

Media Release

11 November 2015

## ***Victorian writers receive literary acclaim and reward***

***Recipient of \$60,000 Melbourne Prize for Literature 2015, \$30,000 Best Writing Award 2015  
and \$20,000 Writers Prize 2015 announced***

The winners of the esteemed Melbourne Prize for Literature 2015, Best Writing Award 2015 and new Writers Prize 2015 were announced tonight at a special awards ceremony.

The recipient of the **\$60,000 Melbourne Prize for Literature 2015** is **Chris Wallace-Crabbe AM** in recognition of his outstanding contribution to Australian literature and cultural and intellectual life. **The Prize is supported by The Vera Moore Foundation and The Tallis Foundation.**

The recipient of the **\$30,000 Best Writing Award 2015** is **Andrea Goldsmith** for her work *The Memory Trap*, published by 4th Estate 2013, which is recognised for its clarity, originality and creativity. **The Award is supported by its sole patron, The Robert Salzer Foundation and includes a \$2,500 Qantas airfare credit.**

The recipient of the **\$20,000 Writers Prize 2015**, a new category offered this year to continue the 10th anniversary celebrations of the annual Melbourne Prize is **Kate Ryan** for her essay *Psychotherapy for Normal People*. **This Award is supported by Copyright Agency's Cultural Fund, in association with The Malcolm Robertson Foundation.** To read the finalists' essays and download the e-book, please visit [melbourneprize.org](http://melbourneprize.org). This initiative is supported by the **Griffith Review**.

The **Residency with the School of Culture & Communication at The University of Melbourne** is awarded to Writers Prize 2015 winner, **Kate Ryan**.

The announcements were made at Federation Square, the exhibition and event partner of the annual Melbourne Prize, and coincide with the opening of the two-week free exhibition of all 2015 finalists, which will run until November 23.

The announcement marks the annual Melbourne Prize's eleventh year, celebrating the abundant literary talent in Victoria across a range of writing genres and providing recognition and opportunities for Victorian writers. The public can vote now at [www.melbourneprize.org](http://www.melbourneprize.org), or at the exhibition, for one finalist to win the **\$6,000 Civic Choice Award 2015, which is supported by Readings and Hardie Grant Books**. By voting, people will have a chance to win an overnight stay at the **Sofitel Melbourne On Collins, Melbourne's hotel for the arts**.

The winners were selected by the Melbourne Prize judging panel, which includes some of Australia's most respected literary identities including Readings, **Mark Rubbo OAM**, Artistic Director and CEO of the Melbourne Writers Festival, **Lisa Dempster**, Writer **Craig Sherborne**, and Director of the Wheeler Centre, **Michael Williams**.

### **Judges' Statement:**

As the winner of the Melbourne Prize for Literature 2015, Chris Wallace-Crabbe AM continues an imposing and significant influence on Australian literature, in the genre of poetry. Chris has established himself among the vanguard of international poetry giants and made an outstanding contribution to Australian literature and cultural and intellectual life. Chris has devoted his career to teaching mentoring and supporting new generations of writers.

As the winner of the Best Writing Award 2015, Andrea Goldsmith's entered work, *The Memory Trap*, 4th Estate 2013 is visceral, immediate and psychologically gripping and builds on her already impressive body of work. It demonstrates outstanding clarity, originality and creativity and suggests even greater achievements in writing yet to come.

As the inaugural winner of the Writers Prize 2015, Kate Ryan's essay, *Psychotherapy for Normal People*, is a powerful and engaging work and account of the psychotherapeutic process by an accomplished Victorian writer.

### **Biographies**

#### **Prof. Chris Wallace-Crabbe AM – winner Melbourne Prize for Literature 2015**

Chris Wallace-Crabbe AM is a poet based in Melbourne, yet known worldwide over the years. He writes essays, but is known for verbally rich poetry, for his diverse range of interests. He also taught at Melbourne University for decades. Since 1988 he has practiced his buoyant, renewable art full-time.

#### **Andrea Goldsmith – winner Best Writing Award 2015**

*The Memory Trap* is Andrea Goldsmith's seventh novel. Her literary essays have been published widely and she is a lively speaker and performer of her work. She has taught creative writing at universities and in the community, and has mentored many new writers. She lives in inner Melbourne.

#### **Kate Ryan – winner Writers Prize 2015**

Kate Ryan writes fiction and non-fiction. Her work has appeared in publications including *New Australian Writing 2*, *The Sleepers Almanac*, *Kill Your Darlings*, and *The Griffith Review*. Her picture books have been published by Penguin and Lothian. Kate's story *Sunday Nights* was shortlisted for the 2015 Josephine Ulrick Literature Award.

The annual Melbourne Prize is supported by the State Government through Creative Victoria.

Minister for Creative Industries, Martin Foley MP, said the Melbourne Prize for Literature is a testament to the abundant literary talent in Victoria.

"Each year the Melbourne Prize honours and showcases the talents of Victorian writers, sculptors and musicians, and, in doing so, celebrates one of the great strengths of our city – creativity.

