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Media release

Ten outstanding novels recognised in prestigious Miles Franklin Literary Award 2026 longlist

Perpetual, the trustee of the Miles Franklin Literary Award, has unveiled this year’s longlist, featuring ten novels that collectively offer a portrayal of Australian life in all its diversity. Bringing together stories shaped by varied cultural backgrounds, voices and experiences, this selection celebrates the richness and complexity of Australian storytelling today. The works, which include two former longlist winners and one past short-listee, showcase the talent and creativity of authors from across the nation and set the stage for an exciting journey toward the prestigious award.

The Award celebrates novels of the highest literary merit that tell stories about Australian life. The winner will receive \$60,000.

The 2026 Miles Franklin Literary Award longlist is:

Author	Novel	Publisher
Randa Abel-Fattah	<i>Discipline</i>	University of Queensland Press
Dominic Amerena	<i>I Want Everything</i>	Summit Books
Lyn Dickens	<i>Salt Upon the Water</i>	Wakefield Press
Toni Jordan	<i>Tenderfoot</i>	Hachette Australia
Steve MinOn	<i>First Name Second Name</i>	University of Queensland Press
Konrad Muller	<i>My Heart at Evening</i>	Evercreech Editions
Omar Musa	<i>Fierceland</i>	Penguin Random House Australia
Josephine Rowe	<i>Little World</i>	Black Inc
Madeleine Watts	<i>Elegy, Southwest</i>	Ultimo Press
Sean Wilson	<i>You Must Remember This</i>	Affirm Press

According to the judging panel, “Destabilised histories, faltering memories and chequered geographies meet in the pages of the 2026 Miles Franklin longlist. From Far North Queensland to Tasmania and all the way to remote Western Australia, these novels remind us of the vastness of this continent, the many times and places that Australian stories inhabit, and the global networks in which ‘Australian life’ is invariably embedded. This year’s longlist is haunted by ancestral inheritances, the human capacity for self-deception, and the ways we make space for grief. These novels hold up mirrors to little worlds and large ones too.”

The 2026 judges are Richard Neville, Mitchell Librarian of the State Library of NSW and Chair; literary scholar, A/Prof Jumana Bayeh; literary scholar and translator, Dr Mridula Nath Chakraborty; literary scholar and author Prof Tony Hughes-d’Aeth; with literary scholar and Director of AustLit, A/Prof Maggie Nolan.

Last year, the Miles Franklin Literary Award was awarded to Siang Lu for his novel, *Ghost Cities* (2024).

ENDS

For further information about the Miles Franklin Literary Award: <http://www.milesfranklin.com.au/>

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About the Miles Franklin Literary Award www.milesfranklin.com.au

Perpetual is the Trustee for the Miles Franklin Literary Award. The Award was established in 1954 by the estate of *My Brilliant Career* author Stella Maria Sarah Miles Franklin to celebrate the Australian character and creativity. It supports the betterment of Australian literature by each year recognising the novel of the highest literary merit which presents Australian Life in any of its phases. Since being established, the Award has distributed over \$1.54 million in philanthropic funds to authors. Those wishing to be part of the Miles Franklin legacy can donate to the [Franklin Support Fund](#) to become a friend of the Award. Please visit the website for further details.

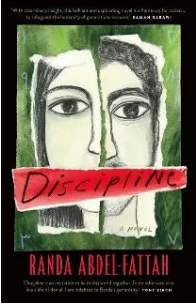

Copyright Agency's Cultural Fund is a long-time supporter of the Miles Franklin Literary Award, providing \$5,000 to each of the finalists and granting more than half a million dollars to this premier Australian literary prize since 2004.

About Perpetual Philanthropic Services

Perpetual is one of Australia's largest managers of philanthropic funds, with \$3.6 billion in funds under advice for charitable trusts and endowment funds (as at 30 June 2024). Perpetual is trustee for over 1000 [charitable trusts and endowments](#) and provides individuals and families with advice on establishing charitable foundations and structured giving programs. Each year Perpetual distributes more than \$123 million to community organisations on behalf of its clients. Perpetual also assists charities and not-for-profit organisations with [investment advice and management](#).

