



The Children's Book Council of Australia

ABN 14 009 580 956

Judges' Report 2006

Edited by Kerry Neary

Judges of the Book of the Year Awards 2006

Marilyn Steven (ACT)

Susan Wills (NT)

Jenny Foster (NSW)

Kerry Neary (QLD)

Beryl Siemionow (SA)

Leonie McNair (TAS)

Susan La Marca (VIC)

Margaret Robson Kett (WA)

and the NSW-based Panel for the Eve Pownall Award

Annette Dumars

Jan Herival

Vivienne Nicoll-Hatton

Alison Spencer

Published in 2006 by The Children's Book Council of Australia

ABN 14009580956

ISSN 1038-3336

Copyright ©The Children's Book Council of Australia, 2006

Introduction

Aside from the excellence of the short listed books and those selected for the Notables list - even those that failed to achieve just one more vote to reach the qualifying tally of six - there was a shortfall in the quality of entries for this year, as measured against the criteria for these Awards. Perhaps this was a reflection of the trend towards the publication of series directed at the popular market, especially for the Younger Readers readership. In future Awards, publishers might want to consider whether such entries can meet the literary scrutiny required of this competition.

However, success in popular sales gives publishers some leeway to develop new writing and illustrating talent. The value of such investment is shown in the representation of authors and illustrators new to Australian children's literature in this year's list of notable books, being almost one quarter (including late bloomer 86-year-old Amy Lissiat - as if CT, but we did enjoy the anagram!). The emergence of so many new authors and illustrators as well as fresh directions taken by known authors and illustrators, indicates that Australian children's literature will continue to maintain the high standards for which it is renowned.

Some adventurous formats enlivened the publications entered this year. A variety in sizes of books will attract attention and be comfortable for small hands to hold and young readers to cradle. Sculptured pages also attract reader attention and this device varied from sculptured edges of the entire book to holes that draw the reader through the story to a bright and felicitous colour at the end. Fold outs were again used to extend pages in many directions and to attract, extend interest and build suspense for the reader. At a time when publishers are consciously producing books in formats that are affordable, many still venture to produce expensive editions in hardcover and even with dust jackets. This is commendable in reminding young readers of the book's aesthetic appeal over digital forms. In one case a bejewelled and sculptured cover gave a luxurious invitation to the reader to enter the book.

An interesting field of picture books, with several innovative contributions, was submitted this year. Picture books can be written for children of all ages and are seen by the judges as distinct from the writing forms that are required by the Early Childhood, Younger Readers and Older Readers categories. Nonetheless, a book can be considered notable in one of these categories as well as being notable as a picture book. Before considering the particular merits of picture books, the judges made a clear decision on the distinguishing criteria of the picture book 'genre' (as stated in the Awards Handbook).

Thus, an illustrated book is one in which the illustrations depict fairly literally what is being described by the text. The characters may be illuminated, the action may be portrayed, but there is little expansion upon the narrative. Illustrated books, of course, can be published in picture book format.

In the picture book genre, however, the illustrations not only represent what is happening in the text but they also amplify and expand upon it. In an exceptional picture book, the illustrations harmonise well with the narrative but they also communicate ideas that take the reader beyond the limits of the written word without conflicting with it. Those authors who achieved success this year in the picture book category produced books where the text was strong and the accompanying illustrations offered a further wealth of ideas for the reader to enjoy.

The judges were impressed by the deceptive simplicity of a number of works across the categories. Stories told with pared back language or in some cases draped over simple structures often belied great depth of content and emotional scope.

Notions of philosophy were a common thread, explored through several thought provoking and discussion evoking works. This was an enriching and illuminating element of this year's field and impressively, these works covered a broad range of ages. Unusual treatments were found in several picture books, including the creative questing for happiness, a direct though open-ended treatise on spirituality, and innovative and quirky philosophy.

This year's reading saw families wrestling with mental illnesses such as bipolar disorder, depression and schizophrenia. In several notable works authors were able to provide shimmers of credible optimism as a counterpoint to despair in the face of unremitting bleakness. Without exception, these works resounded with the ring of lived experience.

