

Perpetual announces Longlist for prestigious Miles Franklin Literary Award

The trustee of Australia’s most prestigious literary award, Perpetual, has today announced ten talented authors who have been included in the 2020 Longlist for the Miles Franklin Literary Award.

The Miles Franklin Literary Award was established by prolific author and feminist Stella Maria Sarah Miles Franklin, now best known for her first novel *My Brilliant Career*. First presented in 1957, the Award celebrates novels of the highest literary merit that tell stories about Australian life. Winning authors also receive a prize of \$60,000. The Award remains Australia’s most prestigious and valued literary award.

The 2020 Miles Franklin Literary Award Longlist is:

Author	Novel	Publisher
Tony Birch	<i>The White Girl</i>	University of Queensland Press
Melanie Cheng	<i>Room for a Stranger</i>	Text Publishing
Peggy Frew	<i>Islands</i>	Allen & Unwin
John Hughes	<i>No One</i>	UWA Publishing
Anna Krien	<i>Act of Grace</i>	Black Inc.
Gerald Murnane	<i>A Season on Earth</i>	Text Publishing
Philip Salom	<i>The Returns</i>	Transit Lounge
Carrie Tiffany	<i>Exploded View</i>	Text Publishing
Tara June Winch	<i>The Yield</i>	Penguin Random House
Charlotte Wood	<i>The Weekend</i>	Allen & Unwin

“This year’s Miles Franklin longlist is a mix of established and newer Australian authors. Their novels give voice to a diversity of Australian characters whose common feature is their location on the margins, whether geographical, familial or societal. They explore the ripples and repercussions of childhood trauma, the healing power of friendship, and the unshakeable presence of the past,” said Richard Neville, State Library of NSW Mitchell Librarian.

The judging panel comprises Richard Neville – Mitchell Librarian of the State Library of NSW and Chair, Murray Waldren – *The Australian* journalist and author, book critic Dr Melinda Harvey, Sydney-based bookseller Lindy Jones, and author and literary critic Dr Bernadette Brennan.

Perpetual’s General Manager of Community & Social Investment, Caitriona Fay, congratulated the longlisted authors on their achievement.

“Now, more than ever, we recognise the exceptional contribution these writers make to Australian cultural life and the importance of supporting them to tell our stories. As Trustee of the Miles Franklin Literary Award, Perpetual is proud to support the literary community through this enduring philanthropic legacy and we commend the longlisted authors,” said Ms Fay.

Last year, the Miles Franklin Literary Award was awarded to Melissa Lucashenko for her novel, *Too Much Lip* (2019).

The shortlisted finalists will be revealed on 17 June 2020 and the winner announced 16 July 2020.

ENDS

For further information about the Miles Franklin Literary Award:

<http://www.milesfranklin.com.au/>

For enquiries or to request interviews, please contact:

Jane Morey

Morey Media

0416 097 678

jane@moreymedia.com.au

Join the Miles Franklin conversation on social media:

Twitter: @_milesfranklin

Instagram: @milesfranklinliteraryaward

Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/MilesFranklinLiteraryAward>

#milesfranklin

About the Miles Franklin Literary Award www.milesfranklin.com.au

Perpetual is the 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. Since being established, the Award has distributed over \$1.2 million in philanthropic funds to authors. Those wishing to be part of the Miles Franklin legacy can donate to the [Franklin Support Fund](#) to become a friend of the Award. Please visit the website for further details.

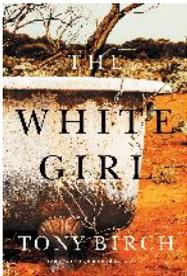
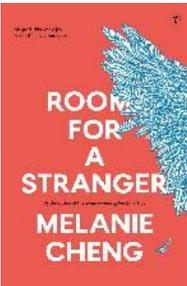
Copyright Agency's Cultural Fund is a long-time supporter of the Miles Franklin Literary Award, providing \$5,000 to each of the finalists and granting more than half a million dollars to this premier Australian literary prize since 2004.

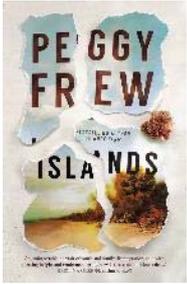
About Perpetual Philanthropic Services

Perpetual is one of Australia's largest managers of philanthropic funds, with \$2.9 billion in funds under advice for charitable trusts and endowment funds as at 30 June 2019. Perpetual is trustee for approximately 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](#).

