

The Australian Centre Literary Awards 2012

School of Historical and Philosophical Studies



THE UNIVERSITY OF
MELBOURNE

JUDGES' REPORT

KATE CHALLIS RAKA AWARD

Prize for Indigenous creative artists offered through the generosity of Bernard Smith. The 2012 Kate Challis RAKA Award is for an Indigenous playwright. Award value: \$25,000.

The judging panel for the 2012 Kate Challis RAKA Award was impressed by the outstanding quality of several scripts, indicative of the innovative staging and reception of the performance of these works across Australia over the last five years. A dominant theme expressed through these works was articulated in the words of one of our judges, Don Heathcote, who commented that while our winning entry told a particularly harrowing story, it was also a fine demonstration of the human spirit. What these playwrights convey as a collective is that while Indigenous communities have had to deal with extreme adversity, the response to this situation is expressed through courage and ingenuity.

WINNER

Dallas Winmar for *Yibiyung*.

COMMENDED

Tony Briggs for *The Sapphires*.

JUDGES

Tony Birch (Chair), Hilary Glow, Don Heathcote, Larissa Behrendt and Mammad Aidani.

THE 2013 PETER BLAZEY FELLOWSHIP

Fellowship to honour the memory of Peter Blazezy for a work-in-progress in the non-fiction fields of biography, autobiography and life-writing. Award value: \$15,000 plus residency at The Australian Centre.

Submissions for the 2013 Peter Blazezy Fellowship demonstrated a vigorous interest in life writing. Many works explored little-known aspects of Australian life, ranging from biographies of scholars, local community figures and family, to memoirs of childhood and young-adult experience. From such a high quality field, Kim Mahood's study of her experiences working with Aboriginal communities in mapping the remote desert country where she grew up was exceptional in the precision and perception of its writing. Mahood's wonderful evocation of place and the complex personalities of her friends is underpinned by a subversive intelligence. Her clear-sighted journey across the cultural fault-lines of her past also resonates with a contemporary political edge, deepening our understandings of identity and the human condition.

WINNER

Kim Mahood for *Position Doubtful*.

JUDGES

Kate Darian-Smith (Chair), Mark McKenna, Tim Herbert and Helen Ennis.

DJ 'DINNY' O'HEARN MEMORIAL FELLOWSHIP

Fellowship to honour the memory of Dinny O'Hearn for emerging writers of fiction, poetry or drama. Award value: \$5,000 plus residency at The Australian Centre.

There was both a large and a strong field of writers applying for the 2013 DJ 'Dinny' O'Hearn Memorial Fellowship, in fiction, verse and even in dramatic script. After much reading and discussion the judges agreed that the Fellowship should go to Amy Barker, of South Melbourne, for a developing novel that explores the Port Arthur massacre as a national and individual traumascape. Her narrative is deeply inward and managed with a keen eye. Special commendation is given to Janine Mikosza for her strong and pungent short stories, to Joanne Riccioni for her novel-in-progress tracing the cultural interactions between English people and Italian immigrants after World War Two, and to Julia Prendergast's stories that realise the full dramatic potential in the colloquial language of everyday.

WINNER

Amy Barker for *Paradise Earth*.

COMMENDED

Julia Prendergast for *The Earth Does Not Get Fat*, Janine Mikosza for *Monkey Boy* and Joanne Riccioni for *The Onorati*.

JUDGES

Chris Wallace-Crabbe (Chair), Delia Falconer, Lisa Gorton and Nick Sharman.