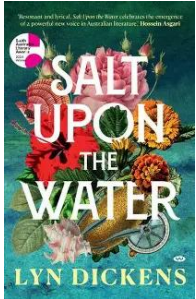
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Background Information – 2026 Miles Franklin Longlist

	<p>Randa Abdel-Fattah <i>Discipline</i></p> <p>BIOGRAPHY: Randa Abdel-Fattah is an ARC Future Fellow at Macquarie University. Her research areas cover Islamophobia, race, Palestine, the war on terror, youth identities and social movement activism. Dr Abdel-Fattah is also a former lawyer and the award-winning author of twelve books for children and young adults, which have been translated into over thirteen languages. She has won and been shortlisted and longlisted for awards including the Australian Book Industry Award, the Australian Book of The Year Award, the Victorian and NSW premiers' literary awards, the Stella Prize, the Children's Book Council Award, Middle East Outreach Council USA and the Astrid Lindgren Memorial Award. Her bilingual English and Arabic picture story book <i>11 Words for Love</i>, illustrated by Maxine Beneba Clarke, was shortlisted for the 2023 Prime Minister's Literary Award.</p> <p>SYNOPSIS: Sydney, May 2021. Ashraf is an academic whose career and personal life are in freefall. Hannah is a young journalist struggling to honour the voices of her community.</p> <p>When a Year 12 student from a local Islamic college is arrested for protesting a university's ties to an Israeli weapons manufacturer, Ashraf sees an opportunity to exploit his personal connection to the situation for professional redemption. Meanwhile Hannah, who is juggling the demands of new motherhood and family trauma, fights racism in the newsroom. As Israel's bombardment of Gaza intensifies into the final weeks of Ramadan, Ashraf and Hannah must reckon with their choices, values and places in their communities. Will they be prepared to make sacrifices in the pursuit of what is right?</p> <p>With a focus on two of today's most contested fields, academia and the media, <i>Discipline</i> tallies the price we all pay when those with privilege choose to remain silent.</p>
	<p>I Want Everything <i>Dominic Amerena</i></p> <p>BIOGRAPHY: Dominic Amerena's work has been widely published. <i>I Want Everything</i> is his debut novel, and has been published in multiple territories and languages. It won the Readings Prize, the MUD Literary Award and the Speculate Prize. He lives between Melbourne and Athens, Greece.</p> <p>SYNOPSIS: It starts with a lie. One small lie to get everything he wants. But one lie leads to another, and another. Caught in his own web of deception, how can he recognise the truth? And what is it going to cost him?</p> <p>The legendary career of reclusive cult author Brenda Shales remains one of Australia's last unsolved literary mysteries. Her books took the literary world by storm before she disappeared from the public eye after a mysterious plagiarism case. But when an ambitious young writer stumbles across Brenda at a Melbourne pool, he realises the scoop of a lifetime is floating in front of him: the truth behind why she vanished without a trace. The only problem? He must pretend to be someone he's not to trick the story out of her.</p> <p>One innocent lie leads to a slew that are definitively not innocent, as Brenda reveals the strange and troubling truth of where her books came from. Yet the more the young author unravels about Brenda's past, the more he begins to question whether Brenda is a reliable narrator. Is Brenda spilling secrets or</p>

spinning tales? Is she, like him, little more than a talented thief? Just who is deceiving whom? To write the book which will make his name, he must balance his ethics and ambition and decide what he's willing to sacrifice to become the next great Australian writer.

