

EMBARGOED until 22 July 2018

State Library of Queensland announces 2018 Young Writers Award recipients

Two gripping stories from Brisbane writers aged under 25 have won the State Library of Queensland's 2018 Young Writers Award.

Ellen Wengert, 24, from Petrie Terrace and Helen Yesberg, 17, of Brookfield were presented with their prizes by State Librarian and CEO Vicki McDonald during the 2018 Young Writers Conference.

Ellen received \$2,000 and membership to the Queensland Writers Centre (QWC) in the 18–25 years category for *Everyone Will Be There*, a work the judges praised for confident writing and characterisation, which produced a polished, tension-filled story.

Helen won \$500 and a QWC membership in the category for writers aged 15–17 years. The judges said her entry *These Broken Souls of Ours* used exceptional prose to craft an unsettling genre story with not one word out of place.

The Young Writers Award has been run by State Library for more than 20 years and encourages, inspires and champions the writing of young Queenslanders. In 2018, the award attracted 216 entries across the two age categories.

Quotes from Minister for the Arts Leeanne Enoch:

“Investing in the next generation of writing talent is a priority for the Queensland Government.”

“For more than two decades the Young Writers Award has recognised and rewarded Queensland’s emerging creative talent.”

“The award has set many young writers on a path to a literary career, widening their professional networks and providing valuable access to the publishing industry.”

Quotes from State Librarian and CEO Vicki McDonald:

“State Library of Queensland is proud to champion young writers during such a critical stage of their professional and artistic development.”

“The Young Writers Award has recognised the literary talents of some of the country’s most exciting young writers including Benjamin Law, Shastra Deo, Rebecca Jessen and Christopher Currie.”

“The judging panel was impressed by the maturity and diversity of voices within this year’s entry pool and remarked on the sense of freedom, experimentation and exploration on display.”

2018 Young Writers Award winners and finalists:

Category: 15–17 years of age

- Winner: *These Broken Souls of Ours* by Helen Yesberg of Brookfield, 17
- Runner Up: *Little Firefly* by Kiarni Burton of Merrimac, 16
- Highly Commended: *Hope Among the Flames* by Tara Phillips of Cashmere, 16
- Highly Commended: *A Loneliness That Fancies Solitude* by Kayleigh Laine of Birkdale, 15
- Highly Commended: *Loaf Thy Enemy* by Samuel Bergmark of Merrimac, 17
- Highly Commended: *Where the Coconuts Grow* by Christiana Palella of Keperra, 16

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Category: 18–25 years of age

- Winner: *Everyone Will Be There* by Ellen Wengert of Petrie Terrace, 24
- Runner Up: *Red Gum* by Chloe Mark of Taringa, 21
- Highly Commended: *Salt of the Earth* by Ryan Delaney of Buderim, 23
- Highly Commended: *Last Hope* by Gavin Yuan Gao of Sunnybank Hills, 24
- Highly Commended: *To Whom Replaces Me* by Samantha Kate Zell of Yeronga, 24
- Highly Commended: *Sufia's Moon* by Ramisa Raya of Coorparoo, 20

More information and the winning stories are available at slq.qld.gov.au/whats-on/awards/ywa.