



MEDIA RELEASE

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2024 Victorian Premier's Literary Awards Winners Announced

Poet Grace Yee has been awarded the Victorian Prize for Literature at the prestigious 2024 Victorian Premier's Literary Awards for her debut poetry collection, *Chinese Fish*. The award to Yee was amongst a total of \$292,000 that was awarded to nine winning literary works at tonight's ceremony in Melbourne.

At \$100,000, the Victorian Prize for Literature is Australia's richest literary prize. In addition to the overall prize, Yee was also honoured with the \$25,000 Award for Poetry. *Chinese Fish* explores exclusionary immigration policies in Aotearoa New Zealand. The judges praised the work for the way it 'intelligently...braids its modes and forms, its feminist vision, and its literary and conceptual sophistication'.

The Victorian Prize for Literature was last awarded to a work of poetry in 2014 for *Liquid Nitrogen* by Jennifer Maiden.

The Premier of Victoria, The Hon Jacinta Allan MP congratulated this year's winners: 'Literature and storytelling are more than words on a page – poems, books and plays have the power to open our minds, show us different perspectives, and spark our imaginations. Through this program we celebrate the extraordinary contribution writers make to Australia's creative and cultural life and to those who are touched by their words.'

Other winning works at this year's Awards included the graphic novel *Ghost Book* by Brisbane-based author and illustrator Remy Lai, which won the Prize for Children's Literature. Judges noted that *Ghost Book's* 'pacing, imagery and text flawlessly combine to create a memorable interactive reading experience of wide appeal'.

Last awarded in 1995, the Children's Literature category was re-introduced in 2024 to honour works written for children up to age 12.

Dramatists S. Shakthidharan and Eamon Flack were awarded the Prize for Drama for *The Jungle and the Sea*, which the judges described as a 'a rich and essential work of contemporary theatre'.

Miles Franklin Literary Award-winning author Melissa Lucashenko was awarded the Prize for Fiction for her searing novel *Edenglassie*. Judges said *Edenglassie* offered an example of 'luminescent truth telling' that shines a light on the true colonial history of this country.



The Prize for Non-Fiction was awarded to Ellen van Neerven for *Personal Score: Sport, culture, identity*, which judges called a ‘ground-breaking book that confirms, once again, van Neerven’s unrivalled talent, courage and originality’.

The Prize for Indigenous Writing was awarded to Daniel Browning for *Close to the Subject: Selected Works*. The work was hailed as an ‘astounding contribution to arts journalism’ by the judges.

Melbourne writer Lili Wilkinson was awarded the Prize for Writing for Young Adults for *A Hunger of Thorns*, a fantasy novel exploring female friendship that was praised by the judges for its ‘strong feminist lens’.

The much-anticipated Prize for an Unpublished Manuscript was awarded to *Panajachel* by Rachel Morton, a writer from south-west Victoria. The judges noted that ‘in a meditative and hypnotic style, Morton has drawn in-depth characters with complex relationships’.

Erin Vincent CEO of The Wheeler Centre said, ‘The winning works of the 2024 Victorian Premier’s Literary Awards are exceptional and reflect the breadth of talent in Australian literature right now. Their stories help shape important conversations and offer us insight into who we are.’

‘I congratulate all winners, shortlisted and highly commended authors of the 2024 Awards and encourage all interested readers to explore these remarkable works.’

In 2024, a record 807 entries were received across eight award categories comprising fiction, non-fiction, drama, poetry, Indigenous writing, writing for young adults, children’s literature and unpublished manuscripts.

Beyond the main award categories, The Wheeler Centre’s People’s Choice Award went to *The Palestine Laboratory: How Israel Exports the Technology of Occupation Around the World* by Antony Loewenstein.

2024 Victorian Premier’s Literary Awards winning works

Victorian Premier’s Prize for Literature

Chinese Fish by Grace Yee (Giramondo Publishing)

Prize for Children’s Literature

Ghost Book by Remy Lai (Allen & Unwin)

Prize for Drama

The Jungle and the Sea by S. Shakhidharan and Eamon Flack (Currency Press in association with Belvoir St Theatre)

Prize for Fiction

Edenglassie by Melissa Lucashenko (University of Queensland Press)



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Prize for Indigenous Writing

Close to the Subject: Selected Works by Daniel Browning (Magabala Books)

Prize for Non-Fiction

Personal Score: Sport, culture, identity by Ellen van Neerven (University of Queensland Press)

Prize for Poetry

Chinese Fish by Grace Yee (Giramondo Publishing)

Prize for Writing for Young Adults

A Hunger of Thorns by Lili Wilkinson (Allen & Unwin)

Prize for an Unpublished Manuscript

Panajachel by Rachel Morton

People's Choice Award – determined by online public votes via The Wheeler Centre website

The Palestine Laboratory: How Israel Exports the Technology of Occupation Around the World by Antony Loewenstein (Scribe Publications)

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The Victorian Premier's Literary Awards were established by the Victorian Government in 1985 to honour literary achievement by Australian writers. Since 2011 The Wheeler Centre has managed the Awards on behalf of the Victorian Government.

The Wheeler Centre is Melbourne's home for smart, passionate and entertaining public talks, and exists to support writers, readers and thinkers. Through live and digital conversations, debates, readings, performances and discussions, it deepens public engagement with the most pressing topics of the day. It is dedicated to creative collaboration, community engagement, diversity, and innovation.

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