State Library of South Australia
Media Release

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
4 September 2026

2026 South Australian Literary Awards shortlist announced

The State Library of South Australia has announced the shortlist for the 2026 South Australian Literary Awards, with 55 writers and works selected from 766 entries across national and South Australian award categories.

Funded by the South Australian Government through CreateSA, the biennial awards offer a total prize pool of $185,000 across five national awards and five South Australian awards and fellowships, including the prestigious Premier's Award, presented to the most outstanding work selected from the national award winners.

This year's shortlist spans fiction, non-fiction, poetry, children's and young adult literature, playwriting and unpublished manuscripts, showcasing diverse voices, perspectives and stories from South Australia and across the nation. The selected works reflect the depth, creativity and literary excellence of contemporary Australian writing.

Each award category is assessed by an independent judging panel, which reviews the entries against the published award criteria and determines the shortlist.

The 2026 Awards also include the Carclew Max Fatchen Fellowship and the inaugural Carclew Young Writers Awards, creating new opportunities for young South Australian writers. The Carclew Young Writers Awards have recognised six young South Australians across two age categories, with a further three writers shortlisted for the Carclew Max Fatchen Fellowship.

Megan Berghuis, Director of the State Library of South Australia, said:

"Libraries and literature share a common purpose: connecting people with ideas, experiences and each other. The South Australian Literary Awards celebrate writers who enrich our cultural life through the power of story.

"This year's shortlist reflects the strength and diversity of contemporary Australian writing, bringing together established authors, emerging voices and works that invite readers to see the world from new perspectives.

"We're especially pleased to recognise the first group of young writers shortlisted in the inaugural Carclew Awards for Young Writers. These new awards create opportunities for young people to develop their craft, share their stories and be recognised alongside some of Australia's most accomplished writers."

Winners will be announced at the State Library of South Australia in November 2026.

The winner for the inaugural Friends of the State Library of South Australia Deane Miller Fellowship will also be announced at the Awards event in November 2026.

For more information visit http://saliteraryawards.com.au/

MEDIA ENQUIRIES:
Lucy Guster
Manager, Engagement & Marketing
State Library of South Australia
0409 091 829
Lucy.guster@sa.gov.au

2026 South Australian Literary Awards shortlist

National Awards for published works:

Fiction Award ($15,000)

- Randa Abdel-Fattah, *Discipline*
- Rhett Davis, *Arborescence*
- Michelle de Kretser, *Theory & Practice*
- Charlotte McConaghy, *Wild Dark Shore*
- Holden Sheppard, *King of Dirt*

Non-Fiction Award ($15,000)

- Adele Dumont, *The Pulling*
- Madison Griffiths, *Sweet Nothings*
- Natalie Harkin, *Apron-Sorrow/Sovereign-Tea*
- John Safran, *Squat*
- Micaela Sahhar, *Find Me at the Jaffa Gate: An Encyclopaedia of a Palestinian Family*

John Bray Poetry Award ($15,000)

- Evelyn Araluen, *The Rot*
- Maxine Beneba Clarke, *Beautiful Changelings*
- Eileen Chong, *We Speak of Flowers*
- Paul Dawson, *Lines of Desire*
- Alan Fyfe, *G-d, Sleep, and Chaos*

Young Adult Fiction Award ($15,000)

- Olivia De Zilva, *Eggshell*
- Sharon Kernot, *Birdy*
- Margot McGovern, *This Stays Between Us*

- Pip Smith, *The Pull of the Moon*

Children's Literature Award ($15,000)
- Sandy Bigna, *Little Bones*
- Julia Busuttil Nishimura and Myo Yim (illustrator), *Sundays Under the Lemon Tree*
- Peter Carnavas, *Leo and Ralph*
- Deborah Frenkel and Danny Snell, *The Truck Cat*
- Judith Rossell, *The Midwatch*

South Australian Awards and Fellowships

Barbara Hanrahan Fellowship ($15,000)
- Olivia De Zilva, *Paradise Court*
- Aimee Knight, *Heart of Felt*
- Carrie Miller, *King Neptune*

Tangkanungku Pintyanthi Fellowship ($15,000)
- Dominic Guerrera, *Pelican's Bill*
- Jared Thomas, *Uncle X-Box*

Jill Blewett Fellowship ($15,000)
- Mali Harkin-Noack, *Tell Me Something*
- Jamie Hornsby, *Python*
- Anthony Nocera, *Someone You Know*
- Sarah Peters, *Lost Socks & Polka Dots*

Wakefield Press Unpublished Manuscript Award ($15,000)
- Patrick Allington, *Former Princess Gracious*
- Jennifer Caruso, *Nala-alati Pinti Miyurna Pudni*
- Tom Gurn, *Pugholes*
- Carol Lefevre, *Disturbances*
- Lara Saunders, *Wash Dirt. Burn Water*

Carclew Max Fatchen Fellowship ($5,000)
- Asha Bates, *The Circling*
- Indirani Schocroft, *Limp Lilacs*
- Kate Strutton, *Honeycrisp*

Carclew Young Writers Award (8–12 years, $500 x 2 awards)
- Benjamin Brown, *Mad About Elements Gold: AU*
- Eusoph Rizanudin Jusary, *The Ngaltiga Chronicles: Frostfall*
- Paige Moore, *One Day to Live*

Carclew Young Writers Award (13–17 years, $750 x 2 awards)
- Lourdes Casi, *Like Ribbons in Your Hair*
- Katharina Ge, *Achilles, Come Down*

- Riley Stubberfield, *The Rainbow in the Dark*