This astonishing debut, full of delicious twists and wicked insights, is a dazzling novel of desire and deception, authorship and authenticity, and the costs of creative ambition

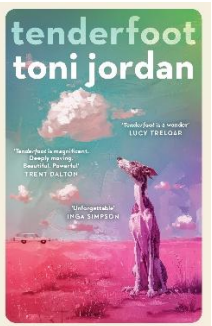


Lyn Dickens
Salt Upon the Water

BIOGRAPHY:
Lyn Dickens is an award-winning writer, editor, and academic living on unceded Kaurna land. Her debut novel *Salt Upon the Water* was the winner of the 2024 Arts South Australia Wakefield Press Unpublished Manuscript Award and published in 2025. She was the 2025 Arts and Culture category winner of the Asian Australian Leadership Awards and a Caruso Fellow at the Katharine Susannah Prichard Writers Centre. Her work has won and been listed for a number of awards. Lyn has a PhD from the University of Sydney and is a member of the JM Coetzee Centre for Creative Practice at Adelaide University.

SYNOPSIS:
1836. The liberated, mixed heritage Clarissa FitzRoy lands on the glittering shores of the South Australian coast determined to confront Surveyor General Colonel William Light about her past, and find her missing mother. For Light, Clarissa's arrival is a flashpoint, upending the new colony and compelling him to face both his complicity in colonial violence and the promise of a different future. But Clarissa has agendas of her own, and the tidal force of their reunion will reveal one final, devastating secret.

Sweeping from the pleasure gardens of London to the canals of Venice, the streets of Calcutta to the island of Penang, Lyn Dickens' award-winning novel is a love story blending magical realism with historical detail, charting the shattering effects of the British East India Company across the globe. A ground-breaking, poetic debut.

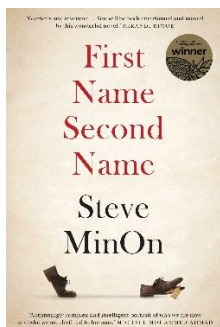


Toni Jordan
Tenderfoot

BIOGRAPHY:
Toni Jordan has worked as a molecular biologist, quality control chemist, TAB operator and door-to-door aluminium siding salesperson. She is the author of the international bestseller *Addition*, which was longlisted for the Miles Franklin Award and has been adapted into a feature film, in cinemas in 2026. Her novel *Nine Days* was awarded Best Fiction at the 2012 Indie Awards and was named in *Kirkus Reviews'* top 10 Historical Novels of 2013; *Our Tiny, Useless Hearts*, was longlisted for the International Dublin Literary Award; and her two Schnabel family novels, *Dinner with the Schnabels* and *Prettier if She Smiled More*, were critically acclaimed. Toni has been published widely in newspapers and magazines. She holds a Bachelor of Science in physiology and a PhD in Creative Arts and lives in Melbourne. *Tenderfoot* is her eighth novel.

SYNOPSIS:
Brisbane, 1975: Andie Tanner's world is small but whole. Her mum is complicated, but she adores her dad and the kennel of racing greyhounds that live under their house. Andie is a serious girl with plans: finish school with her friends, then apprentice to her father until she can become a greyhound trainer, with dogs of her very own.

But real life rarely goes to plan, and the world is bigger and more complicated than Andie could imagine. When she loses everything she cares about - her family, her friends, the dogs - it's up to Andie to reclaim her future. She will need all her wits to survive this new reality of secrets and half-truths, addictions and crime.



Steve MinOn
First Name Second Name

BIOGRAPHY:

Steve MinOn was an internationally awarded advertising copywriter and a restaurateur before becoming a writer of fiction and children’s picture books. He grew up in North Queensland, and he now lives on Turrbal land in Magandjin/ Brisbane. Steve’s debut novel *First Name Second Name* (UQP 2025) won the Glendower Award for an Emerging Queensland Writer and was shortlisted for People’s Choice at the Queensland Literary Awards. In 2026, it was shortlisted for the MUD Literary Award and nominated for the Dublin Literary Award. He has written often about outsiders and his family’s mixed-race ancestral history, and his articles and short stories have been published in *SBS Voices* and various newspapers and anthologies. His children’s picture book *Make Them Say Poo* (Affirm Press 2026) was illustrated by Rudi de Wet.

SYNOPSIS:

The journey will be long and difficult, one thousand miles. Try not to be too obvious. Stick to the backroads. You’ll know you’ve arrived when you get there.