A number of books confronted grief and loss with powerful authenticity. Death came in many guises, via the waste of war, through illness,

avoidable accident or mystery. Treatments of the healing process ranged from the folkloric to the realistic and extended into the supernatural. Often, treatments of tragedy were tempered with refreshing though poignant humour which-further served to underline tragedy's contrariety while moderating events for the young reader.

There was a welcome increase in the number of notable humorous books in general. Humour appeared both in its own right and as a device for handling more than one weighty theme. The full spectrum of reading pleasure was there, from the wryly-turned-up-corner-of-a-smile to the muscle wrenching release of a cathartic belly laugh.

These then, are the books which the 2006 judges found most outstanding in their categories, in the context of the Awards criteria. We strongly commend your attention as well, to the books selected for the *Notable Australian Children's Books 2006* lists for each category.

Book of the Year: Older Readers

WINNER

BURKE, J. C.

STORY OF TOM BRENNAN

Random House Australia

ISBN 1741660920

284 pages

When his brother, Daniel, causes a car accident and is gaoled, Tom Brennan's world is shattered. His life and that of his family, is broken irrevocably and raw emotions are exposed in a believable scenario as they try to re-establish themselves. The grief and realism of their journeys makes this story both mesmerizing and unforgettable. The author has an acute sense of human behaviour and the reactions of the community are realistically harsh. Tom's eventual healing and the metaphoric link with climbing (out of black depressive holes, up Daniels' whine, up the ascent, to Everest Base Camp) is apt. Tom's voice is strong, convincing and admirable as he accepts a new reality and undergoes a values change. The undercurrent message of learning to live for the pleasure of living/giving, instead of winning, is poignant. But the real power of this book is in the lesson for the Daniels of this world. A lesson learned through painful showing not didactic telling. J.C. Burke has that rare talent of writing for teenagers yet satisfying the over eighteens as well. The novel contains coarse language consistent with the characters.

HONOUR BOOKS

CONDON, Bill

NO WORRIES

University of Queensland Press

ISBN 0702234915

207 pages

The reality of hard physical work sits alongside a dysfunctional family plagued by mental illness, economic pressures and an inability to cope with little support in this book about strong emotional ties, relationships, responsibility and deep pain. Brian Talbot is seventeen years old, has dropped out of school and is working night shifts in a milk factory. His mother is bipolar and either incredibly high or incredibly low. His father opted out years ago and lives in a shed in the back yard where he hits the grog and goes fishing when things get too tough. Brian's life has hardly begun, but as his story unfolds he must find the strength to face life-threatening events and emotions. The book reads so authentically that one feels privy to deeply secret information. Definitely for the upper end of the older reader's category, it is by turns painful, moving, hopeful,

funny and warm. Strong characterization, a clear teenage voice and varied and well structured shifts in relationships make a powerful blend. The reader cannot help but feel deeply for these characters.

MOLONEY, James

LOST PROPERTY

Viking. Penguin Books Australia

ISBN 067029432

269 pages

When Josh goes to work at the Lost Property office, he sees how people grieve for the special things that they have lost. He also sees the joy that comes from finding things that could have been lost forever. Old Clive, who runs the lost property office, has learnt this and he holds back from the auction of lost property the irreplaceable items that he feels people will come looking for.

This is the story of Josh and his family and their lost property. Outwardly, Josh has everything going for him: a supportive family, friends, a band, and an attractive girlfriend. In reality, his family is self destructing. Mike, the difficult eldest son, has left the family and though he keeps in touch with home, he will only speak to Josh and refuses to disclose his whereabouts. As Josh struggles to find what he wants out of life – the types of songs he wants to sing in his band, what relationship he wants with his girlfriend, his beliefs about God, and his relationship with his father, mother and sister, a chance viewing of a photo in Clive's special lost property case, starts Josh on his solo, secretive journey to locate Mike in Mackay. Moloney's writing skill takes the reader into this family and along with Josh as he takes control of his life and makes decisions about what is important to him. The reader is constantly confronted with loss and retrieval. A compelling read.

