

# Results of the Fellowship of Australian Writers (Vic). Inc.

## 2010 National Literary Awards



### PART 1 – BOOK AWARDS

#### **FAW SID HARTA LITERATURE AWARD**

Sponsored by **Sid Harta Publishing**

In its thirty-eighth year, an award for a non-fiction book with an Australian theme, first published in Australia.

#### **Winner (\$1000)**

**Cameron Forbes**, *The Korean War: Australia In the Giant's Playground*, NSW, Pan Macmillan

#### **Highly Commended**

**Ron Brooks**, *Drawn From the Heart: A Memoir*, NSW, Allen and Unwin

#### **Commended**

**Michael Molkentin**, *Fire in the Sky: The Australian Flying Corps in the First World War*, NSW, Allen and Unwin

#### **Judges' Report: Jean Thornton and Dr Bill Anderson**

An increased number of high quality books were entered this year, covering a diverse range of subjects. The winning entries were of excellent quality and the judges had little difficulty in arriving at their decision.

Cameron Forbes' outstanding study of the Korean War was a clear winner. Forbes brought his great experience as a journalist and his writing skills to bear in writing this book. These skills, combined with the attributes of an excellent academic historian have resulted in a study that is impeccably researched and analysed. The Korean War has sometimes been called 'The Forgotten War'; Forbes has made a major contribution to ensuring that this important event in Australian history will be better remembered.

Ron Brooks' memoir is a well-written and moving account of the life and work of an Australian artist who has won international renown as a designer and illustrator of children's books. His description of the creative process involved in his work is fascinating and engrossing.

Michael Molkentin's fine study of the Australian Flying Corps in World War One is a major book on an important and often overlooked aspect of Australian involvement in the war. Molkentin writes with skill and enthusiasm and does a great story full justice.

#### **FAW CHRISTINA STEAD AWARD**

Sponsored by **Merchant of Fairness Bookshop**

In its twenty-fourth year, an award for a work of fiction, first published in Australia.

#### **Winner (\$500)**

**Maggie Joel**, *The Second-Last Woman In England*, NSW, Murdoch Books

#### **Highly Commended**

**Rebecca James**, *Beautiful Malice*, NSW, Allen and Unwin

**Lisa Lang** *Utopian Man*, NSW, Allen and Unwin

#### **Judges' Report: Philip Rainford and Gail Blundell**

Judging a published book award is always difficult because the entries cover a range of genres. Some are crime, romance, fantasy, mystery, lifestyle stories, stories of life in the suburbs, historical novels, horror and even short story collections and poetry novels. To this end we try to obtain judges with differing tastes in their reading so that personal bias is minimised. Every year we get novels that start well and then fall off towards the end, as if the authors lost interest in the novels. This almost always leads to the reader also losing interest and many books that seemed contenders fell by the wayside. Those that won were books that held a good story together for the entire novel, the ones that stood out in our memory as being unique, intriguing or just interesting plots of human conflict or relationships. They made us want to keep reading and ended as strongly as they began. Only then did we consider writing styles, as a novel that reads well should only have minor imperfections that may be overlooked as you become engrossed in the story.

## FAW ANNE ELDER AWARD

Sponsored by **Anne Elder Trust, managed by Catherine Elder and FAW**

In its thirty-fourth year, this is an award for a first book of poetry first published in Australia. It was named after Anne Josephine Chloe Elder (1918-1976), ballet dancer and poet.

### Winner (\$1000)

**Rosanna Licari**, *An Absence of Saints*, Qld., University of Queensland Press

### Highly Commended

**Andy Jackson**, *Among the Regulars*, Vic., Paper Tiger

### Commended

**Rachael Petridis**, *Sundecked*, Vic., The Australian Poetry Centre

**Chloe Wilson**, *The Mermaid Problem*, Vic., The Australian Poetry Centre

**Peter Coghill**, *The Rockclimber's Hands*, NSW, Picaro

**Leah Kaminsky**, *Stitching Things Together*, Interactive Press

### Judges' Report: Meg McNena & Garth Madsen

First collections of poetry are difficult territory. They are tender ground. There is often an uneasy compromise between the poet's best work and the integrity of the collection as a whole. These books contained a wide range of forms and subjects, from haiku to verse novels, from the deeply personal to Hawaiian shirts. Often this diversity could be found within a single collection. Sometimes, titles did not reflect content. Some poems were over-written and others did not allow the reader into the experience of the poet.