Perpetual's Philanthropic Services and advice are provided by Perpetual Trustee Company Limited (PTCo), ABN 42 000 001 007, AFSL 236643. This publication has been prepared by PTCo and contains information contributed by third parties. It contains general information only and is not intended to provide advice or take into account personal objectives, financial situation or needs. The information is believed to be accurate at the time of compilation and is provided by PTCo in good faith. To the extent permitted by law, no liability is accepted for any loss or damage as a result of any reliance on this information. PTCo does not warrant the accuracy or completeness of any information included in this document which was contributed by a third party.

Background Information – 2020 Miles Franklin Literary Award Longlist

 The book cover for 'The White Girl' by Tony Birch features a photograph of a rural landscape with a tree and a building in the background. The title 'WHITE GIRL' is written in large, white, serif capital letters across the middle, and the author's name 'TONY BIRCH' is at the bottom in smaller white capital letters.	<p>Tony Birch <i>The White Girl</i></p> <p>BIOGRAPHY: Tony Birch is the author of three novels: the bestselling <i>The White Girl</i>, winner of the NSW Premier’s Award for Indigenous Writing; <i>Ghost River</i>, winner of the Victorian Premier’s Literary Award for Indigenous Writing; and <i>Blood</i>, which was shortlisted for the Miles Franklin Award. He is also the author of <i>Shadowboxing</i> and three short story collections, <i>Father’s Day</i>, <i>The Promise</i> and <i>Common People</i>. In 2017 he was awarded the Patrick White Literary Award. Tony is a frequent contributor to ABC local and national radio, a regular guest at writers’ festivals, and a climate justice campaigner. He lives in Melbourne.</p> <p>SYNOPSIS: Odette Brown has lived her whole life on the fringes of a small country town. After her daughter disappeared and left her with her granddaughter Sissy to raise on her own, Odette has managed to stay under the radar of the welfare authorities who are removing fair-skinned Aboriginal children from their families. When a new policeman arrives in town, determined to enforce the law, Odette must risk everything to save Sissy and protect everything she loves.</p> <p>In <i>The White Girl</i>, Miles-Franklin-shortlisted author Tony Birch shines a spotlight on the 1960s and the devastating government policy of taking Indigenous children from their families.</p>
 The book cover for 'Room for a Stranger' by Melanie Cheng has a solid red background. The title 'ROOM FOR A STRANGER' is written in white, sans-serif capital letters, with 'A' on a separate line. The author's name 'MELANIE CHENG' is at the bottom in white, sans-serif capital letters. A stylized, blue, textured map of Australia is on the right side.	<p>Melanie Cheng <i>Room for a Stranger</i></p> <p>BIOGRAPHY: Melanie Cheng is a writer and general practitioner. She was born in Adelaide, grew up in Hong Kong and now lives in Melbourne. Her debut collection of short stories, <i>Australia Day</i>, won the Victorian Premier’s Literary Award for an Unpublished Manuscript in 2016 and the Victorian Premier’s Literary Award for Fiction in 2018. <i>Room for a Stranger</i> is her first novel.</p> <p>SYNOPSIS: Since her sister died, Meg has been on her own. She doesn’t mind, not really—not with Atticus, her African grey parrot, to keep her company—but after her house is broken into by a knife-wielding intruder, she decides it might be good to have some company after all.</p> <p>Andy’s father has lost his job, and his parents’ savings are barely enough to cover his tuition. If he wants to graduate, he’ll have to give up his student flat and find a homeshare. Living with an elderly Australian woman is harder than he’d expected, though, and soon he’s struggling with more than his studies.</p>



Peggy Frew
Islands

BIOGRAPHY:

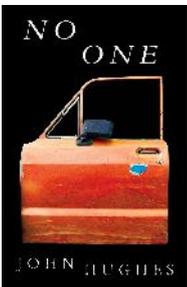
Peggy Frew's first novel, *House of Sticks*, won the Victorian Premier's Literary Award for an Unpublished Manuscript by an Emerging Victorian Writer, and was shortlisted for the UTS Glenda Adams Prize for New Writing. *Hope Farm*, her second novel, won the Barbara Jefferis Award, was shortlisted for the Stella Prize and the Miles Franklin Literary Award, and longlisted for the International Dublin Literary Award. She has been published in *New Australian Stories 2*, *Kill Your Darlings*, *Meanjin* and *The Big Issue*. Peggy is also a member of the critically acclaimed and award-winning Melbourne band Art of Fighting. *Islands* is her third novel.

SYNOPSIS:

A stunning literary novel from the author of the Stella Prize shortlisted *Hope Farm*.

