

Australian Centre Literary Awards 2016

Judges Report

School of Culture and Communication



Kate Challis RAKA Award

This award for Indigenous creative artists has been made available through the generosity of Bernard Smith. The 2016 Kate Challis RAKA Award is for an Indigenous writer. Award value: \$20,000.

Alexis Wright for *The Swan Book*, 2013

The Swan Book is a sprawling, magnificent achievement, a remarkable imaginative vision of Australia as it was and is, and will be. Set at some point in the future, in a world utterly changed by global warming, war and the global movement of people, it charts the life of a mute young woman, Oblivian Ethel(ene), beginning with her fraught relationship with an old, enigmatic refugee, Bella Donna of the Champions. The novel is full of mythologies and soaring imagery: the swans, for example, are ever-present and say so much about the predicament of the world they inhabit. At the same time, the novel launches a devastating critique of Australia's treatment of Indigenous people: condemning the Federal government's Intervention, and showing us the many ways in which a militarised colonialism has shaped, and continues to shape, Indigenous lives in Australia's north and across the nation.

Judges: Ken Gelder (chair),
Denise Varney, Kate Challis, Andrew
Hollo, Philip Morrissey.



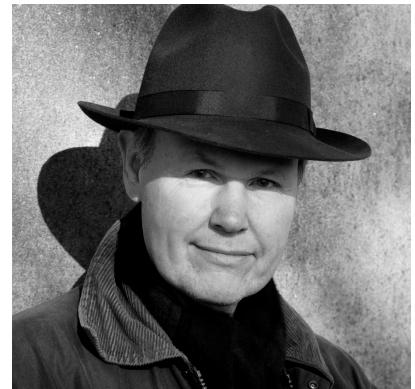
Peter Blazey Fellowship

Fellowship to honour the memory of Peter Blazey 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.

Eleanor Hogan for *Into the Loneliness: The Literary Alliance of Ernestine Hill and Daisy Bates*

This impeccably researched work provides a captivating account of two famous Australians, Daisy Bates and Ernestine Hill. Both women were heavily implicated in the lives of Indigenous people: Bates was an influential amateur ethnographer and Hill was a popular journalist, author of *The Great Australian Loneliness* (1937). Eleanor Hogan offers insightful and compelling reflections on their unsteady friendship, their unwavering ambitions, the details of their hard-earned experiences, and the crucial role they both played in giving shape to our colonial legacy.

Judges: Ken Gelder (chair),
Denise Varney, Clare Forster,
Jonathan Green



Vincent Buckley Poetry Prize

Established to honour the memory of Vincent Buckley, the biennial prize is offered alternately to enable an Australian poet to visit Ireland and to facilitate the visit of an Irish poet to Melbourne. Award value: \$12,000 plus residency at the Australian Centre.

James Harpur for *In Loco Parentis*

James Harpur is an accomplished poet with a compelling narrative voice and unpretentious style. His forthcoming book *In Loco Parentis* chronicles family and institutional life in poetry that is alive to characters and the ways they can affect each other.

Judges: Ken Gelder (chair),
Denise Varney, Kevin Brophy



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