

# MEDIA RELEASE

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## ADELAIDE FESTIVAL AWARDS FOR LITERATURE 2020

### ***2020 Adelaide Festival Awards for Literature Winners Announced***

Queensland author **Jessica Townsend** has been awarded the coveted Premier's Award at this year's Adelaide Festival Awards for Literature. As the state's highest literary honour, Ms Townsend wins \$25,000 for her novel *Nevermoor: The Trials of Morrigan Crow*. An enchanting tale about a cursed girl who escapes death and finds herself in a magical world, judges described the novel as amazingly vivid and an enticing read.

Also winning the \$15,000 Children's Literature Award, Ms Townsend beat 36 other shortlisted winners from around Australia.

The awards, which celebrate Australia's writing culture, were announced in a ceremony on the opening day of Adelaide Writers' Week in the Pioneers Women's Memorial Gardens, as part of the 2020 Adelaide Festival.

South Australian writer **Natalie Harkin** won the \$15,000 John Bray Poetry Award for her important work *Archival-Poetics*, described by the judges as heavily researched, deeply felt and painstakingly written.

**Gail Jones** (NSW) won the \$15,000 Fiction Award for her mesmerising novel, *The Death of Noah Glass*, while Victorian author **Sarah Epstein** (VIC) took out the \$15,000 Young Adult Fiction Award for her page turning thriller *Small Spaces*.

The \$15,000 Non-Fiction Award was won by **Meredith Lake** (NSW) for her book *The Bible in Australia: A Cultural History*, described as a mind-altering read.

An exciting new voice for South Australian theatre, **Piri Eddy** a local writer and playwright, has won the \$12,500 Jill Blewett Playwright's Award for his one-act tragedy about love and revenge, *Forgiveness*.

South Australian writer **Jelena Dinic** was awarded the \$10,000 Arts South Australia Wakefield Press Unpublished Manuscript Award for her elegant and tense collection of poems *In the Room With the She Wolf*.

South Australian authors **Sally Heinrich**, for *The Rainbow Thief*, and **Aidan Coleman**, for *Liabie*, were also awarded fellowships worth \$15,000 each.

Premier of South Australia and Minister for the Arts, The Honourable Steven Marshall, said, "Congratulations to the 2020 winners for this prestigious acknowledgement of literary excellence. Once more, the awards showcased the diversity of Australia's written talent and I encourage everyone to immerse themselves in all of the winners' stories."

The biennial awards offer a total prize pool of \$167,500 across six national and five South Australian categories, including three fellowships for South Australian writers.

The awards, being managed by the State Library of South Australia for the first time, began in 1986. They highlight the importance of our unique South Australian writers, and contribute to and support community engagement with literature.

Geoff Stempel, Director State Library of South Australia said, "It's been exciting to be a part of the Awards and showcase the creativity of our talented emerging and established local and national writers. I congratulate all the winners on their achievements and the recognition of their impressive literary talent and ability to enrich the reader's world."

## The 2020 Adelaide Festival Awards for Literature winners

### National Awards for published works:

- **Premier's Award** (\$25,000), and **Children's Literature Award** (\$15,000)  
*Nevermoor: The Trials of Morrigan Crow* by Jessica Townsend (QLD) (Hachette Australia)
- **Young Adult Fiction Award** (\$15,000)  
*Small Spaces* by Sarah Epstein (VIC) (Walker Books Australia)
- **Fiction Award** (\$15,000)  
*The Death of Noah Glass* by Gail Jones (NSW) (Text Publishing)
- **John Bray Poetry Award** (\$15,000)  
*Archival-Poetics* by Natalie Harkin (SA) (Vagabond Press)
- **Non-Fiction Award** (\$15,000)  
*The Bible in Australia: A Cultural History* by Meredith Lake (NSW) (NewSouth Publishing)

## South Australian Awards and Fellowships:

- **Jill Blewett Playwright's Award** (\$12,500)  
*Forgiveness* by Piri Eddy
  - **Arts South Australia Wakefield Press Unpublished Manuscript Award** (\$10,000)  
*In the Room With the She Wolf* by Jelena Dinic
  - **Barbara Hanrahan Fellowship** (\$15,000)  
*Liable* by Aidan Coleman
  - **Max Fatchen Fellowship** (\$15,000)  
*The Rainbow Thief* by Sally Heinrich
  - **Tangkanungku Pintyanthi Fellowship** (\$15,000)  
No applications were received for this Fellowship.
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