Helen and John are too preoccupied with making a mess of their marriage to notice the quiet ways in which their daughters are suffering. Junie grows up brittle and defensive, Anna difficult and rebellious. When fifteen-year-old Anna fails to come home one night, her mother's not too worried; Anna's taken off before but always returned. Helen waits three days to report her disappearance. But this time Anna doesn't come back ...

A spellbinding novel in the tradition of Helen Garner, Charlotte Wood and Georgia Blain, *Islands* is a riveting and brilliant portrait of a family in crisis by the breathtakingly talented author of *House of Sticks* and *Hope Farm*.



John Hughes
No One

BIOGRAPHY:

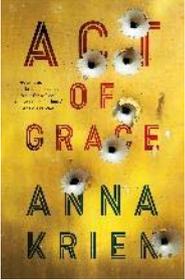
John Hughes' first book, *The Idea of Home*, won the 2005 NSW Premier's Award for Non-Fiction, the 2006 National Biography Award, and was the National Year of Reading 'Our Story' winner for NSW in 2012. His second book, *Someone Else: Fictional Essays*, won the Adelaide 2008 Festival Award for Innovation and the 2008 Queensland Premier's Award for Short Stories, and was listed for the inaugural 2009 Warwick International Prize for Writing. His third book, *The Remnants*, was published in 2012 by UWAP, which also published *The Garden of Sorrows* in 2013 and *Asylum* in 2016. *The Garden of Sorrows* was translated by Li Yao and published in China by the Foreign Language Teaching and Research Publishing Company in 2016, and republished by Azoth Books in Taiwan, Hong Kong and Macau, also in 2016. John has published widely in journals and magazines throughout Australia and overseas and is Librarian at Sydney Grammar School.

SYNOPSIS:

In the ghost hours of a Monday morning a man feels a dull thud against the side of his car near the entrance to Redfern Station. He doesn't stop immediately. By the time he returns to the scene, the road is empty, but there is a dent in the car, high up on the passenger door, and what looks like blood. Only a man could have made such a dent, he thinks. For some reason he looks up, though he knows no one is there. Has he hit someone, and if so, where is the victim? So begins a story that takes us to the heart of contemporary Australia's festering relationship to its indigenous past. A story about guilt for acts which precede us, crimes we are not sure we have

committed, crimes gone on so long they now seem criminal-less.

Part crime novel, part road movie, part love story, No One takes its protagonist to the very heart of a nation where non-existence is the true existence, where crimes cannot be resolved and guilt cannot be redeemed, and no one knows what to do with ghosts that are real.



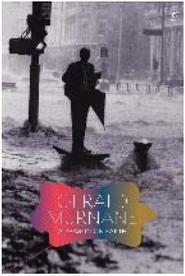
Anna Krien
Act of Grace

BIOGRAPHY:
Anna Krien is the author of the award-winning *Night Games* and *Into the Woods*, as well as two Quarterly Essays, *Us and Them* and *The Long Goodbye*. Anna’s writing has been published in *The Monthly*, *The Age*, *Best Australian Essays*, *Best Australian Stories* and *The Big Issue*. In 2014 she won the UK William Hill Sports Book of the Year Award, and 2018 she received a Sidney Myer Fellowship. *Act of Grace*, her debut novel, was shortlisted for the 2020 Victorian Premier’s Literary Awards.

SYNOPSIS:
An electrifying story of fear and sacrifice, and what people will do to outrun the shadows.

Iraqi aspiring pianist Nasim falls from favour with Saddam Hussein and his psychopathic son, triggering a perilous search for safety. In Australia, decades later, Gerry is in fear of his tyrannical father, Toohey, who has returned from the Iraq War bearing the physical and psychological scars of conflict. Meanwhile, Robbie is dealing with her own father’s dementia when the past enters the present. These characters’ worlds intertwine in a brilliant narrative of guilt and reckoning, trauma and survival.

Crossing the frontiers of war, protest and reconciliation, *Act of Grace* is a meditation on inheritance: the damage that one generation passes on to the next, and the potential for transformation.



Gerald Murnane
A Season on Earth

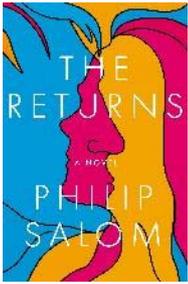
BIOGRAPHY:
Gerald Murnane was born in Melbourne in 1939. He is the author of thirteen works of fiction, including the internationally acclaimed novel *The Plains* and most recently *A Season on Earth*, as well as a memoir, a collection of essays and a volume of poetry. He has won the Patrick White Award, the Melbourne Prize for Literature, an Adelaide Festival Award, a Victorian Premier’s Literary Award and, for *Border Districts*, a Prime Minister’s Literary Award. Murnane lives in Goroke, in western Victoria.