It was hard to fault the winner, *An Absence of Saints*. It combined a diversity of themes with a cohesiveness of style. The poet's voice is powerful and personal, her characters and her empathy for them unforgettable. Her imagery is strong and layered, her metaphors unique. The poet's experiences are never far away and yet, she is able to take us into her own ancestral history and the wider past of the country in which she lives. Of the commended books, *Among the Regulars* was remarkable for the originality of its concept and the intimacy of its experiences; *Sundecked* chilled and intrigued with its wide-ranging narratives and metaphors; *Rockclimber's Hands* showed a keen eye for the natural world and the language took the reader right into the poet's landscape; *The Mermaid Problem* explored old mythologies and created new ones; and *Stitching Things Together* was a darkly honest collection that combined humour with tragedy. Other books short-listed were *A Question of Translation*, *You Can Only Get So Close on Google Earth* and *In Defence of Hawaiian Shirts*.

## FAW BARBARA RAMSDEN AWARD

Sponsored by **Institute of Professional Editors and FAW (Vic.)**

In its twenty-eighth year, this is an award for a major literary award for a book of quality writing in any field of literature. Two specially cast bronze plaques designed by Andor Meszaros and supplied to the FAW by Michael Meszaros, are presented to the author and the publisher's editor to recognise the combined effort of both parties to achieve final result.

### Plaque Winner *Night Street*

**Kristel Thornell**, Author, NSW, Allen and Unwin, **Clara Finlay** Editor

### Special Mention *Utopian Man*

**Lisa Lang**, Author, NSW, Allen and Unwin, **Ali Lavau**, Editor

### Judges' Report: Craig Munro and Pamela Hewitt

The entries for the 2010 Barbara Ramsden Award consisted of varied and high quality titles. The collection included fiction and non-fiction, traversing genres such as crime fiction, literary fiction, pictorial history and Indigenous culture. Among these books, a small group displayed a marked maturity and sophistication in the conversation that had taken place between editor and author. It was not an easy task to single out a winner.

After careful consultation and detailed discussions, we declare that the winner of the 2010 Barbara Ramsden Award is *Night Street* by Kristel Thornell, edited by Clara Finlay.

*Night Street* is a moving fictional portrait of an artist little appreciated during her brief lifetime. The creative relationship between editor and writer has resulted in a captivating story based on the life of painter Clarice Beckett. Skilled editorial judgement is evident too when Kristel Thornell's writing breaks free of the conventional boundaries of style. With expertly judged timing and pacing, this debut novel fuses history and imagination as it fashions a compelling work of fiction. *Night Street's* characterisation is plausible to the contemporary reader as well as appropriate to its early 20th century setting, and the novel conjures up Beckett's works of

art as well as her uncompromising life as an artist with freshness and sophistication. Images, light and colour inhabit and infuse the text with a painter's perception of the surrounding world.

It is appropriate to pay formal tribute to a second book, which also exhibited an extremely high standard of editing. We would like to record our view that *Utopian Man* by Lisa Lang, edited by Ali Lavau, should be recognised as highly commended.

It is not the first time the closeness of the literary qualities of these two books has been recognised. *Night Street* and *Utopian Man* shared the prestigious 2009 Vogel Award and are both published by Allen and Unwin. The decision to nominate both a winner and a highly commended title celebrates the quality of Australian book editing and honours their editors and mentors while highlighting the emergence of two talented young novelists.

Set in Melbourne between 1883 and 1919, *Utopian Man* brings flamboyant bookselling entrepreneur EW Cole and his family and friends to life with exhilarating panache. This fine, brilliantly edited novel takes readers back, as if in a time machine, to the heady days of Marvellous Melbourne in the 1880s and the difficult depression years that followed. Historically accurate, this memorable and heart-warming saga sparkles with just the sort of lively entertainment that Cole himself guaranteed his customers who flocked to his eccentric and theatrical Book Arcade for more than four decades. The success of the transformation from non-fiction to fiction in this work speaks of a thoughtful, iterative editorial collaboration.

The results of the 2010 Barbara Ramsden Award are a clear demonstration of the benefits of extensive mentoring and constructive editorial involvement over an extended period. The level of achievement of a committed editing process reflects high standards of contemporary book editing and production.