"I would like to congratulate all of this year's finalists and winners for their achievements. I would also like to express my thanks for the contributions of this year's finalists and winners who collectively help to make our city a City of Literature and creative State," he said.

The Melbourne Prize is supported by the City of Melbourne 2015 Arts Grants Program. Lord Mayor of Melbourne, Robert Doyle, said the annual Melbourne Prize makes a significant contribution to the city's cultural life.

"Melbourne is one of the world's great creative cities. We have a thriving music scene, a dynamic arts industry, and we are a UNESCO City of Literature," he said.

"For more than ten years, the annual Melbourne Prize has made a significant contribution to our city's rich cultural life. The Prize is all about celebrating creative excellence and talent, and providing exceptional career development opportunities for writers, musicians, and sculptors from Melbourne and Victoria," he added.

"I congratulate the winners and wish the finalists every success in their future creative pursuits," said Lord Mayor of Melbourne, Robert Doyle.

Melbourne Prize Trust Executive Director Simon Warrender has been delighted with the response to this year's Prize.

"It has been an excellent year and the response was well above our expectations and continues to grow – thank you to all the 2015 entrants and finalists."

"The generous support and community investment of our 2015 partners and patrons have made it possible to offer the Melbourne Prize 2015 program and exhibition, which reinforce Melbourne and Victoria's reputation as a centre of opportunity for writers. Many of our partners have been with the trust since its inception," he said.

The Vera Moore Foundation is the Principal Partner of the Melbourne Prize for Literature 2015 and Awards.

"The Vera Moore Foundation has always supported the development of the arts in Victoria and in this regard is pleased to support the Melbourne Prize for Literature 2015 and Awards, which this year recognises, rewards and importantly provides opportunities to Victorian writers cross all literary genres," said Ian R M Morrison, Trustee.

**Federation Square** is the exhibition and events partner and 'home' of the Melbourne Prize. This long-term partnership makes it possible for the public, visiting the free public exhibition each November, to engage with abundant talent in literature, music and (urban) sculpture and provides artists, writers and musicians with public exposure, in one of the country's most visited public spaces.

"The Melbourne Prize Trust appreciates Federation Square's generous support, which enhances our creative resources and provides opportunities to promote our abundant artistic talent through the annual Melbourne Prize," added Mr Warrender.

There is a well-known group of past recipients. Please refer to the **annual Melbourne Prize Alumni 2005 to 2014**, including the Melbourne Prize for Literature & Awards 2006, 2009 and 2012 over the page.

The annual Melbourne Prize runs in a three-year cycle to benefit and demonstrate the importance of our creative sectors in Victoria in literature, music and sculpture. It is estimated that, including this year's prize and awards, the Melbourne Prize Trust, which runs the annual Melbourne Prize, will have generated over \$1 million in financial, professional development and public exhibition support of the arts since its foundation in 2004. The finalists this year include:

#### **Melbourne Prize for Literature 2015 finalists**

**Steven Carroll**

**Brenda Niall**

**Christos Tsiolkas**

**Chris Wallace-Crabbe AM**

**Alexis Wright**

#### **Best Writing Award 2015 finalists**

**James Button** *Speechless A year in my father's business*, MUP 2012

**Patricia Cornelius** *Savages*, Playlab 2014

**Andrea Goldsmith** *The Memory Trap*, 4th Estate 2013

**Gideon Haigh** *On Warne* Penguin, Books 2012

**Daniel Keene** *Mother*, Currency Press 2015

**Alex Miller** *Coal Creek*, Allen & Unwin 2013

**John Safran** *Murder in Mississippi*, Penguin Books 2013

**Maria Takolander** *The Double*, Text Publishing 2013

**Abigail Ulman** *Hot Little Hands*, Hamish Hamilton Penguin Books 2015

**Don Watson** *The Bush*, Hamish Hamilton Penguin Books 2014

#### **Writers Prize 2015 finalists**

**Robyn Annear**, *Places Without Poetry*

**Nick Gadd**, *The Unconscious of the City*

**Kate Ryan**, *Psychotherapy for Normal People*

**David Sornig**, *Jubilee: a hymn for Elsie Williams on Dudley Flats*

**Maria Tumarkin**, *No Skin*

To keep up to date with news from this year's Melbourne Prize program, please visit our social media channels:

TWITTER: @Melbourne\_Prize

FACEBOOK: <http://www.facebook.com/pages/Melbourne-Prize/165519083499496>

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**Interviews with the 2015 prize winners and with Melbourne Prize Trust Executive Director, Simon Warrender are available upon request. For more information, please visit [www.melbourneprize.org](http://www.melbourneprize.org) or contact:**

Nicolette Baxter, Royce Communications, T: 03 8628 9320 / M: 0438 143 342

#### **Notes to the editor:**

##### **About the annual Melbourne Prize**

Launched in 2004, the Melbourne Prize Trust was established to recognise and reward talent, excellence and inspire creative development. The Trust achieves this aim by running the annual Melbourne Prize, which is funded by a collaboration of partners and patrons. The Melbourne Prize Trust and annual Melbourne Prize was founded by Executive Director, Simon Warrender. Committee for Melbourne is a founding supporter.