SYNOPSIS:
What he had been searching for was not the perfect religious order but the perfect landscape...From that moment on he was a poet in search of his ideal landscape.

Lost to the world for more than four decades, *A Season on Earth* is the essential link between two acknowledged masterpieces by Gerald Murnane: the lyrical account of boyhood in his debut novel, *Tamarisk Row*, and the revolutionary prose of *The Plains*. *A Season on Earth* is Murnane’s second novel as it was intended to be, bringing together all of its four sections—the

first two of which were published as *A Lifetime on Clouds* in 1976 and the last two of which have never been in print. A hilarious tale of a lustful teenager in 1950s Melbourne, *A Lifetime on Clouds* has been considered an outlier in Murnane's fiction. That is because, as Murnane writes in his foreword, it is 'only half a book and Adrian Sherd only half a character'.

Here, at last, is sixteen-year-old Adrian's journey in full, from fantasies about orgies with American film stars and idealised visions of suburban marital bliss to his struggles as a Catholic novice, and finally a burgeoning sense of the boundless imaginative possibilities to be found in literature and landscapes. Adrian Sherd is one of the great comic creations in Australian writing, and *A Season on Earth* is a revelatory portrait of the artist as a young man.

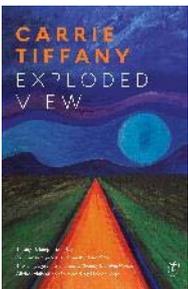


Philip Salom
The Returns

BIOGRAPHY:
Philip Salom lives in North Melbourne, Australia. In 2017 his novel *Waiting* was shortlisted for the Miles Franklin Award, the Prime Minister's Award and the Victorian Premiers Prize. His novel *Toccata and Rain* was shortlisted for the ALS Gold Medal and the WA Premiers Prize for Fiction, and *Playback* won the WA Premiers Prize for Fiction. His poetry books have twice won: the Commonwealth Poetry Book Prize in London and the Western Australia Premier's Prize for Poetry. Philip was born in Bunbury, Western Australia, and raised on a dairy farm in Brunswick Junction. After several years working in farming districts he went to University in Perth. Over the years he has lectured in Creative Writing at the Universities of Murdoch, Curtin, Deakin and the University of Melbourne.

SYNOPSIS:
Elizabeth posts a 'room for rent' notice in Trevor's bookshop and is caught off-guard when Trevor answers the advertisement himself. She expected a young student not a middle-aged bookseller whose marriage has fallen apart. But Trevor is attracted to Elizabeth's house because of the empty shed in her backyard, the perfect space for him to revive the artistic career he abandoned years earlier. The face-blind, EH Holden-driving Elizabeth is a solitary and feisty book editor, and she accepts him, on probation...

Years earlier Elizabeth's mother had been a strikingly wilful Rajneeshee, renouncing the world – and her family – but now she is the ageing matriarch, increasingly unwell and become, of all things, a hoarder. Trevor's father has been missing, assumed dead, for thirty years, until he suddenly re-appears in Trevor's bookshop demanding money. *The Returns* is a story of odd couples and eccentric encounters and of life's many ironies.



Carrie Tiffany
Exploded View

BIOGRAPHY:
Carrie Tiffany was born in West Yorkshire and grew up in Western Australia. She spent her early twenties working as a park ranger in Central Australia. Her first novel, *Everyman's Rules for Scientific Living* (2005), was shortlisted for the Orange Prize, the Miles Franklin Literary Award, the Guardian First Book Award and the Commonwealth Writers' Prize, and won the Dobbie Award and the WA Premier's Award for Fiction. *Mateship with Birds* (2011) was also shortlisted for many awards and won the inaugural Stella Prize and the Christina Stead Prize for Fiction in the NSW Premier's Literary Awards. Carrie's latest novel *Exploded View* (2019) won the University of Queensland

