

MEDIA RELEASE

Perpetual reveals 2017 longlist for the 60th anniversary of the Miles Franklin Literary Award

Tuesday, 2 May 2017

Sixty years since Patrick White was awarded £500 and proclaimed: “I am going to buy a hi-fi set and a kitchen stove,” after winning the inaugural Miles Franklin Literary Award, the longlist for 2017’s iteration was today announced by Perpetual. As trustee of the Award, one of Australia’s most prestigious literary prizes, Perpetual announced nine authors in competition for this year’s prize. The winning author will receive \$60,000, Australia’s largest literary purse.

The Miles Franklin Literary Award was established through the will of *My Brilliant Career* author, Stella Maria Sarah Miles Franklin. First awarded in 1957 to Mr White, the prize is awarded each year to the novel of the highest literary merit and presents Australian life in any of its phases.

The 2017 Miles Franklin Literary Award longlist is:

Author	Novel	Publisher
Steven Amsterdam	<i>The Easy Way Out</i>	Hachette Australia
Emily Maguire	<i>An Isolated Incident</i>	Picador Australia (Pan Macmillan Australia)
Mark O’Flynn	<i>The Last Days of Ava Langdon</i>	University of Queensland Press
Ryan O’Neill	<i>Their Brilliant Careers</i>	Black Inc.
Josephine Rowe	<i>A Loving, Faithful Animal</i>	University of Queensland Press
Philip Salom	<i>Waiting</i>	Puncher & Wattmann
Inga Simpson	<i>Where the Trees Were</i>	Hachette Australia
Kirsten Tranter	<i>Hold</i>	HarperCollins Publishers
Josephine Wilson	<i>Extinctions</i>	UWA Publishing

Speaking on behalf of the judging panel, State Library of NSW Mitchell Librarian, Richard Neville, said: “This year’s longlist, unusually, is nearly all contemporary and urban. The longlist is a reflective one, as novelists grapple with the creation and remembrance of history, the contests of urban relationships, and domestic complexity, trauma, and insight from the proximity of mortality.

“The diversity of these voices suggests the depth and strength of Australian writing, and its resistance to easy categorisation. Each of these novels brings a distinct voice to the Australian experience which refuses conventional description.

“Strong narratives drive these stories, which foreground an Australian perspective on questions exploring the making and understanding of identity through the writing of history, the constructions of media, the imminence of death, or the immediacy of family.”

Mr Neville is joined on the judging panel by *The Australian* journalist and columnist, Murray Waldren, Sydney-based bookseller, Lindy Jones, book critic Dr Melinda Harvey and Emeritus Professor, Susan Sheridan.

Perpetual’s National Manager of Philanthropy, Caitriona Fay, congratulated the longlisted authors.

“The longlist authors announced today join an esteemed group of some of Australia’s greatest ever novelists.

“Celebrating its 60th year, the Miles Franklin Literary Award is a tremendous example of how philanthropy can have such a positive impact on an entire industry. It’s also a prime example of how, with management, philanthropic donations can grow well beyond their original intentions. Perpetual is proud to support what is arguably the most important prize in the Australian literature community.”

There were 64 entries submitted for the 2017 Award. The shortlisted finalists will be announced on 18 June 2017 at the Annual Australian Booksellers Association (ABA) Conference in Melbourne. The winner announcement will be made in September.