Electronic editing has been the essential technology of professional editors for many years, replacing paper with screen and author queries with the comment function. The more recent shift in balance from print-based towards screen-based publication represents a new and challenging threshold for editors and their relationships with writers and publishers, along with the continuing imperative to maintain quality in a transformed publishing industry.

The editor's longstanding role as advocate for writers, readers and the integrity of the text will continue, however much the technology shifts. The Barbara Ramsden Award will be part of these developments, reflecting the editor's new roles in e-publication as the industry implements technologies that radically change the way people read and interpret what a book may look like in future.

*Judges appointed by the Institute of Professional Editors (IPEd)*

## **PART 2 – MANUSCRIPT AWARDS**

### **FAW COMMUNITY WRITERS' AWARD**

*Sponsored by the Fresh Start Training Inc*

In its thirty-first year, this is an award for an anthology by a community writers' group.

**Winner (\$500)**

**The Grove Road Poets *A Poem is a Parachute*, Vic.**

### **Judge's Report: Elizabeth Owen**

The standout winner of the 2010 FAW Community Writers' Award is an anthology of poetry entitled: *A Poem is a Parachute*. The anthology comprised 66 poems by five different poets who remain anonymous. It covers many poetic subjects with each poet writing to a high standard while maintaining his or her individual voice. The poems often showed a strong sense of place, from Paris to the Scottish highlands, and drew upon themes taken from nature in particular using images of birds.

The writing throughout was spare but evocative. The poets wrote with sensitivity and imagination and drew on different cultural traditions, Western and otherwise, while using these in new and sustaining ways. They generally wrote in free verse but some poems were structured more formally using rhyme and recurrent but evolving imagery. This anthology was arranged with all poems by each poet together, a format which allows the reader to develop an inwardness with the individual writer. Other anthologies were arranged thematically allowing poems by different poets to reflect back on each other.

A difficulty in judging is to allow for the professionalism of some poets who appear to have been writing longer and hence have a more fully developed style, with the inclusiveness a community writers' group should sustain. The quality of the items in some anthologies varied more than in the winning entry but they are to be commended for this encouragement of newer writers. The 11 entries contained a fair mix of short stories and poetry showing both genres are alive and well.

No Commendations or High Commendations were made as the anthologies which would have received these did not abide by some of the length requirements stipulated in the Conditions of Entry.

Congratulations to all entrants for the versatility and quality of the writing which made for enjoyable reading.

## FAW JENNIFER BURBIDGE SHORT STORY AWARD

*Sponsored by Mary Burbidge*

Named in honour of Jennifer Burbidge, this award is for a story dealing with any aspect of the lives of those who suffer from some form of mental disability and/or its impact on their families.

**Winner (\$250)**

**Barry Divola**, 'Life be in it', NSW

**Commended**

**Vicky Daddo**, 'My Mother's Arm', VIC

### **Judge's Report: Mary Burbidge**

The number of entries was again disappointingly low but the choice was still difficult as my short list was relatively long. Stories appealed for different reasons—their passion, their empathy, their novel approach to the disability situation they are exploring—but tended to fall by the wayside for similar reasons—inadequate editing, over-writing, giving an account rather than creating a story and an unsatisfying ending.

The winning story, 'Life, be in it' was on the short list as a well-written imaginative, tender story with quirky premise: an old man talking people out of committing suicide. When I heard of the 2011 Australian of the Year awards I realised this was in fact a creative extrapolation of a true story and this gave it the edge it needed. 'My Mother's Arm', explores complex emotions, attitudes and family interactions as different members contemplate a difficult decision that may have to be made. It is harsh, raw and open-ended, finishing just before the test result are known. It is well-written with good use of dialogue.

## FAW MARY GRANT BRUCE SHORT STORY AWARD FOR CHILDREN'S LITERATURE

*Sponsored by Wellington Shire Council*

In its thirtieth year, an award for a manuscript written for readers aged 10-15 years, with a special prize for winners from Gippsland.

**Winner (\$600)**

**Caroline Christie**, *The Big Picture*, SA

**Second (\$300)**

**Tracey Slater**, *Chasing Rabbits*, NSW

**Highly Commended**

**Anna Quinlan**, *Sci-Fi Moments*, ACT     **Janice Elva Williams**, *The Sight of Blood*, Vic.

**Commended**

**Marian McGuinness**, *Ghost Games*, NSW     **Daan Spijker**, *The Prize*, Vic.

**Gippsland Regional Winner (\$200)**

**Vicky Daddo**, *Witch's Brew*, Vic.

**Judge: Margaret Campbell**

## FAW JOHN SHAW NEILSON POETRY AWARD

*Sponsored by Collected Works Bookshop*

In its fortieth year, for a poem or suite of poems of sustained quality and distinction by an Australian author.

