuster)
- *To Prey and To Silence* by Joan Isaacs (A and A Publishing)
- *For a Girl* by Mary-Rose MacColl (Allen & Unwin)
- *Saltwater* by Cathy McLennan (UQP)

The Queensland Government through State Library of Queensland and Arts Queensland supports and champions the Queensland Literary Awards in nurturing a culture of reading, writing and ideas.

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