Stephen Bolin leaves a bizarre note by his deathbed, asking his sisters to take his body back to his birthplace in Far North Queensland. When they ignore his request, Stephen’s corpse makes the nocturnal pilgrimage alone. But what is compelling him and what will he find there?

His journey, as a kind of jiangshi, takes him back through his turbulent family history: from his Chinese great-grandfather’s life on the goldfields in 1860s Queensland, to his Scottish grandparents’ migration to Australia as ten-pound Poms, and to his own coming of age and coming out in Brisbane and London.

Original and satirical, *First Name Second Name* follows four generations of one family through a reckoning with racial, familial and sexual identity.



Konrad Muller
My Heart At Evening

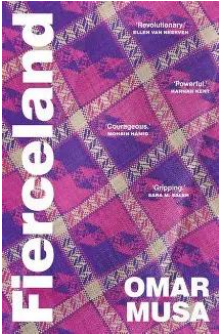
BIOGRAPHY:

Konrad Muller grew up in Melbourne, studied Arabic in Cairo, and was posted as an Australian diplomat to Egypt, Israel and the Occupied Territories. He now works on a small family vineyard in northern Tasmania. His essays and short stories have appeared in *The London Magazine*. *My Heart At Evening* is his first novel.

SYNOPSIS:

1832. The artist, architect, and surveyor of Van Diemen’s Land, Henry Hellyer, is found dead in his room, his brains blown out with a horse pistol, at the headquarters of the notorious Van Diemen’s Land Company in the island’s remote northwest. An unnamed Special Agent is summoned out of retirement to investigate the case. That Special Agent, a former Danish convict (based on the historical figure of Jorgen Jorgensen), has his own troubled past. When the puzzle is solved, he walks home to his wife, rehearsing in his mind the dark truths he has unearthed about the surveyor’s death and himself.

Based on real events, this is a short novel that explores such themes as the enigma of character, jealousy, homophobia, and the problem of suicide, against the backdrop of early colonial Tasmania, with its isolation and enveloping violence, including the island’s genocidal war.



Omar Musa
Fierceland

BIOGRAPHY:

Omar Musa is an author, visual artist, rapper and poet from Queanbeyan, Australia. He has written two novels (including *Fierceland*), three books of poetry, five hip-hop records, and two plays, *Since Ali Died* and *The Offering (A Plastic Ocean Oratorio)*, with cellist Mariel Roberts Musa. His work has appeared in Poetry Magazine, *The Best Australian Stories* and *Best of Australian Poems*.

His debut novel *Here Come the Dogs* was long-listed for the International Dublin Literary Award and Miles Franklin Award and he was named one of the Sydney Morning Herald's Young Novelists of the Year in 2015. *Fierceland* won the Victorian Premier's Literary Award for Fiction.

He has had several solo exhibitions, including *The Hurt Business*.

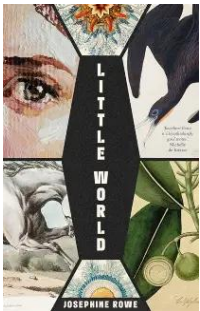
SYNOPSIS:

How do you mourn your father when you know his secrets?

After many years abroad, Roz and Harun return to Malaysian Borneo for the funeral of their father Yusuf – and to reckon with their inheritance. A renowned palm-oil baron during Malaysia's economic rise, Yusuf built the family's immense wealth by destroying huge tracts of rainforest. What his children know is that he was also responsible for the violent disappearance of a man who stood in his way.

Harun has become a successful tech entrepreneur in Los Angeles, Roz is an artist struggling to stay afloat in Sydney. Now they want to return something their father stole from the forests of their homeland. In their quest for redemption they grapple with the legacy of power and corruption, dreamers and exiles, thugs and zealots. Most dangerous of all, they are haunted – by the ghosts of colonialism, the ghosts of family, the ghosts of language, and the ghosts of the forest itself.