**Winner (\$600)**

**Mark Wills**, 'Up and Down in One Day (A Country Wedding)', Vic.

**Second (\$150)**

**Anthony Lynch**, 'Topography', Vic.

**Highly Commended**

**Laura Jan Shore**, 'Retrievals', NSW

**Adrienne Kwan**, 'Surface Tension', Vic.

**Irene Elizabeth Wilkie**, 'Of Dandelion and Daisies', NSW

**Commended**

**Joan Kerr**, 'Mulier Fortis', Vic.

**Jo Stanlake**, 'The Painting', Vic.

**David Campbell**, 'Zoo', Vic.

### **Judge's Report: Garth Madsen**

Popular subjects were war, fire, drought, the landscape, childhood memories, art, travel, history, love and marriage. These are all perennials for poetry, but it was disappointing that so many poets failed to explore these themes in original ways. So often the imagery and the narratives were predictable. Many poets were prone to clichés and some never got beyond mere description. Those who used rhyme, meter or other traditional devices rarely seemed to consider how form could be used to enhance their verse. The winning

poem was 'Up and Down in One Day', an account of a farcical country wedding. The opening is powerful ('the red carpet ... like blood draining'), but we hardly have time to digest it before we are hurried into a list of details that have us laughing or cringing. The poem never loses the quality of an itinerary. Sentences rarely have verbs. It is only in the last stanza that the poet returns to the horror of the beginning and takes us beyond the farce ('shocked as if you've witnessed a robbery'). Second place went to 'Topography', a reflection on life on the land. It begins with a fox taking a sheep and through the subtle thread of imagery explores our place within the landscape as well as edging us into the complexity of a relationship between two people. Other poems worthy of mention were 'As I Gaze Upon My Lover's Face', 'life like violence graphic', 'Obiter dictum' and 'The Pit, the Labyrinth, the Tower'.

### **FAW JIM HAMILTON AWARD**

*Sponsored by Eltham High School*

In its seventeenth year, this is an award for an unpublished novel of sustained quality and distinction by an Australian author. It is named in honour of Jim Hamilton in recognition of his contribution and that of his family for thirty years of service to the FAW, Australian writers and writing.

#### **Winner (\$1000)**

**Jo Gardiner**, *The Night Visitor*, Vic.

#### **Highly Commended**

**Georgina Luck**, *Clutching the Butterfly Shawl*, Vic.

#### **Commended**

**Samantha Tidy**, *The Happiness Jar*, Vic.

#### **Judges' Report: Robert Watson and Clare Carlin**

*The Night Visitor*. The author has a talent for some striking elliptical shifts in the narration; *caesurae* that abruptly sharpen the focus of the narrative. It was refreshing to see a manuscript abound with as many symbols as this one has. It allows for a closer re/reading and gives opportunity for pause at significant moments.

The manuscript awarded second place, *Clutching the Butterfly Shawl*, had a voice that is unusually sentient. This is particularly appropriate for one significant if uncommon subject: for this manuscript is in part a novel about friendship, of friendship's vicissitudes—and non-romantic love. There was no shortage of enthusiasm evident in this year's entries, with much writerly zeal devoted to sex scenes—a fraught and contested place in literature that has borne witness to many a significant writer coming unstuck. Contestants are advised to proceed with caution, or with none at all. Fall between the stools and you are lost.

There seemed to be a renewal of interest in historical/genre pieces; few actually challenged the genre, which, paradoxically, is the mark of the very best examples. It is possible to both remain faithful to and investigate the underpinnings of one's devotion.

Many manuscripts were highly original and had a solid grasp of pace/tempo. Some had a great plot, others a strong voice, others a lovely sense of timing but none had the combination that adds up to a well-written book—yet. Keep going. Do lots of revision. Consider having your manuscript appraised through an assessment service, or try applying for a mentor through the ASA or your state writers' centre.

There were some promising YA manuscripts that would benefit from conscientious editing. Poor syntax and basic spelling mistakes showed up the non-readers.