Join the Miles Franklin conversation on Twitter with hashtag #milesfranklin or follow @_milesfranklin; Instagram with @milesfranklinliteraryaward; or Facebook at <https://www.facebook.com/MilesFranklinLiteraryAward/>

For further information about the Miles Franklin Literary Award, visit <http://www.milesfranklin.com.au/>

For further information or to request an interview, please contact:

Jane Morey
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0416 097 678
jane@moreymedia.com.au

For any enquiries on individual authors/novels please contact their publicist:

Publisher	Contact name	Email	Phone
Black Inc.	Ms Kate Nash	kate@blackincbooks.com	0406 997 647
Hachette Australia (<i>The Easy Way Out</i>) (<i>Where the Trees Were</i>)	Ms Jessica Skipper	jessica.skipper@hachette.com.au	(02) 8248 0883
HarperCollins Publishers	Ms Jaki Arthur	jaki.arthur@harpercollins.com.au	(02) 9952 5301 0403 901 252
Picador Australia (Pan Macmillan Australia)	Ms Tracey Cheetham	tracey.cheetham@macmillan.com.au	(02) 9285 9104
Puncher & Wattmann	Mr Ed Wright	ecwright@gmail.com	0408 788 765
University of Queensland Press (<i>The Last Days of Ava Langdon</i>) (<i>A Loving, Faithful Animal</i>)	Ms Harriet Swatman	harriets@uqp.uq.edu.au	(07) 3346 7932
UWA Publishing	Ms Charlotte Guest	charlotte.guest@uwa.edu.au	(08) 6488 3670 0424 344 002

About the Miles Franklin Literary Award

Perpetual is Trustee for the Miles Franklin Literary Award. The Award was established in 1954 by the estate of *My Brilliant Career* author Stella Maria Sarah Miles Franklin to celebrate the Australian character and creativity. It supports the betterment of Australian literature by each year recognising the novel of the highest literary merit which presents Australian Life in any of its phases. The 2016 winner of the prize was A S Patric for his novel *Black Rock White City*.

Copyright Agency's Cultural Fund has been a proud supporter of the Miles Franklin Award since 2004, granting more than half a million dollars to this premier Australian literary prize.

www.milesfranklin.com.au

About Perpetual Philanthropic Services

Perpetual is one of Australia's largest managers and distributors of philanthropic funds with \$2.4 billion in funds under advice (as at 30 June 2016). Perpetual is trustee for more than 1,000 [charitable trusts and endowments](#) and provides individuals and families with advice on establishing charitable foundations and structured giving programs. Perpetual also assists charities and not-for-profit organisations with [investment advice and management](#).

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Steven Amsterdam

The Easy Way Out

BIOGRAPHY:

Steven Amsterdam is the award-winning author of *Things We Didn't See Coming* (winner of the Age Book Of The Year, shortlisted for the NSW Premier's Award for Fiction and longlisted for The Guardian First Book Award) and *What The Family Needed* (AWW Great Read and longlisted for the Dublin IMPAC literary award). He lives in Melbourne with his partner where he works as a palliative care nurse.

SYNOPSIS:

If you could help someone in pain, would you?

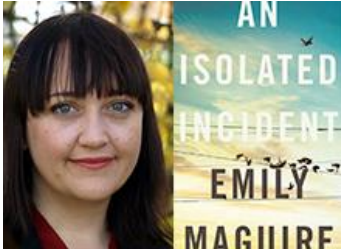
Evan is a nurse, a suicide assistant. His job is legal . . . just. He's the one at the hospital who hands out the last drink to those who ask for it.

Evan's friends don't know what he does during the day. His mother, Viv, doesn't know what he's up to at night. And his supervisor suspects there may be trouble ahead.

As he helps one patient after another die, Evan pushes against legality, his own morality and the best intentions of those closest to him, discovering that his own path will be neither quick nor painless.

He knows what he has to do.

In this powerful novel, award-winning author Steven Amsterdam challenges readers to face the most taboo and heartbreaking of dilemmas. Would you help someone end their life?



Emily Maguire

An Isolated Incident

BIOGRAPHY:

Emily Maguire is the author of the novels *Taming the Beast* (2004), an international bestseller and finalist for the Dylan Thomas Prize and the Kathleen Mitchell Award, *The Gospel According to Luke* (2006), *Smoke in the Room* (2009) and *Fishing for Tigers* (2012).