SHORTLISTED BOOKS

CASWELL, Brian

DOUBLE EXPOSURE

University of Queensland Press

ISBN 0702235334

252 pages

Vivid characterisation and well-crafted storytelling make this remarkably conceived psychological thriller an engrossing read. Cain and Chris are twins with parallel lives. Chris has escaped the tyranny of life at home with their father, the General, and lives through his art. Photographing street people and juxtaposing them with his own renderings of their futures, he is on the edge of stardom. Cain, with his job at the Cineplex, is envious but plagued by unrelenting dreams and flashbacks which keep him clinging to hopes of a normal life. The minor characters of the

boys' love interests are at times stereotypical but the accomplished author draws all of the threads together in an unexpected and heart stopping ending that lingers in the reader's mind way beyond the final page. There are some fascinating concepts of artistic expression explored in the novel and each character is most skillfully crafted, with the author building layer upon layer of strengths and frailties. Caswell demonstrates a lovely use of language in this book; tense and vocabulary have been well-considered for maximum effect without being obtrusive.

CROWLEY, Cath

CHASING CHARLIE DUSKIN

Pan Macmillan Australia

ISBN 0330421603

226 pages

With both laughter and tears, the writer takes us on the powerful journey of a young girl's recovery from the grief felt as a result of the deaths of her mother and grandmother. Charlie regrets that her father was still grieving and unable to see the effect of his introspection and lack of attention, on his daughter. Undergoing the pain of isolation and finding it difficult to make friends, Charlie consoles herself with music. Her growth is reflected as she moves from playing by herself to a successful public performance.

Cath Crowley breathes amazing life into her characters so that Charlie and Rose emerge as authentic teenage misfits who find friendship and trust. She crafts words masterfully to conjure emotions, images and deep insights which will resonate strongly with all those who have ever found themselves on the outside of life or who have lost someone dear to them. The situations are plausible and although the language is sophisticated, with many references to music, it is easy to read.

JONSBURG, Barry

ITS NOT ALL ABOUT YOU, CALMA

Allen & Unwin

ISBN 1741144841

252 pages

A sequel to *The Whole Business of Kiffo and the Pitbull* (2004) this book offers a continuing insight into the life of Calma. This is witty, intelligent writing offering a teenage world to the reader that is full of angst, humour, insecurities and challenges. Relationships of all kinds dominate Calma's world as she endeavours to negotiate family and friends and her place within the world. We are shown flawed, realistic characters that engage us and at the same time make us question our own values and opinions. Full of one-liners juxtaposed with thoughtful serious observations this is a refreshing, gently layered novel and readers will enjoy the irreverence, pace, unselfconscious character and masterful use of language.

Book of the Year: Younger Readers

WINNER

FENSHAM, Elizabeth

HELICOPTERMAN

Bloomsbury Children's Books

ISBN 0747575495

159 pages

The issue of mental illness is a difficult one, especially in a book for younger readers, but Elizabeth Fensham handles it beautifully in this emotionally challenging yet uplifting story of a twelve year old boy struggling to understand his father's schizophrenia and cope with life on the run from indistinct but powerful fears. Through deftly controlled writing and the well-chosen vehicle of the diary, the reader is taken more and more deeply into Pete's circumstances through eye-witness accounts and reflective insights, sensitively disclosing Pete's despair and confusion as his father is overwhelmed by paranoid delusion. We see Pete's wider life with peers as well as his pain and his voice as a plausibly intelligent but confused young man is true and strong and utterly convincing. The unfolding of understanding and the moments of insight are poignant and moving and the characters are cast in just enough colour as to see them through the protagonist's eyes. In many cases, it is what is left unsaid that resonates so powerfully. Characters that connect make this a breathtaking read that will intrigue and inspire readers beyond the age-group for which it was written.

