

2011 NSW Premier's Literary Award Winners

The winners of the 2011 NSW Premier's Literary Awards were announced at a gala dinner at the Sydney Opera House.

Some of the countries leading writers and luminaries were at the event, including ABC TV presenter Jennifer Byrne (as MC), NSW Premier Barry O'Farrell and former Prime Minister of Australia, Malcolm Fraser.

One of Australia's best-loved writers, Alex Miller, was awarded the Christina Stead Prize for Fiction for *Lovesong*. Alex has received numerous awards for his writing, including twice winning the prestigious Miles Franklin Award.

Miller also won The People's Choice Award. Introduced three years ago to increase public engagement with the arts, the People's Choice Award was chosen by Australian residents from the six novels shortlisted for the Christina Stead Prize..

Former Prime Minister of Australia, Malcolm Fraser, along with Margaret Simons, were awarded the Douglas Stewart Prize for Non-Fiction for *Malcolm Fraser: The Political Memoirs*. It also took out Book of The Year. The judges described it as an engaging work that demonstrates how literary craft can transcend the usual limitations of political autobiography.

The NSW Premier's Literary Awards, established in 1979, were Australia's first premier's awards. In their 32 year history, they have honoured many of the nation's greatest writers, including David Malouf, Shaun Tan and Jane Campion.

Over the course of the evening, \$315,000 in prizes were given out over 13 categories. Author Libby Gleeson, AM, received a Special Award for her numerous contributions to the children's book industry.

Jennifer Maiden won the Kenneth Slessor Prize for Poetry for her collection *Pirate Rain*, making her the first poet to win the prize three times.

Other winners include Debra Oswald for *Offspring* (Script Writing Award), Patricia Cornelius for *Do Not Go Gentle...* (Play Award), Cath Crowley for *Graffiti Moon* (Ethel Turner Prize), Sophie Masson for *My Australian Story* (Patricia Wrightson Prize), Ouyang Yu for *The English Class* (Community Relations Commission Award), Stephen Daisley for *Traitor* (UTS Glenda Adams Award) and Ian Johnson (Translation Prize & PEN Medallion).

Additionally, the recipient of the 2011 NSW Writer's Fellowship was announced. The winner, chosen from a field of 111 applications, was Emily Maguire. The Fellowship is offered annually by the NSW Government and is valued at \$20,000.

The NSW Premier's Literary Awards help to establish values and standards in Australian literature and draw international attention to some of the country's best writers and to the cultural environment that nurtures them.

Please see below for the full list of winners, or visit www.pla.nsw.gov.au

2011 NEW SOUTH WALES PREMIER'S LITERARY AWARD WINNERS

CHRISTINA STEAD PRIZE FOR FICTION (\$40,000)

Alex Miller, Lovesong

DOUGLAS STEWART PRIZE FOR NON-FICTION (\$40,000)

Malcolm Fraser & Margaret Simons, Malcolm Fraser: The Political Memoirs

KENNETH SLESSOR PRIZE FOR POETRY (\$30,000)

Jennifer Maiden, Pirate Rain

ETHEL TURNER PRIZE FOR YOUNG PEOPLE'S LITERATURE (\$30,000)

Cath Crowley, Graffiti Moon

PATRICIA WRIGHTSON PRIZE FOR CHILDREN'S LITERATURE (\$30,000)

Sophie Masson, My Australian Story: The Hunt for Ned Kelly

SCRIPT WRITING AWARD (\$30,000)

Debra Oswald, Offspring

PLAY AWARD (\$30,000)

Patricia Cornelius, Do Not Go Gentle...

NSW PREMIER'S TRANSLATION PRIZE & PEN MEDALLION (\$30,000)

Ian Johnston

COMMUNITY RELATIONS COMMISSION AWARD (\$20,000)

Ouyang Yu, The English Class

UTS GLENDA ADAMS AWARD FOR NEW WRITING (\$5,000)

Stephen Daisley, Traitor

BOOK OF THE YEAR (\$10,000)

Malcolm Fraser & Margaret Simons, Malcolm Fraser: The Political Memoirs

SPECIAL AWARD (\$20,000)

Libby Gleeson

PEOPLE'S CHOICE AWARD

Alex Miller, Lovesong

JUDGES FOR THE 2011 NSW PREMIER'S LITERARY AWARDS

Paula Abood, Stephen Axelsen, Professor Robyn Ewing, Farid Farid, Judi Farr, Johanna Featherstone, Tim Gooding, Dr Kathryn Heyman, Jacqueline Kent, Suzanne Leal, Dr Chris Mead, Stephen Measday, Rhyll McMaster (Chair), Tony Morphett, Omar Musa, Dr Camilla Nelson, Jane Oehr, Joseph Pugliese, Judith Ridge, Polly Rowe, James Roy and Les Wicks.

At 5.30pm on Friday 20 May, join some of the NSW Premier's Literary Award winners as they discuss their work at the Sydney Writers' Festival. FREE. Sydney Theatre, Richard Wherrett Studio, 22 Hickson Road, Walsh Bay. www.swf.org.au

For further information, please visit the Awards website: www.pla.nsw.gov.au, or contact: April Murdoch, Publicist, mob: 0434 581 944 / aprilmurdochmedia@yahoo.com.au