Emily enjoys a high-profile in Australia as a social commentator, with her articles and essays on sex, religion and culture having been published in newspapers and journals including The Sydney Morning Herald, The Financial Review, The Big Issue and The Griffith Review.

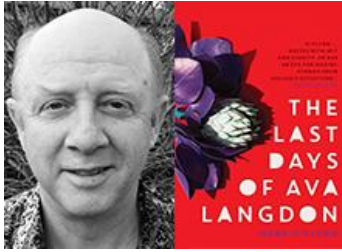
SYNOPSIS:

When 25-year-old Bella Michaels is brutally murdered in the small town of Strathdee, the community is stunned and a media storm descends.

Unwillingly thrust into the eye of that storm is Bella's beloved older sister, Chris, a barmaid at the local pub, whose apparent easy going nature conceals hard-won wisdom and the kind of street-smarts only experience can bring.

As Chris is plunged into despair and searches for answers, reasons, explanation – anything – that could make even the smallest sense of Bella's death, her ex-husband, friends and neighbours do their best to support her. But as the days tick by with no arrest, Chris's suspicion of those around her grows.

An Isolated Incident is a psychological thriller about everyday violence, the media's obsession with pretty dead girls, the grip of grief and the myth of closure, and the difficulties of knowing the difference between a ghost and a memory, between a monster and a man.



Mark O'Flynn

The Last Days of Ava Langdon

BIOGRAPHY:

Mark O'Flynn's fiction and poetry have been widely published in Australian journals as well as overseas. His novels include *Grassdogs* and *The Forgotten World*, and he has published five collections of poems, most recently *The Soup's Song*. He has also published the comic memoir *False Start* and a collection of short fiction, *White Light*. He lives in the Blue Mountains.

Author photo credit: Barbara Fitzgerald

SYNOPSIS:

Ava Langdon is often not herself. Having fled her early life in New Zealand and endured the loss of her children, she now lives as a recluse in the Blue Mountains. Regarded by locals as a colourful eccentric, she dresses in men's clothes and fearlessly pursues her artistic path.

All that matters to Ava is her writing. Words offer beauty and a sense of possibility when so much has been lost. But can they offer her redemption in her last days?

Poetic, poignant, and at times bitingly funny, *The Last Days of Ava Langdon* takes us into the mind of a true maverick.



Ryan O'Neill

Their Brilliant Careers

BIOGRAPHY:

Ryan O'Neill is the author of *The Weight of a Human Heart* and *Their Brilliant Careers*.

He was born in Glasgow in 1975 and has lived in Africa, Europe and Asia before settling in Newcastle, Australia, with his wife and two daughters. His fiction has appeared in *The Best Australian Stories*, *The Sleepers Almanac*, *Meanjin*, *New Australian Stories*, *Wet Ink*, *Etchings* and *Westerly*. His work has won the Hal Porter and Roland Robinson awards and been shortlisted for the Queensland Premier's Steele Rudd Award and the Age Short-Story Prize. He teaches at the University of Newcastle.

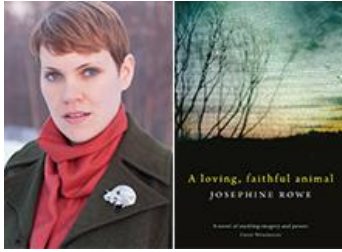
Author photo credit: Rachel Saunders

SYNOPSIS:

Absurd, original and highly addictive . . .

In *Their Brilliant Careers*, Ryan O'Neill has written a hilarious novel in the guise of sixteen biographies of (invented) Australian writers. Meet Rachel Deverall, who discovered the secret source of the great literature of our time – and paid a terrible price for her discovery. Meet Rand Washington, hugely popular sci-fi author (of *Whiteman of Cor*) and inveterate racist. Meet Addison Tiller, master of the bush yarn, “The Chekhov of Coolabah”, who never travelled outside Sydney.