HONOUR BOOKS

GLEITZMAN, Morris

ONCE

Penguin Books Australia

ISBN 0143301950

160 pages

Many orphans were created during World War II throughout Europe, most left to wander pitifully in search of their parents. One was a Jewish boy from Poland who passed through unspeakable horrors eventually to come with several other children under the protection of a village dentist. The boy's name was Felix. This is his story. With a blend of poignancy and humour that strikes just the right chord, the author has successfully taken on the daunting challenge of telling the story of the Holocaust and its horror, courage, racism, loyalty and hope, to young readers. Felix's trustful innocence redoubles the terror of this inexplicable time in human history. It's a rare story where the author creates such an

authentic character that so completely appropriates the telling. Images from this book will remain with the reader long after the last page is turned.

BATESON, Catherine

MILLIE AND THE NIGHT HERON

University of Queensland Press

ISBN 0702235261

181 pages

In possibly Catherine Bateson's best work so far she has created a near perfect novel for the 10-11 year old. This is a touching, lyrical exploration of a time of change and challenge as young Millie faces a new town, a new school, new relationships and all of the complications that these entail. Gentle and warmly told, the book is about the many styles of family, seeing parents as people and the importance of friendship and finding what truly matters. The beautifully crafted characters are refreshingly normal without being bland and will strike a chord with many young readers.

SHORTLISTED BOOKS

GODWIN, Jane

THE TRUE STORY OF MARY

Illustrated by Zak Drahos

Allen & Unwin

ISBN 174114 716 6

47 pages

In the tradition of nonsense poetry and with echoes of the old masters like Lewis Carroll, Edward Lear, Hillaire Belloc and even Sendak, comes this fascinating story of one girl's individualism and independence in the face of defiant odds. A sense of the ridiculous in the text combines with darker overtones in the illustrations to produce a most intriguing tale that invites many re-readings. Whimsical, imaginative and playfully different, this book boasts exquisite production quality from the rich yet muted tones of the quasi macabre illustrations to the silky pocket-sized cover.

While the detail in the beautifully crafted illustrations sets the scene, there is much to admire in the rich vocabulary and the pleasure it offers as a read-aloud. The language, though challenging, is never forced. Quirky, inventive, delightful and perfect for anyone who has ever dreamed of getting in touch with their inner 'upside down' child.

FLYNN, Pat

TO THE LIGHT

University of Queensland Press

ISBN 0702234923

92 pages

Mirroring a tube wave, at first unimpressive but building into something of beauty and power and finishing with light at the end, this is a very accessible novel for younger readers, particularly those with an interest in surfing. Pat Flynn captures the world of primary school children, their fears, relationships, the way they speak and the things that are important to them in a way which is never didactic. He utilises a gentle humour which is spot on and neither detracts from, nor trivialises, the storyline. The characters are real, very believable and respectfully drawn. The twist at the end is extremely well done and comes as a genuine surprise. A tight piece of work that packs a punch.

JENNINGS, Paul

HOW HEDLEY HOPKINS DID A DARE...

Puffin Books

Penguin Australia

ISBN 0141306114

205 pages

This partially autobiographical book explores the difficulties faced by young Hedley Hopkins, a sensitive and thoughtful boy, as he struggles to understand changes to his body while finding a place for himself in a new world. Although set in the 1950s this is a story with timeless qualities, covering concerns that are relevant to every generation. In his usual style, Jennings uses a clever blend of pathos, humour and mayhem to compassionately explore the issues facing Hedley whilst dealing with the continuing issues of bullying, the acceptance of mental disability and the treatment of indigenous Australians. This easy read is ultimately a heart warming, entertaining and fast paced tale of growing up.

Book of the Year: Early Childhood

WINNER

NILAND, Deborah

ANNIE'S CHAIR

Viking. Penguin Books Australia

0670 042498

32 pages

Written and illustrated by Deborah Niland

Penguin Viking

Every young reader who feels ownership of some belonging will relate to this book's opening sentence 'This is Annie, and this is her chair.'

Annie's chair serves as sanctuary, sleeping bag and kitchen step. Most important of all, it is hers alone. When she finds Benny occupying it, she tries just about everything to get him out before using her ultimate weapon. This classic tale of a toddler's sense of ownership has been beautifully depicted by an accomplished artist who contributes vibrant colour and pattern to the domestic detail beloved by the under fives. The simple text credibly constructs a problem, an inevitable crisis and then a satisfying resolution showing that the character has 'grown'. Delightful to read aloud.

