

STATE LIBRARY OF QUEENSLAND

MEDIA RELEASE

8.30pm, 8 September 2022

Queensland Literary Awards winners announced

A “meticulously researched and beautifully written environmental history” book has won the top prize at the 2022 Queensland Literary Awards announced tonight.

Wounded Country: The Murray-Darling Basin – a contested history (NewSouth) by Quentin Beresford won the \$25,000 Queensland Premier's Award for a Work of State Significance.

The judges said: “With clarity and insight, *Wounded Country* illustrates the way our disregard for nature and science, and denial of First Nations rights and knowledge of Country, have been entrenched in Australian politics and culture from federation.”

“The repeated mismanagement of this critical water resource is a metaphor for the history of colonisation,” the judges said.

“Equally clear is the way forward, caring for water, land, and people.”

A total of \$238,500 in prize money was awarded across 12 categories that included fiction, non-fiction, poetry, and published and unpublished work.

Children’s Book Award winner, Kunyi June Anne McInerney, was praised for her “raw, honest and significant” writing.

The judges said: “*Kunyi* is a book by a Stolen Generations survivor to be remembered and read by all.”

State Library of Queensland proudly manages the awards in collaboration with sponsors, industry partners and the writing community.

Quotes from the Premier Anastacia Palaszczuk

“Congratulations to the winners for this year’s Queensland Literary Awards and for their exceptional creativity and inspiration that tell the great stories of our cultural diversity.

“Quentin Beresford’s book *Wounded Country: The Murray-Darling Basin – a contested history* is a worthy winner for the Queensland Premier's Award for a Work of State Significance, highlighting how we must learn from our past and cherish and respect Culture and Country.

“Telling the truth about our often uncomfortable history through literature is an important step forward in working towards reconciliation, and comes at a time when the Queensland Government on behalf of all Queenslanders has made significant commitments to advance our Path to Treaty.

“By celebrating the books and significant stories showcased in the literary awards we can share the conversations to build a more inclusive and respectful future for Queensland.”

Quotes from the Arts Minister Leeanne Enoch

“Stories told through literature and books, and the narratives captured on a page, inspire us to reflect on the truths of our shared history.

Media enquiries

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Interviews are available upon request.

“The Queensland Literary Awards pay special tribute to writers of all levels of achievement, and diversity, for their extraordinary work enriching our lives with their remarkable stories.

“These awards deliver on the priorities of *Creative Together 2020-2030: A 10-Year Roadmap for arts, culture and creativity*, by elevating First Nations arts and sharing our stories and celebrating our storytellers.

“The Queensland Government supports State Library of Queensland to provide opportunities for writers to progress their works and to champion meaningful and iconic stories for readers.”

Quotes from State Librarian and CEO Vicki McDonald AM:

“The winners of this year’s Queensland Literary Awards give voice to a diversity of perspectives and ideas that connect us all.

“The awards recognise and celebrate the creative endeavours of established writers and emerging talent who cast light on untold stories and bring new characters to life.

“I congratulate all the winners and the finalists and I look forward to watching their continuing journeys and celebrating their successes.”

2022 Queensland Literary Awards winners

Queensland Premier's Award for a Work of State Significance

Awarded to an outstanding work, by an Australian writer, focused on documenting, discussing or highlighting a uniquely Queensland story.

Prize: \$25,000

- *Wounded Country: The Murray-Darling Basin – a contested history* (NewSouth) by Quentin Beresford

Queensland Writers Fellowships

Awarded to three Queensland authors to advance a writing project over a 12-month period.

Prize: three Fellowships of \$15,000 each, plus professional development support to the value of \$4,500

- Melissa Ashley
- Geneve Flynn
- Mary-Rose MacColl

Queensland Premier's Young Publishers and Writers Awards

Awarded to two outstanding Queensland writers up to 30 years of age.

Prize: two awards of \$10,000 plus career development support to the value of \$2,500 each

- Rebecca Cheers
- Marilena Hewitt



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The University of Queensland Fiction Book Award

Awarded to an outstanding work of fiction by an Australian writer.

Prize: \$15,000

- *The Other Half of You* (Hachette Australia) by Michael Mohammed Ahmad

The University of Queensland Non-Fiction Book Award

Awarded to an outstanding work of non-fiction by an Australian writer.

Prize: \$15,000

- *Lies, Damned Lies* (Ultimo Press) by Claire G. Coleman

Children's Book Award

Awarded to a work, suitable for children up to 12 years old, by an Australian writer.

Prize: \$15,000

- *Kunyi* (Magabala Books) written and illustrated by Kunyi June Anne McInerney

Griffith University Young Adult Book Award

Awarded to a work, suitable for young adults aged 13 to 19, by an Australian writer.

Prize: \$15,000

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

University of Southern Queensland Steele Rudd Award for a Short Story Collection

Awarded to an outstanding collection of short stories by an Australian writer.

Prize: \$15,000

- *Dark as Last Night* (University of Queensland Press) by Tony Birch

Judith Wright Calanthe Award for a Poetry Collection

Awarded to an outstanding collection of poetry by an Australian writer.

Prize: \$15,000

- *Stasis Shuffle* (Hunter Publishers) by Pam Brown

Glendower Award for an Emerging Queensland Writer

Awarded for an outstanding manuscript by an unpublished Queensland writer.

Prize: \$15,000, plus publication with University of Queensland Press

- Yen-Rong Wong, 'Things Left Unsaid'

David Unaipon Award for an Emerging Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander Writer

Awarded for an outstanding manuscript by an unpublished Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander writer.

Prize: \$15,000, plus publication with University of Queensland Press

- Mykaela Saunders for 'Always Will Be – stories of Goori sovereignty, from the future(s) of the Tweed'

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

Awarded to an outstanding book by a Queensland author, taken from eligible books entered in the Fiction and Non-Fiction categories. The winner of *The Courier-Mail* People's Choice Queensland Book of the Year Award is determined by public vote.

Prize: \$10,000

- *Another Day in the Colony* by Chelsea Watego

For more information: [Queensland Literary Awards](#) | [Media kit](#)