### **FAW ANGELO B. NATOLI SHORT STORY AWARD**

*Sponsored by A.B. Natoli Pty Ltd.*

In its eleventh year, this award is for a short story of up to 3000 words of sustained quality and distinction by an Australian author. It is named in memory of Angelo B. Natoli who for many years served as Honorary Solicitor to the FAW and whose firm still retains that office.

#### **Winner (\$600)**

**Bruce Pascoe**, 'Lament for Three Hands', Vic.

#### **Second (\$400)**

**Trish Kennedy**, 'Skin', NSW

#### **Highly Commended**

**Jodie Kewley**, 'The Large Blue', Vic. **Carmel Lillis**, 'Redux Now', Vic.

#### **Commended**

**Judith Raie O'Donnell**, 'Death is a Big Part of Life' **Bruce Pascoe**, 'Midnight Choir'

### **Judge's Report: Louise Le Nay**

The number of entries in this year's competition was higher than last year's.

The winning story 'Lament for Three Hands' suggests a post-apocalyptic world, where new relationships and connections are being made with difficulty, and out of necessity. It's a story about loss, told with a survivor's pragmatism and determination. The language is forthright, confident, the unspoken tragedy is palpable.

The second place winner 'Skin' tells the story of a broken relationship, but does so with energy, anger and wry humour. The reader is swept up into the obsessive 'clearing out' of the rejected lover. The author uses skilful imagery—as with 'Lament for Three Hands' the author of 'Skin' is courageous with language.

Doing multiple drafts of a story is important. First draft puts the story in place, second draft irons out sequential bumps in the story. But a short story is much more than a smart plot and a snappy climax. It is usually in the third, fourth and fifth drafts that the writer's craft is tested – the time when a writer can experiment with language and imagery and can build a work of beauty and eloquence. I recommend 'The Sidmouth Letters' (Jane Gardam) and 'Dubliners' (James Joyce).

### **FAW DI CRANSTON AWARD**

*Sponsored by Di Cranston*

In its twenty-third year, for a play, screenplay or TV script of sustained quality and distinction by an Australian author.

#### **Winner (\$250)**

**Nathan Curnow**, *How the Goose Broke Open*, Vic.

#### **Highly Commended**

**Jacqueline Morley**, *A Midsummer Daydream*, Vic. **Jacqueline Morley**, *Pierette*, Vic.

**Jacqueline Morley**, *Emily Applebee*, Vic.

#### **Commended**

**Mary Jones**, *Craft Work*, Vic. **Natasha Pincus**, *Goodman*, Vic. **Natasha Pincus**, *A Girl Like Nina*, Vic.

### **Judge's Report: Peter Krausz**

The quality of entries was both varied in theme and stylistically variable. It is good to see writers attempting to either find originality in their work, or solidify an existing genre or idea. However, far too often the outcome tends to be contrived, overly manipulative, riddled with stereotypes and/or cliches, or just makes no sense. Writers need to understand that when key characters are developed to gain sympathy with the audience, it is somewhat pointless to introduce a twist or contrivance that undermines a consistent view of the narrative. A number of screenplays, in particular, demonstrated a lack of connection with audience in an attempt to startle, but oftentimes this can be counterproductive. I also seek out a clear voice that comes through the writing, and this was a rare occurrence in this year's entries, with a more bland approach preferred. Although it is good to see writers tackling contemporary themes, often this was presented in overly melodramatic or simplistic approaches, leading to dissatisfaction by the conclusion.

This year's winning entry was both original and challenging, combining a bizarre dramatic structure with a distinctive view of Australian colonialism. The writer clearly understands narrative form, but is constantly able to embellish it with some crisp dialogue and satiric historic observations. The author is also able to challenge our view of Australian culture in an entertaining script.

I continue to encourage writers to attempt a personal and original voice and view of an idea, theme or topic, and to find less traditional ways of expressing them. I also encourage development of screenplays that will entertain or challenge the audience, and reinvigorate the narrative approach. The art of quality writing is not an easy process to synthesize, but the winner and the commended entries this year indicate a way of exploring ways of raising the standard of such an essential art.

### **FAW WHITELIGHT TV DRAMA SCRIPT AWARD Part A, 25 Minute TV Drama**

*Sponsored by Whitelight Productions*

In its fifth year, this award is for TV drama scripts.