HONOUR BOOK

WATTS, Frances

KISSES FOR DADDY

Illustrated by David Legge

Little Hare Books

ISBN 1877003786

24 pages

Warmth and love ooze from the pages of this book which is the perfect feel-good bedtime read. Baby Bear's grumpiness is won over by Dad's patient, loving, nonconfrontational, care and physicality typical of father son playful times. Baby bear enjoys the joke and his anger melts.

Bears distance the situation but children will identify with the tiredness and difficult behaviour. The plot moves as quickly as Dad does to bath Baby Bear.

David Legge's illustrations are exciting, crisp and vibrant and clues for the next kind of hug are embedded in the detail: a shadow that makes a giraffe, a koala picture on the wall, alligator tiles in the bathroom etc. The feelings this story evokes are created in part by the appealing rhythm and repetition of the simple text and the intimacy of the language and also by the carefully considered perspective of each illustration.

SHORTLISTED BOOKS

BOURKE, Nike

WHAT THE SKY KNOWS

Illustrated by Stella Danalis

University of Queensland Press

ISBN 0 7022 3501 6

36 pages

Distinctive illustrations and endpapers make this book a visual treat. The text, though spare, is lyrical and philosophical and has a strength that unifies the whole. The words stimulate the imagination. The main character is simply seeking to know what the sky knows: how to be blue or grey or pink, how to make clouds or stars, have tea with the angels, hold the sun like an orange or carry birds ... Each query is accompanied by a double page illustration using collage which blends painted pieces of paper with a decoupage of old style pictures. Although sophisticated, the illustrations radiate a childlike mischief and are detailed without being too busy. The interplay of visual and verbal is wonderful and offers more on each re-reading.

DUBOSARSKY, Ursula

REX

Illustrated by David Mackintosh

Viking. Penguin Books Australia

ISBN

32 pages

A familiar aspect of early schooling is given a terrific twist in this engaging book that stands out for child centred-ness both in the illustrative style and the story's theme. Every child with a classroom pet will love it!

The plot is simple and logical, clearly written and quite involving. The illustrations are deceptively clever introducing perspective and point of view from the first double page spread: a picture of Rex that is a show-stopper. The scratchy style of illustration gives movement to the pages, the colours are vibrant yet subdued and the illustrator has played with a variety of layouts. A great read aloud, inviting participation from listeners.

MATTHEWS, Cecily

EMILY'S RAPUNZEL HAIR

Illustrated by Freya Blackwood

ABC Books

ISBN 0733315232

36 pages

This is a charming collection of short stories about Emily, who wants to have Rapunzel hair. The episodes of Emily's life described in each chapter - the 'picnic' with Grandma and the toys, the bus journey, experiences with pets and other animals - express an easily identifiable childlike view of life in a voice which is authentic and credible. The text reads fluently and rhythmically and the dialogue is natural. The connecting motif of Rapunzel's hair and red stockings is non-intrusive in each story and cleverly tied in the end. The illustrations, created with watercolour and pencil, play a substantial part in the storytelling and concept development. The overall design and production is of a very high standard and it is pleasing to see a short story collection such as this being published in Australia.

SHANAHAN, Lisa.

DADDY'S HAVING A HORSE

Illustrated by Emma Quay

Hodder Headline Australia

0733616631

32 pages

The interest of the reader is immediately captured by the title of this book and is sustained by the whimsical text. Caitlin and Lachlan's mother is expecting another baby and Lachlan has convinced himself that his dad is also expectinga horse!

What begins as a fun game of humouring Lachlan's hopes ends in his great disappointment when only a baby returns from hospital! The way the story is resolved - with Lachlan, more than his sister, bonding with his new brother and then receiving a rocking horse from Sam the handyman - is clever and satisfying. Humour is achieved on several levels for adults and children and colour and movement convey emotions well. Delightful illustrations and endpapers complement this warm and caring family story which is to be commended for its innovation and production standards.