	<p>Fiction Book Award in the 2019 Queensland Literary Awards. She lives and works in Melbourne.</p> <p>SYNOPSIS: <i>Must a girl always be a part? How can she become a whole?</i></p> <p>In the late 1970s, in the forgotten outer suburbs, a girl has her hands in the engine of a Holden. A sinister new man has joined the family. He works as a mechanic and operates an unlicensed repair shop at the back of their block. The family is under threat. The girl reads the Holden workshop manual for guidance. She resists the man with silence, then with sabotage. She fights him at the place where she believes his heart lives – in the engine of the car.</p> <p>Spare, poetic and intensely visual, <i>Exploded View</i> is the powerful new novel from the author of <i>Everyman's Rules for Scientific Living</i> and <i>Mateship with Birds</i> – one of Australia's most celebrated writers and winner of the inaugural Stella Prize.</p>
	<p>Tara June Winch <i>The Yield</i></p> <p>BIOGRAPHY: Tara June Winch is a Wiradjuri author, born in Australia in 1983 and based in France. Her first novel, <i>Swallow the Air</i> was critically acclaimed. She was named a Sydney Morning Herald Best Young Australian Novelist, and has won numerous literary awards for <i>Swallow the Air</i>. A 10th Anniversary edition was published in 2016. In 2008, Tara was mentored by Nobel Prize winner Wole Soyinka as part of the prestigious Rolex Mentor and Protégé Arts Initiative. Her second book, the story collection <i>After the Carnage</i> was published in 2016. <i>After the Carnage</i> was longlisted for the Victorian Premier's Literary Award for fiction, shortlisted for the 2017 NSW Premier's Christina Stead prize for Fiction and the Queensland Literary Award for a collection. She wrote the Indigenous dance documentary, <i>Carriberrie</i>, which screened at the 71st Cannes Film Festival and toured internationally. <i>The Yield</i> won the Christina Stead Prize for Fiction, the People's Choice Award and Book of the Year at the 2020 NSW Premier's Literary Awards.</p> <p>SYNOPSIS: The <i>yield</i> in English is the reaping, the things that man can take from the land. In the language of the Wiradjuri <i>yield</i> is the things you give to, the movement, the space between things: <i>baayanha</i>.</p> <p>Knowing that he will soon die, Albert 'Poppy' Gondiwindi takes pen to paper. His life has been spent on the banks of the Murrumbidgee River at Prosperous House, on Massacre Plains. Albert is determined to pass on the language of his people and everything that was ever remembered. He finds the words on the wind. August Gondiwindi has been living on the other side of the world for ten years when she learns of her grandfather's death. She returns home for his burial, wracked with grief and burdened with all she tried to leave behind. Her homecoming is bittersweet as she confronts the love of her kin and news that Prosperous is to be repossessed by a mining company. Determined to make amends she endeavours to save their land – a quest that leads her to the voice of her grandfather and into the past, the stories of her people, the secrets of the river.</p> <p>Profoundly moving and exquisitely written, Tara June Winch's <i>The Yield</i> is the story of a people and a culture dispossessed. But it is as much a celebration of what was and what endures, and a powerful reclaiming of Indigenous</p>

language, storytelling and identity.



Charlotte Wood
The Weekend

BIOGRAPHY:

Charlotte Wood has been described as 'one of our most original and provocative writers'. She is the author of six novels and two books of non-fiction. Her bestselling novel, *The Natural Way of Things*, won the 2016 Stella Prize, the Indie Book of the Year and Indie Book Award for Fiction, was joint winner of the Prime Minister's Literary Award for Fiction, and was published throughout Europe, the United Kingdom and North America. She has been twice shortlisted for the Miles Franklin Literary Award, as well as many others for this and previous works. Her non-fiction books include *The Writer's Room*, a collection of interviews with authors about the creative process, and *Love & Hunger*, a book about cooking. She lives in Sydney with her husband.

SYNOPSIS:

The brilliant new novel from Charlotte Wood, acclaimed author of *The Natural Way of Things*. Four older women have a lifelong friendship of the best kind: loving, practical, frank and steadfast. But when Sylvie dies, the ground shifts dangerously for the remaining three. Can they survive together without her? They are Jude, a once-famous restaurateur, Wendy, an acclaimed public intellectual, and Adele, a renowned actress now mostly out of work. Struggling to recall exactly why they've remained close all these years, the grieving women gather for Christmas at Sylvie's old beach house - not for festivities, but to clean the place out before it is sold. Without Sylvie to maintain the group's delicate equilibrium, frustrations build and painful memories press in. Fraying tempers, an elderly dog, unwelcome guests and too much wine collide in a storm that brings long-buried hurts to the surface - and threatens to sweep away their friendship for good.

The Weekend explores growing old and growing up, and what happens when we're forced to uncover the lies we tell ourselves. Sharply observed and excruciatingly funny, this is a jewel of a book: a celebration of tenderness and friendship that is nothing short of a masterpiece.