#### **Winner (\$125)**

**Natasha Pincus**, *Mates*, Vic.

### **FAW WHITELIGHT TV DRAMA SCRIPT AWARD Part B, 10–15 Minute Short Film**

#### **Winner \$125**

**Sally Pitts**, *Elevate*, Vic.

**Highly Commended**  
**Sally Pitts**, *Another Day*, Vic.  
**Commended**  
**Kathryn Goldie**, *Body Surfer*, Vic.

**Judge's Report: Angelo Salamanca**

It was satisfying to see some screenwriters embrace challenging themes and subject matter: the search for identity and sexuality; disturbing father /son conflict; the pain of losing a child - to name but a few.

The thriller genre—both psychological and action—was well represented this year—something not usually tackled in the short screenplay format.

Unfortunately, some writers neglected to present their screenplays in the industry standard format. I would urge anyone unsure of correct formatting to look up relevant websites such as Film Victoria's, and download information. Prospective producers / assessors appreciate the effort taken to correctly format a script. I hasten to add, however, that in this case, the incorrectly formatted scripts were not disadvantaged.

I would also urge writers tackling screenwriting for the first time to read scripts of produced works so as to gauge the success (or otherwise) of the transition from the page to screen.

As a teacher of screenwriting and judge for this award, I eagerly seek compelling story-lines, engaging dialogue and subtext; non hackneyed scenarios. In the instance of scripts for the big screen I particularly welcome strong imagery through gripping big print.

Notwithstanding some under-developed scripts, the writing overall was of a high standard. I believe the winners and those commended stand a good chance of attracting producers with a view to having their work developed further and possibly produced.

**PART 3 – YOUNG WRITERS' AWARDS**

**FAW YOUNG POET OF THE YEAR AWARD Part A, Poets 8–12 years**

*Sponsored by Fellowship of Australian Writers (Vic.) Inc*

in its thirty-fourth year, for poetry of sustained quality and distinction by Australian poets under 16 years.

**Winner (\$100)**

**Isabella Somerville**, 'In Classrooms Across the Land', Vic.

**Highly Commended**

**Stefan Hwang**, 'I Want to be a Writer', Vic.

**Commended**

**Antonia Langenegger**, 'The Earth's Symphony', Vic.

**Judge's Report: Shirley Randles**

It was difficult to choose winners for this section. The maturity of the writing from all in this age group was impressive. Issues such as war, self evaluation and sensitivity to the environment were well presented. The majority of poems were rhymed and in most submissions the rhymes worked well without being contrived. It was evident much thought and care was taken to produce these poems. Those who entered deserve to be congratulated on their effort and to be encouraged to keep writing even if they did not gain a place this year. 'In Classrooms Across the Land', is a rhyming humorous poem, showing how teachers can inspire and educate their students..

'I Want to be a Writer' is convincing in that it demonstrates the passion to write overwhelms any other consideration for further employment.

**FAW YOUNG POET OF THE YEAR AWARD Part B, Poets 13–16 Years**

*Sponsored by Fellowship of Australian Writers (Vic.) Inc*

**Winner (\$150)**

**Anna-Rose Shack**, 'The Run of Liberte', WA

**Highly Commended**

**Amy Robinson**, 'An Old Flame', WA

**Commended**

**Eliza Huck**, 'My Street', WA   **Opemipo Olubodun**, 'My Home', WA   **Michaela Prunotto**, 'Insight', Vic.

**Judge's Report : Shirley Randles**

Poems were well presented and many dealt with the families and the local environment. The entries often contained descriptive passages using the five senses. This allowed the reader to identify with the poem on a personal level

In rhyming poetry or free verse care should be taken to eliminate unnecessary words. The use of 'such as', 'like', 'and', can slow the poem and distract from the poem's message. It is a good idea to read your work aloud or ask another person to read it to you.

'The Run of Liberte' is inspired by 'La Liberte Guidant le Peuple', by Eugene Delacroix. When viewing this painting one will appreciate the accuracy of this poem. Written skillfully, it depicts the 1830 French rebellion with the physical and emotional repercussions.

'An Old Flame' uses a minimum of words in this nostalgic description of nature's cycle of life.

### **FAW MICHAEL DUGAN SHORT STORY AWARD Part A, Authors 6–12 Years**

*Sponsored by Penguin Books Australia*

In its sixteenth year, for short stories of sustained quality and distinction by Australian authors under 16 years.