Picture Book of the Year

WINNER

THOMPSON, Colin

THE SHORT AND INCREDIBLY HAPPY LIFE OF RILEY

Illustrated by Amy Lissiat

Lothian Books

ISBN 0 7344 0806 4

32 pages

A highly original picture book of sophisticated thought that will wildly delight and gently provoke. A story of the simple, uncomplicated and unquenchably joyous life of a rat contrasted with the unsatisfied materialist desires and aspirations of humans. Thought provoking for children and adults, it contains a universal and timeless message, perceptive insights into human nature and joy that bubbles from every page. The playful use of punctuation works to enhance its read aloud pleasure through satisfying rhythm and delightful-run-on-hyphenated-sentences! The illustrations are superb and made entirely using Photoshop. Classic artworks (such as *The Mona Lisa* and *The Scream*) convey and extend meaning and add hugely to the book's appeal. Even the illustrator is a creation of Thompson's, her name being an anagram for 'It's My Alias'. It works just as well with secondary students, parents and grandparents. Optimism and pessimism contest for the reader's attention as situations arise that alternately shock, offend and inspire. Certain nuances and a brazen sassiness on some pages could place it in a middle to older readership whereas younger children can simply enjoy it at face value. Sure to attain cult status among the pre-hedonists, this is a great inoculation against *affluenza*.

HONOUR BOOKS

HEFFERNAN, John

THE ISLAND

Illustrated by Peter SHEEHAN

Scholastic Press (Scholastic Australia)

ISBN 1865048135

32 pages

With deceptively simple language that conveys a wealth of ideas, John Heffernan has created a fable of modern life. The people of the island are hard-working but not very happy, having lost their capacity to appreciate the natural beauty that surrounds them. It takes a blind boy and a "monster" from the sea to remind them of the happiness they have lost. When the people of the island try to control the source of their pleasure, they lose it forever. This book can be read on several levels, each one

conveying themes that are eternally valid and important. The language is simultaneously simple and poetic, rich with adjectives and similes that paint vivid pictures. It is supported by graphic illustrations showing innovative use of colour, counterbalancing the uninviting black and whiteness of the tribe against the warm colours of the urchin and the monster. This clever device illustrates the contrast between a society's preoccupation with the superficialities of life and a child's joy in laughter and simple pleasures. There is so much to enjoy in this book, from the simple parable it offers younger readers to the profound examination of modern society that older readers will be able to explore.

HARVEY, Jacqueline

THE SOUND OF THE SEA

Illustrated by Warren Crosse tt

Lothian Books

ISBN 0734407424

32 pages

With deceptive simplicity, the author and illustrator of this book combine to produce a stunning and poignant portrayal of a young boy's grief and ultimate acceptance of his mother's death.

The language of the text is well chosen to convey the power of emotions in the story with an economy of words that avoids overkill or cliché. The drawings of the illustrator support and expand upon the text extremely well. The softness and warmth of oil pastels, the very expressive human faces, the play of light, the body postures and the authenticity of these illustrations result in a very moving reading experience. The narrative voice is not intrusive, can handle hard moments and is also accessible for children. The love between Samuel and his mother is powerfully evoked and Samuel's fear and anger, his joy and pain are palpable. The healing is offered up not as a solution but as a new step in the dance.

SHORTLISTED BOOKS

BOURKE, Nike

WHAT THE SKY KNOWS

Illustrated by Stella Danalis

University of Queensland Press

ISBN 0702235016

36 pages

In Clarice Bean style, postmodern collages frame a collection of musings on the sky. From quilted endpaper to endpaper this book is a visual feast and tiny text details invite lingering. The text is spare but lyrical and philosophical. The illustrations are distinctive in style, quite sophisticated yet radiating a childlike mischief. Hindu-Arabic, Middle-

Eastern, Asian and European script, musical, graphical and numerical annotation, a Rwandan flower, an Indian elephant, fabric patterns from an array of historical and cultural points remind us that we are all connected under one sky regardless of tongue, colour or creed. A book that is enriched with each reading; beyond culture and beyond being placed in time. It is a picture book for thinkers and dreamers, planners and schemers, regardless of gender, age or birthplace.

