

## The 2008 CBCA Picture Book of the Year Award

The CBCA 'Children's Book of the Year' Awards have three age group categories and two genre categories. For books suitable for young children, the CBCA recommends the Early Childhood short list and notable books list. The Picture Book category is a genre award with an 'implied readership' of up to the age of 18.

Quoting from the CBCA Awards Handbook:

*The **CBCA Picture Book of the Year Award** will be made to outstanding book of the Picture Book genre in which the author and illustrator achieve artistic and literary unity.*

*The judges may consider the relative success of a picture book in balancing and harmonising the following elements:*

- *artistic style and graphic excellence (including typography and its suitability for the implied readership);*
- *effective use of media and technique;*
- *colour, line, shape, texture;*
- *relationship between illustration and text;*
- *consistency of style, characterisation, information and setting;*
- *clarity, appropriateness and aesthetic appeal of illustrations;*
- *quality of book design, production, printing and binding*

The CBCA includes, on all its official announcements, the advice that 'some of these books are for mature readers'. It is the responsibility of those selecting books for children to assess whether they are suitable for their particular needs. The CBCA does not control book selection by libraries and schools, nor can it influence the ways in which booksellers display and promote titles.

In the CBCA publication *Notable Books 2008*, the judges wrote of the Picture Book of the Year 'Requiem for a Beast' by Matt Ottley:

*Ottley's picture book is an artistic masterpiece for an older audience. In his own words this is 'a work for image, word and music', and the combination is powerful. From the opening panorama this book is visually stunning; Ottley utilises different techniques, including panelling and graphic novel conventions. There are large blocks of text in sections, but the clever use of white space breaks these up. Neither a comfortable nor a happy read, this book must be appreciated for its artistic excellence.*

The following review of the work by a Year 9 student may also be of interest:

*The book holds three intertwining stories about a young boy and a wild bull, an aboriginal woman of the stolen generation, and a man with recurring memories of a terrible wrong. The words scream out to you from the page, hammering their message of love and home lost. With pictures that flow from the brush and pen of a master, the swirls and colours speak to your soul, showing you the joy of the land and the pain of loss. The book explores the dark side of history taken from a people, despair and pain suffered by thousands. These stories mix to create a fascinating tapestry of light and sound.*