

Katharine Susannah Prichard Short Fiction Awards 2010
Judge's Report

Judge: Will Yeoman, Books Editor, The West Australian

General Comments

The range of subjects, themes and genres was enormous this year, from chick lit, horror and science fiction to stories focussing on love, death, illness, alienation, family relationships, and the environment. There was, however, very little in the way of what one might call literature; that is, most of the authors were content to wade in the shallows rather than take the plunge into deeper waters; the overall use of language too, while on the whole excellent, shied away from the experimental. In addition, the short story form itself was not always utilised to its maximum potential, with many of the plots, for example, being far too ambitious in scope for the 3000-word limit.

Mundaring National Young Writers Encouragement Award (Under 13)

There were five entries this year. 1 was ten years old; four were 11.

Winner

“The Bookshop” by Rachel Denham-White from Glen Forrest, WA (11 years old). A love letter to books, bookshops and the power of the imagination, this engagingly written story powerfully demonstrates how wonderful an experience reading can be for a young person.

“This small cramped shop was her escape, her escape from the bleak, concrete world outside, into a fantasy world of mystery and wonder.”

Mundaring National Young Writers Awards (Under 20)

There were 12 entries this year. Three were 13 years old; four were 15; two were 18 and three were 19.

First Place

“Truth, Consequence and Trivialities” by Veronique Regnard from Riverton, WA (15 years old). A female convict stoically meditates on choice, error and possible redemption en route to Australia from England. A richly imagined interior monologue.

Second Place

“Driven to Distraction” from Emily Paull from Mt Pleasant, WA (19 years old). A girl witnesses a car accident before relating the circumstances that led up to it. A skilfully realised tale of teenage jealousy and complicated friendships.

Commended [in alphabetical order by author]

- “Grandma’s Story” by Melanie Chambers from Berry, NSW (18 years old)
- “Dependence Days” by Raeden Richardson from Mulgrave, VIC (15 years old)
- “The Apple” by Elisa Thompson, North Fremantle, WA (19 years old)
- “Beautiful Tears” by Talia Walker from Abbotsbury, NSW (15 years old)
- “Conspiracy” by Katrina Woodforde from Roseville, NSW (15 years old)

Katharine Susannah Prichard Open Awards

There were 103 entries this year.

First Place

“Lifesavers” by Janeen Samuel from Hamilton, VIC. Three women, each from a different generation and all related, go for a daytrip to the beach. A masterly use of the short story form, the delicate exploration of relationships past and present leading to a satisfying resolution of differences in which the word “lifesaver” takes on multiple meanings.

Second Place

“The Greek, The Dog, Shangri-La and Me” by Janet Woods from O’Connor, WA. This charming story of art, real estate, human relationships and the bond between a man and his dog, while in need of some judicious editing, manages to be both amusing and poignant.

Third Place

“Her Husband’s Son” by Catherine Titasey from Thursday Island, QLD. A powerful story of domestic violence, childbirth and adoption among Torres Strait Islanders. Again, needs some work, but the willingness to tackle tough subjects and complex emotional territory is to be applauded.

Commended [in alphabetical order by author]

“A Time for Dawn”	by Helen Iles from Oldbury, WA
“Tiny Collisions”	by Alice Godwin from Leichhardt, NSW
“Brave Music of a Distant Drum”	by Ruth Gooch from Hastings, VIC
“The Court Singer”	by Ken Moore from Claremont, WA
“A New Day”	by Fiona Skepper from Elwwod, VIC

Special Thanks to our Competition Sponsors.

The Young Writer Categories of the Katharine Susannah Prichard Short Fiction Awards are sponsored by the Shire of Mundaring.