RIDDLE, Tohby

IRVING THE MAGICIAN

Viking. Penguin Books Australia

ISBN

32 pages

A small boy, Irving, overhears a man on a city street ask 'Where's the magic?' Irving's search begins. The finding of a magic book in his apartment leads him on a magical journey ...

How Irving brings the magic into his life and the lives of the people around him in the drab apartment block, makes a wonderfully, warm picture book that leaves the reader believing that magic can happen.

This book is beautifully written, illustrated and designed. Tohby Riddle's deceptively simple illustrations evoke great feeling. A wonderful read!

WINCH, John

RUN, HARE, RUN! THE STORY OF A DRAWING

Little Hare Books

ISBN 1877003875

unpaged

This book grew from John Winch's fascination with Albrecht Dürer's painting *The Hare* (1502). He imagines the story behind the painting – the artist's pursuit of the hare in order to capture its grace and simplicity on canvas. Tension builds as the chase develops ... the pictures are dark, the palette looks like blood and tools are prepared. The reader is simultaneously drawn into a vivid depiction of Renaissance life, rich with imaginative insights into another culture and another era. The text is brief, precise and poetic and the drama unfolds from the hare's point of view with great pace and suspense. Each page is a stunning work of art created using mixed media, differing perspectives and lots of detail. The illustrations unite with the text to develop the story and the colour palette throughout has been chosen to evoke the style of the era.

Eve Pownall Award for Information Books

WINNER

DAVIDSON, Leon

SCARECROW ARMY:

THE ANZACS AT GALLIPOLI

Black Dog Books

ISBN 1876372605

186 pages

This book recounts the story of the ANZACS, the Allied as well as opposing forces, from the first enlistments through to the amazing withdrawal from Gallipoli. Leon Davidson brings an original and emotional depth to the story and provides real insights into the origins of World War I, the reasons for Australian and New Zealand involvement and the lives of the predominately young men in the trenches. He begins each chapter with an anecdotal conversation or observation by either a soldier who actually existed or a fictitious soldier who embodies the 'everyman', who was an ANZAC. Writing in the first person brings a vibrancy and immediacy to the narrative and gives readers an intimate look into the ANZACS' thoughts and feelings. He also brings the young soldiers to life through details of day-to-day happenings in the trenches. There are humorous, larrikin moments as well as moments of great courage and sadness. A subtle anti-war message permeates the narrative. The finishing quote from Atatürk - Mustafa Kemal, could not be more poignant.

Includes: acknowledgements, bibliography, quotation sources, timeline, photographs, glossary and topographical maps.

HONOUR BOOKS

BRIAN, Janeen

HOOSH! CAMELS IN AUSTRALIA

ABC Books

ISBN 0733315046

62 pages

Camels were introduced to Australia in 1840 and since then these fascinating animals have been closely involved in our history and development. Today they are feral and more than 500,000 roam the inland as wild herds. This book comprehensively and systematically documents almost every imaginable aspect of camels and their presence in Australia. The author has long been absorbed by the topic and spent years researching it, including talking to experts and spending time 'on the road' with camels and cameleers. She writes in a lively engaging

manner and her text is complemented by good design, clear, colourful maps and contemporary photographs, black and white historical photos, an excellent glossary and detailed index. The colour coding of chapters assists the reader in accessing detail as does the use of fact boxes to provide quick snippets of information. Suitable for Upper Primary and Lower Secondary students.

JAMAL, Nadia & CHANDAB, Taghred

THE GLORY GARAGE

Allen & Unwin

1741146496

182 pages

Comprising a series of short vignettes of Lebanese Muslim life as lived in contemporary Australia, the authors have highlighted the distinction between Islamic religious beliefs and Lebanese patriarchal traditions. Through these narrative accounts, some in the first person, others in the third, young Lebanese Muslims emphasise the difficulties faced by adolescent girls and young women who find themselves torn between their respect and love for their parents cultural beliefs and their identification with the Australian culture of their friends. Written by journalists Nadia Jamal and Taghred Chandab, the gentle way in which many Islamic customs are demystified, allows the reader a greater understanding of life as a Muslim woman making this a most worthwhile addition to multicultural literature for Australian teenagers, particularly girls.