#### **Winner (\$100)**

**Jennifer You**, 'The Silver Key', Vic.

#### **Highly Commended**

**James Checker McCarthy**, 'Airborne Adventure', NSW    **Clarissa Smith**, 'Drifting Dreams', Vic.

#### **Commended**

**Saskia Davey**, 'Unbidden Sins', **Erin Barr**, 'A Convict's Story', **Michaela Prunotto**, 'Saying Sorry',

### **FAW MICHAEL DUGAN SHORT STORY AWARD Part B, Authors 13–16 Years**

*Sponsored by Penguin Books Australia*

#### **Winner (\$150)**

**Benjamin Ilobuchi**, 'James McDonald's Diary as a Viking Slave', Vic.

#### **Highly Commended**

**Rohan Navani**, 'The Controller's Vengeance', Vic.    **Anne-Rose Shack**, 'Home', WA

#### **Commended**

**Becky Bunting**, 'Red and Blue', NSW    **Erin McCullagh**, 'But for the Little Things', NSW

**Judge: Shirley Hassen**

### **FAW COLIN THIELE POETRY AWARD**

*Sponsored by Be Published Pty Ltd*

In its twenty-sixth year this is an award for a poem of sustained quality and distinction by an Australian author between 15-20 years.

#### **Winner (\$200)**

**Nicole Dakin**, 'The Micro Bats', WA

#### **Second (\$100)**

**Rachel Ann Roger**, 'The Movement', Vic.

#### **Highly Commended**

**Raelke Grimmer**, 'Imprints', SA

**Judge's Report: Grant Caldwell**

The winning entries stand out for their good structure and the sharp, apt language. The winning poems also display a certain pleasing ambiguity that is intriguing but not confusing. The other entries tend to rely on rhyming sequences and rather trite subject matter and language.

### **FAW JOHN MORRISON SHORT STORY AWARD**

*Sponsored by Paul Jennings*

In its forty-fifth year, awarded for a short story of sustained quality and distinction by an Australian author between 15-20 years. It is named after John Gordon Morrison, who was awarded the Gold Medal of the Australian Literature Society, the Patrick White Literary Award (1986) and the Order of Australia (1989).

#### **Winner (\$200)**

**Michael Andrew Collins**, 'House', WA

#### **Second (\$100)**

**Gabi Dunn**, 'Cinnamon Dru', Tas.

#### **Highly Commended**

**James Louis Valk**, 'Better Man', Tas.

### **Judge's Report: Jennifer Harrison**

There seemed to be fewer submissions this year and I have awarded only three prizes. Despite this, it was terrific to read the entries which were finely shaped, cleverly imagined and of excellent creative quality. The winning entry is an outstanding short story, a surreal and mysterious tale about a predatory house, obsessive characters and loss - a bold and imaginative page-turner in which the spaces inhabited are as fragile and mistrustful as the characters who move in them. I was reminded of Bachelard's philosophical investigations into habitation (*Poetics of Space*). Congratulations to the author of 'House'. The other prize-winners were also short story writers. These two entries explored themes of young people coping with adversity in interesting and resilient ways. Both were engrossing, satisfying and sensitively written. Best wishes to all the authors who submitted.

### **FAW MAVIS THORPE CLARK AWARD PART 1, Secondary School Student Award**

*Sponsored by Graeme & Robyn Base*

In its sixteenth year, this award is for anthologies of sustained quality and distinction by Australian secondary school students. Mavis Thorpe Clark was a prolific writer of children's fiction who, in late life, also wrote for adults.

**Winner (\$350)**

**Ruben Clark**, *Beyond Infinity*, Vic.

**Highly Commended**

**Saskia Davey**, *Catch Me I'm Falling*, Vic.    **Jack Burnham**, *Love, Life and the Whole Crazy Thing*, Qld.

**Commended**

**Elizabeth Waldron**, *Who?*, NSW

### **FAW MAVIS THORPE CLARK AWARD PART 2, Collected Writings**

*Sponsored by Graeme & Robyn Base*

Awarded for a collection of writing by a group of students who attend the same secondary school.