The 2015 identity and finalist exhibition is designed by Founding Partners Cornwell. The Trust appreciates Cornwell's generous support and creative excellence since inception. The exhibition is contracted by Premier Graphics and the catalogue printed with the support of Rothfield Print Management and Spicers Paper. A full list of partners and patrons can be found in this media release or at [www.melbourneprize.org](http://www.melbourneprize.org)

The annual Melbourne Prize operates in a three-year cycle, including the Melbourne Prize for Urban Sculpture, the Melbourne Prize for Literature and the Melbourne Prize for Music. The Melbourne Prize for Music will be offered in 2016.

In 2008 Melbourne was designated by UNESCO as an international City of Literature, second in the world after Edinburgh. Key areas for UNESCO's consideration were Melbourne's distinct cultural and literary history. The designation recognises the importance of literature to the City and the State and the central role that writers have played, and continue to play, in the cultural life of our community.

The annual Melbourne Prize was launched following the unveiling of the children's garden precinct at the Royal Botanic Gardens Melbourne and the commissioning of *The Magic Pudding* sculpture, by Louis Lauman in 2000 through the initiative of the Trust's Executive Director, Simon Warrender. Proceeds from the sale of a limited edition of bronze miniatures of the Botanic Gardens landmark sculpture continue to contribute to the Trust.

##### **Key dates:**

Finalists' work exhibited at Federation Square Monday 9<sup>th</sup> to Monday 23<sup>rd</sup> November 2015


























Winners announced Wednesday 11<sup>th</sup> November 2015

Civic Choice Award 2015 recipient announced Friday 27<sup>th</sup> November 2015

All announcement and information will be available at [www.melbourneprize.org](http://www.melbourneprize.org)

The origins of the Melbourne Prize Trust date back to *The Magic Pudding* sculpture commission and children's garden precinct at the Royal Botanic Garden Melbourne. The Melbourne Prize Trust is a Deductible Gift Recipient and Income Tax Exempt Charity.

**Thank you to our 2015 Partners & Patrons for your generous support**

Principal Patron	Founding Partners	Patrons	Melbourne Prize for Literature 2015 Partners	Best Writing Award 2015 Patron
	<b>Cornwell</b>	Diana Gibson AO		
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	 	 	 	e-Book Partner
				

Exhibition and Design by **Cornwell**

Committee for Melbourne  a founding supporter



**The annual Melbourne Prize  
2005 – 2014 Alumni**

2014	<b>Melbourne Prize for Urban Sculpture 2014</b> Geoff Robinson	<b>Civic Choice Award 2014</b> Kay Abude
	<b>Professional Development Award 2014</b> Kay Abude	<b>Rural &amp; Regional Development Award 2014</b> Aleks Danko
2013	<b>Melbourne Prize for Music 2013</b> Brett Dean	<b>Development Award 2013</b> Kate Kelsey-Sugg
	<b>Outstanding Musicians Award 2013</b> Stephen Magnusson	<b>Civic Choice Award 2013</b> Mick Harvey
2012	<b>Melbourne Prize for Literature 2012</b> Alex Miller	<b>Civic Choice Award 2012</b> Tony Birch
	<b>Best Writing Award 2012</b> Craig Sherborne	
2011	<b>Melbourne Prize for Urban Sculpture 2011</b> Bianca Hester	<b>Civic Choice Award 2011</b> Lucas Maddock & Isaac Greener
	<b>Professional Development Award 2011</b> Lucas Maddock & Isaac Greener	
2010	<b>Melbourne Prize for Music 2010</b> David Jones	<b>Development Award 2010</b> Natalie Bartsch
	<b>Outstanding Musicians Award 2010</b> Ben Northey	
2009	<b>Melbourne Prize for Literature 2009</b> Gerald Murnane	<b>Civic Choice Award 2009</b> Amra Pajalic
	<b>Best Writing Award 2009</b> Nam Le	
2008	<b>Melbourne Prize for Urban Sculpture 2008</b> Alexander Knox	<b>VicUrban Award 2008</b> Louise Paramor
	<b>Professional Development Award 2008</b> Tom Nicholson	<b>Civic Choice Award 2008</b> Elaine Miles
2007	<b>Melbourne Prize for Music 2007</b> Paul Grabowsky	<b>Development Award 2007</b> Julian Langdon
	<b>Outstanding Musicians Award 2007</b> Genevieve Lacey	
2006	<b>Melbourne Prize for Literature 2006</b> Helen Garner	<b>Civic Choice Award 2006</b> Henry von Doussa
	<b>Best Writing Award 2006</b> Chistos Tsiolkas	
2005	<b>Melbourne Prize for Urban Sculpture 2005</b> Open Spatial Workshop	<b>Civic Choice Award 2005</b> Matthew de Moiser
	<b>Professional Development Award 2005</b> Karen Abernethy	