A trailblazing journey across the globe, *Fierceland* weaves the past and the present into an emotionally powerful family saga that plays out at a mythical scale.



Josephine Rowe
Little World

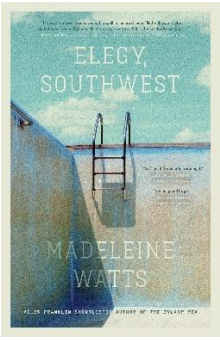
BIOGRAPHY:

Josephine Rowe is the author of three story collections and two novels, including *A Loving, Faithful Animal*, longlisted for the 2017 Miles Franklin and selected as a New York Times Editors' Choice. She has twice been named a Sydney Morning Herald Best Young Australian Novelist, and her collection *Here Until August* was shortlisted for the 2020 Stella Prize. Rowe holds fellowships from the Wallace Stegner Program at Stanford University, and the Dorothy and Lewis B. Cullman Fellowship at the New York Public Library, among others. She currently lives in coastal Victoria.

SYNOPSIS:

Little World begins in 1950s Australia, where a mysterious incorruptible girl—believed to be a saint—comes into the care of a retired engineer. Though seemingly lifeless, she is conscious, quietly observing the world around her.

Spanning decades and continents, the novel follows interconnected lives from Panama to Nauru to contemporary Victoria, exploring belief, longing, and the search for meaning in an uncertain world.



Madeleine Watts
Elegy, Southwest

BIOGRAPHY:

Madeleine Watts is a writer of fiction, stories, and essays. Her debut novel, *The Inland Sea*, was shortlisted for the 2021 Miles Franklin Literary Award and the UTS Glenda Adams Award for New Writing. Her writing has been published in *Harper's Magazine*, *The Believer*, *HEAT*, *The White Review*, *Literary Hub*, *The Paris Review Daily*, *Los Angeles Review of Books*, *The Irish Times*, *Bookforum*, and *Meanjin* among others. She is the winner of the 2015 Griffith Review Novella Competition.

Madeleine grew up in Sydney, and sometimes Melbourne. After a decade living in New York, she is now based in Berlin.

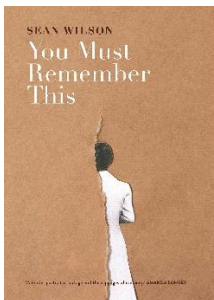
Elegy, Southwest is her second novel.

SYNOPSIS:

In November 2018 Eloise and Lewis rent a car in Las Vegas and take off on a two-week road trip across the American southwest. While wildfires rage, the married couple make their way through Nevada, California, Arizona, and Utah, tracing the course of the Colorado River, the aquatic artery on which the Southwest depends for survival. Lewis, an artist working for a prominent land art foundation, is grieving the recent death of his mother, while Eloise is an academic researching the past and future of the Colorado River as it threatens to run dry.

Over the course of their trip, Eloise, beginning to suspect she might be pregnant, helplessly witnesses Lewis's descent as he struggles to find a place for himself in the desert where he never quite felt at home.

***Elegy, Southwest* is a novel which entwines a tragic love story with an intelligent and profound consideration of the way we now live alongside environmental breakdown; an elegy for lost love and for the landscape that makes us.**



Sean Wilson
You Must Remember This

BIOGRAPHY:

Sean Wilson is a writer, playwright and communications professional from Perth, Western Australia. His short stories have been published in Australian and international journals, anthologies and literary magazines including *Island* and *Narrative*, and he was previously shortlisted for the Patrick White Playwrights Award by Sydney Theatre Company. He now lives in Melbourne with his fiancée. *Gemini Falls* is his first book.

SYNOPSIS:

You Must Remember This is an eloquent jumble of a family story, as experienced by Grace, an elderly woman with dementia trying to get her moorings in a worsening storm. It contemplates the perils of remembering and forgetting, making your own way in the world and how we seem bound to repeat the patterns of the past. Most profoundly it's about sensing what it's like to live on while your faculties dim, and about finding peace.