**Winner (\$200)**

**Eltham High School**, *Revolution in Tongue*, Vic.

**Highly Commended**

**Melbourne High School**, *War*, Vic.

**Judge: Shirley Hassen**

### **PART 4**

### **FAW CHRISTOPHER BRENNAN AWARD**

*Sponsored by SALLY DUGAN*

This is thirty-seventh year of an award to honour an Australian poet who has written work of sustained quality and distinction. It is named after Christopher Brennan (1870-1932)

The winner of the bronze plaque, which is designed and supplied by to the FAW by renowned sculptor and medallionist, Michael Meszaros, is chosen by judges on behalf of the Fellowship.

**Judges: Sheryl Clark, Kristen Henry and Kris Hemensley**

**Winner: Peter Steele**

Peter Steele SJ is a poet, internationally recognised scholar and Professor, and a Jesuit priest. His published works include *White Knight with Beebox: New and Selected Poems*, *A Local Habitation: Poems and Homilies*, *Invisible Riders*, and works of literary criticism.

# The Story Behind the FAW Barbara Ramsden and Christopher Brennan Plaques

Two of the most prestigious prizes in the FAW National Literary Awards are the Barbara Ramsden Prize (recognising the relationship between author and editor) and the Christopher Brennan Award (to honour the work of an outstanding poet). The awards are sponsored by the Institute of Professional Editors (IPEd) and Sally Dugan, respectively. In addition to the acknowledgment of their peers, the award winners receive exquisite bronze plaques designed by Andor and Michael Meszaros. The plaques are cast by the sand casting method.

Michael Meszaros provided this insight into the development of these precious pieces and the symbolism that is contained within them:

'The Barbara Ramsden plaque was designed by my father, Andor, [who died in 1972] and was an adaptation of a design that was originally intended for the outside of the National Library in Canberra. There were 7 designs for large relief panels, 13 x 5 feet. To the dismay of the architect, the scheme was rejected, possibly due to personal enmities with one of the judges. My father then decided to model them at the size 6 x 8 inches and then had them reduced mechanically to their present size of 3 x 4 inches.

When Jim Hamilton approached him to produce the award, my father proposed this one with the inscription added. It is *The Origin of Communication*. The man is drawing an aboriginal myth on the wall, and the woman is telling the children the story of what is depicted. This draws together the notions of storytelling and art expressing the story. By extension, writing, which developed later than painting, falls into the category of expressing the story. As far as I remember, this Award was first presented in 1971. It was awarded every year until about 10 years ago, when it lapsed for some years. It was restarted three or four years ago, as before, as an award to both author and editor of a book.

The Christopher Brennan Award was created by me in 1979. My brief was to express something about the nature or purpose of art in general. My idea was that all artists set out to clarify for their audience something worthwhile and relevant that they have perceived in the world around them. They achieve this through many different forms, styles, techniques, materials and philosophies.

The plaque shows a hand drawing aside a curtain to reveal an array of faces. Through the curtain we can only dimly make out the suggestion of these faces. With the curtain drawn aside, we can see them in fine detail. The hand is the artist's.'

*Michael Meszaros can be contacted at 15 Laver St., Kew, 3101. Phone: 03 9853 9610, 0407 837 538. Email: <meszaros@sculptorsvictoria.asn.au>. A selection of his work can be seen at <www.sculptorsvictoria.asn.au>*

## Thank You to the Sponsors and Judges of the FAW 2010 Literary Awards

### Sponsors

A.B. Natoli Pty Ltd  
The Anne Elder Poetry Trust  
Be Published Pty Ltd  
Mary Burbidge  
Collected Works Bookshop  
Di Cranston  
Graeme and Robyn Base  
Sally Dugan  
Eltham High School  
FAW (Vic.) Inc.  
Fresh Start Training  
Paul Jennings  
The Merchant of Fairness  
Bookshop  
Institute of Professional Editors  
(IPEd)

Michael Meszaros  
Penguin Books Australia  
Sid Harta Publishing  
Wellington Shire Council  
Whitelight Productions

### Judges

Dr Bill Anderson  
Gail Blundell  
Mary Burbidge  
Grant Caldwell  
Margaret Campbell  
Clare Carlin  
Sheryl Clark  
Jennifer Harrison  
Shirley Hassen

Kristen Henry  
Chris Hemmensley  
Pamela Hewitt  
Peter Krausz  
Louise Le Nay  
Garth Madsen  
Meg McNena  
Craig Munro  
Elizabeth Owen  
Shirley Randles  
Philip Rainford  
Angelo Salamanca  
Jean Thornton  
Robert Watson