Their Brilliant Careers is a playful set of stories, linked in many ways, which together form a memorable whole. A wonderful comic tapestry of the writing life, this unpredictable and intriguing work takes Australian writing in a whole new direction . . .



Josephine Rowe

A Loving, Faithful Animal

BIOGRAPHY:

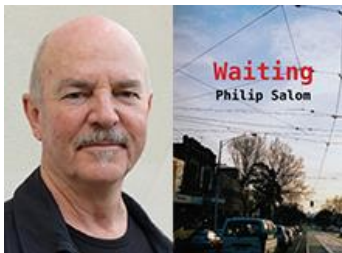
Josephine Rowe was born in 1984 in Rockhampton, and grew up in Melbourne. She is the author of two short story collections and a novel, *A Loving, Faithful Animal*. Her writing has appeared in *McSweeney's Quarterly Concern*, *Best Australian Stories*, *Best Australian Poems*, *Meanjin*, *The Monthly*, *Harvard Review* and elsewhere, and her story 'Glisk' was awarded the 2016 ABR Elizabeth Jolley Short Story Prize. Rowe holds fellowships from the International Writing Program at The University of Iowa, and the Wallace Stegner Program at Stanford University. She currently lives in Tasmania.

Author photo credit: Patrick Pittman

SYNOPSIS:

It is New Year's Eve, 1990, and Ru's father, Jack, has disappeared in the wake of a savage incident. A Vietnam War veteran, he has long been an erratic presence at home, where Ru's allegiances are divided amongst those she loves. Her sister, Lani, seeks to escape the claustrophobia of small-town life, while their mother, Evelyn, takes refuge in a more vibrant past. And then there's Les, Jack's inscrutable brother, whose loyalties are also torn.

A Loving, Faithful Animal is an incandescent portrait of one family searching for what may yet be redeemable from the ruins of war. Tender, brutal, and heart-stopping in its beauty, this is a hypnotic novel by one of Australia's brightest talents.



Philip Salom

Waiting

BIOGRAPHY:

Philip Salom is a poet and novelist originally from Western Australia. Several of his collections have won national and international acclaim, including the Commonwealth Poetry prize in London, and his two previous novels between them have won the WA Premier's Prize, a Canberra Times Book of the Year, and shortlisting for the ASL Gold Medal. His recent poetry collection *Alterworld* is a trilogy of his earlier major works *Sky Poems* and *The Well Mouth* and the new *Alterworld*. He was awarded the Christopher Brennan award for "poetry of sustained quality and distinction." His novel *Waiting* is set in North Melbourne, where he now lives.

SYNOPSIS:

Waiting is a story of two odd couples in prose as marvellously idiosyncratic as its characters. Big is a hefty cross-dresser and Little is little. Both are long used to the routines of boarding house life in the inner suburbs of Melbourne, but Little, with the prospect of an inheritance, is beginning to indulge in the great Australian dream, which has Big worried. Little's cousin, Angus, is a solitary man who designs lake-scapes for city councils, and strangely constructed fireproof houses for the bushfire zone. A handy man, he meets Jasmin an academic who races in her ideas as much as in her runners. Her head is set on publishing books on semiotics and her heart is turned towards her stalled personal life. All four are waiting, for something if not someone.



Inga Simpson

Where the Trees Were

BIOGRAPHY:

Inga Simpson began her career as a professional writer for government before gaining a PhD in creative writing. In 2011, she took part in the Queensland Writers Centre Manuscript Development Program and, as a result, Hachette Australia published her first novel, *Mr Wigg*, in 2013. *Nest*, Inga's second novel, was published in 2014, before being longlisted for the Miles Franklin Literary Award and the Stella Prize, and shortlisted for the ALS Gold Medal. Inga's third novel, the acclaimed *Where the Trees Were*, was published in 2016. Inga won the final Eric Rolls Prize for her nature writing and recently completed a second PhD, exploring the history of Australian nature writers. Inga's memoir about her love of Australian nature and life with trees, *Understory*, will be published in June 2017.

