

Media Release



Call for entries: over \$80,000 on offer to Australian writers

11/12/2023

The State Library of NSW has **TODAY [Monday 11 December]** opened entries for two significant literary awards — the 2024 National Biography Award and the Mona Brand Award for Women Stage and Screen Writers, with a total of \$82,000 in prize money on offer.

According to State Librarian Dr Caroline Butler-Bowdon: “Writers have a remarkable ability to transform real and imagined stories into immersive experiences that resonate with readers on a profound level.”

“Thanks to the support of the State Library Foundation and private benefactors, we’re able to offer these two unique prizes that recognise and celebrate the invaluable contribution of writers to our cultural life.”

The National Biography Award, Australia’s richest prize for biographical writing and memoir, awards \$25,000 to the overall winner, with \$5,000 presented to the best debut biography or memoir. In addition, each of the six shortlisted authors receive \$2,000.

The 2024 award is supported by the John Lambie Foundation, Graham & Charlene Bradley Foundation and Sarah Crouch.

The winners will be selected by a judging panel comprising critic Melinda Harvey (Chair) and writers Eda Gunaydin and Jason Om.

The winners of the 2023 National Biography Award were *My Tongue Is My Own: A Life of Gwen Harwood* by Ann-Marie Priest and *Missing* by Tom Patterson (The Michael Crouch Award for a Debut Work).

The biennial Mona Brand Award, established at the bequest of trailblazing Australian playwright Mona Brand (who also wrote under the name Alexis Fox), is the only award of its kind in Australia available to women writers for stage and screen.

The main prize of \$30,000 is nominated by a judging panel chaired by producer Helen Bowden, Carissa Lee and Anchuli Felicia King. However, the State Library is calling for nominations for the \$10,000 Early Career Writer Award.

The 2022 winners were, respectively, Yorta Yorta/Gunaikurnai woman and playwright Andrea James for her exceptional body of work dedicated to sharing First Nations stories on stage; and fellow playwright Sukhjit Khalsa for her debut coming of age work *Fully Sikh*.

Media Release



There will be an extended nomination period to allow for the Christmas and New Year break, with entries for the 2024 Awards closing Monday 5 February 2024.

Guidelines for each award and the online nomination forms are available on the State Library's website: sl.nsw.gov.au/awards

Media inquiries:

Vanessa Bond, Media & Communications Branch, State Library of NSW
02 9273 1566, 0411 259 898, vanessa.bond@sl.nsw.gov.au