SHORTLISTED BOOKS

BRIM, Warren and EGLITIS, Anna

CREATURES OF THE RAINFOREST

TWO ARTISTS EXPLORE DJABUGAY COUNTRY

Magabala Books

ISBN 0875641998

60 pages

This is an A-Z collection of the creatures to be found in the 'Djabugay country', which covers the rainforest and tableland country of far North Queensland. The illustrations are a combination of hand coloured linoprints and acrylic paintings on papers, with artist rendering their illustrations using different artistic styles and techniques. There is an interesting juxtaposition of European and indigenous images throughout the book. A distinguishing feature of the book is that each illustration has a caption first in Djabugay language, then underneath translated into English.

The design of this book, from the green bush prints on the endpapers to the choice of glossy pages and the texture and look of the cover, through to the background wash illustrations that change from page to page and artist to artist complement the paintings. This is a wonderful cultural mix and showcases the artists' contrasting artistic styles and talent. Included is a Pronunciation guide to the Djabugay language, artists' profiles and resource guide.

LONG, John

**THE BIG PICTURE BOOK: SEE LIFE
UNFOLDING THROUGH TIME**

Illustrated by Brian Choo

Allen & Unwin

ISBN 1741143284

48 pages

This attractive book travels back in time to twelve billion years ago and the beginnings of our universe, through the history of evolution to today and to a possible world of 50, 000,000 years hence. John Long, a distinguished palaeontologist, has taken a complex subject and conveyed it in a text which is lucid, spare and lyrical. Cleverly and colourfully designed, the book is beautiful to the eye. Brian Choo's vivid imaginative illustrations are offset by many smaller photographs. Maps by Sergei Pisarevsky show the formation of the landmasses from one billion years ago to the continents of today. This book encourages readers of any age to both understand the facts and to marvel at the mystery and magnificence of evolution.

STEWART, Robin

CHARLES DARWIN'S BIG IDEA

Hyland House Publishing

ISBN 1864470933

124 pages

Charles Darwin's Big Idea explores the complex subject of the Theory of Evolution. The reader is eased into the theory through chapters that document Darwin's early life, his trips on the Beagle, and the extraordinary wildlife that he discovers on the Galapagos Islands. While Robin Stewart does not deal with any one topic in great depth, she writes with clear thought and reason, and includes questions to stimulate readers' thinking. This book is bright, colourful and very appealing, with coloured sections being used for each chapter. Chapters included photographs, and supplementary information in little 'fact boxes'. The book contains an index, extensive glossary and a further reading list with websites. Robin Stewart has taken a difficult subject and presented it in such a way that will encourage young readers to read this book.

THE CHILDREN'S BOOK COUNCIL OF AUSTRALIA AWARDS FOUNDATION

Benefactors of the CBCA Awards Foundation:

Scholastic Australia
Allen & Unwin
Laurie Copping OAM (in memoriam)
Thyne Reid Trust No. 1.

Major Donors of the CBCA Awards Foundation:

Australia Post
Era Publications
Five Mile Press
Libby Gleeson
Hardie Grant Egmont
HarperCollins *Publishers Australia*
Hodder Headline Australia
Ipswich District Teacher-Librarians' Network
The James N Kirby Foundation
Kinross-Wolaroi School
Koala Books
The Library Board of Queensland
Beryl Moncrieff Matthews (in memoriam)
Angela Namoi
The Northern Territory Government
Parents and Boys of Sydney Grammar Edgecliff Prep School
Penguin Books Australia
Random House Australia
Emily Rodda (Jennifer Rowe)
Gillian Rubinstein
Maurice Saxby
SA Dept of the Arts & Cultural Development
Julie Vivas
Walker Books Australia
Cassandra Weddell, Qld (in memoriam)
Maisie Williams, Garah, NSW (in memoriam)
Sue Williams