SYNOPSIS:

A beautiful new novel about the innocence of childhood and the scars that stay with you for life, from the award winning author of MR WIGG and NEST.

'All in?' Kieran pulled me up, and the others followed. We gathered around the bigger tree. No one asked Matty - he just reached up and put his right hand on the trunk with ours.

Kieran cleared his throat. 'We swear, on these trees, to always be friends. To protect each other - and this place.'

Finding those carved trees forged a bond between Jay and her four childhood friends and opened their eyes to a wider world. But their attempt to protect the grove ends in disaster, and that one day on the river changes their lives forever.

Seventeen years later, Jay finally has her chance to make amends. But at what cost? Not every wrong can be put right, but sometimes looking the other way is no longer an option.



Kirsten Tranter

Hold

BIOGRAPHY:

Kirsten Tranter grew up in Sydney and studied at the University of Sydney. She now lives in the San Francisco Bay Area. Kirsten's first novel, *The Legacy*, was published to international critical acclaim in 2010. It was selected as a Kirkus Reviews Best Debut Novel of the year and was shortlisted for the ABIA Literary Fiction award, the ALS Gold Medal, the Indie Debut Fiction award, and longlisted for the Miles Franklin award. Her second novel, *A Common Loss*, was released in 2012 and her third novel, *Hold*, in 2016. Kirsten's novels have been translated into Spanish, Chinese, and Polish.

Author photo credit: Danny Fisher

SYNOPSIS:

A haunting, hypnotic and enticing novel of grief and desire, by one of Australia's finest, most assured novelists.

Three years ago, Shelley's lover, Conrad, died in a surfing accident. Now, still in a state of subdued grief, Shelley has just moved into an old Victorian terrace in Paddington with David, her new partner, trying for a new beginning. At home one morning, Shelley discovers a door to a small intriguing room, which is not on the plans. There is a window, a fireplace and a beautiful chandelier. But nothing else.

When Shelley meets a man who seems to be Conrad's uncanny double, the mysterious room begins to dominate her world, becoming a focus for her secret fantasies and fears, offering an escape which also threatens to become a trap. A waking dream of a novel, *HOLD* is spellbinding, sensual and unsettling.



Josephine Wilson

Extinctions

BIOGRAPHY:

Josephine Wilson is a Perth-based writer. Her writing career began in the area of performance. Her early works included *The Geography of Haunted Place*, with Erin Hefferon, and *Customs*. Her first novel was *Cusp*, (UWA Publishing, 2005). Josephine has lectured and taught in the tertiary sector. She is the busy parent of two children and works as a sessional staff member at Curtin University, where she teaches in the Humanities Honours Program, in Creative Writing and in Art and Design history. She completed her Masters of Philosophy at Queensland University and her PhD at UWA. Her novel *Extinctions* (UWA Publishing, 2016) was the winner of the inaugural Dorothy Hewett Prize.

SYNOPSIS:

He hated the word 'retirement', but not as much as he hated the word 'village', as if ageing made you a peasant or a fool. Herein lives the village idiot.

Professor Frederick Lothian, retired engineer, world expert on concrete and connoisseur of modernist design, has quarantined himself from life by moving to a retirement village. His wife, Martha, is dead and his two adult children are lost to him in their own ways. Surrounded and obstructed by the debris of his life – objects he has collected over many years and tells himself he is keeping for his daughter – he is determined to be miserable, but is tired of his existence and of the life he has chosen.

When a series of unfortunate incidents forces him and his neighbour, Jan, together, he begins to realise the damage done by the accumulation of a lifetime's secrets and lies, and to comprehend his own shortcomings. Finally, Frederick Lothian has the opportunity to build something meaningful for the ones he loves.

Humorous, poignant and galvanising by turns, *Extinctions* is a novel about all kinds of extinction – natural, racial, national and personal – and what we can do to prevent them.
