

8.12. 2020 Nan Manefield Young Writers' Award

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ATTACHMENTS:

1. Filming the Announcement Video - Mayors Speech [**8.12.1** - 1 page]
2. Sample of Email Feedback Received [**8.12.2** - 2 pages]
3. Sample Pages from 2020 YWA e-Book [**8.12.3** - 6 pages]

PURPOSE:

This report provides a summary of the annual Nan Manefield Young Writer's Award as run by Stanton Library.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY:

The annual Nan Manefield Young Writers' Award was announced in Library and Information Week, May 2020. This is the 31st year that the award has been run by North Sydney Council, and the 6th in honour of Nan Manefield.

This year the restrictions placed by COVID-19 shutdowns created an environment for Stanton Library to move contact with the local community to almost entirely online. It also provided great opportunity through this award, for engagement with school students and their families while they were homeschooling during COVID-19 isolation.

A number of new measures were developed to replace in-person contact of previous years. Highlights include moving the Awards Night to a video presentation and the publication of an eBook of the winning entries.

The quality and amount of entries remained strong with nearly 300 entries, over 30 schools represented, and the winners received prizes totaling nearly \$4,000.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS:

There is an allocated budget of \$5,000 to deliver the Young Writers Award annually.

RECOMMENDATION:

1. **THAT** the report be received.

LINK TO COMMUNITY STRATEGIC PLAN

The relationship with the Community Strategic Plan is as follows:

4. Our Social Vitality

4.3 North Sydney supports lifelong learning

BACKGROUND

The Young Writer's Award was first held in 1990. In 1998 it was named for former Councillor, the late Dr Bill Coppel, and in 2015, in honor of Nan Manefield.

The late Nan Manefield was a Librarian at North Sydney Boys High School and a lifelong champion of literacy and local history, giving 30 years of service as a citizen member on several of Council's Library and Historical Services Committees.

CONSULTATION REQUIREMENTS

Community engagement is not required.

DETAIL

This year was the 31st year of the Award and it was a very successful year, given the restrictions related to COVID-19 and the temporary library closure. It was possible to make changes to all aspects of the running of the award in order to bring it online.

There were a substantial number of entries, showing that both local school and individuals were keen to write and engage with the award. The judges noted that the quality of entries was as strong as in previous years.

The highlights of moving this award online included;

The 3 Writing Masterclasses that were opened to place getters in the award and conducted on Zoom by one of the judges; Will Kostakis.

The publishing of an eBook of the winning entries and making this eBook available via BorrowBox for all members of the community to borrow and read. This was facilitated by Megan Tolnay [Customer Experience Librarian] and was very well received by schools and families.

In place of the annual Awards Night, an announcement video was created. This featured the judges announcing each winner, and the winners speaking about their writing inspiration and reading their winning pieces. Each of the winners and the judges filmed

themselves at home and sent in their clips for inclusion. Ben Sutton, Council's Digital Communications officer filmed the Mayor for this video presentation and completed the editing of the final video. This video can be viewed on the North Sydney Council YouTube page, and to date it has received 320 views.

Other Covid-19 related changes included: All entries were submitted electronically via the website. All communication with the judges was via email and entries allocated to judge's via file sharing. Winner's certificates and prizes were sent by post, and cash prizes were electronically transferred. Promotion through social media including the new Stanton Library Instagram account @Stanton_Library

The judges of the award are award winning, published authors: Will Kostakis, Ceridwen Dovey, Tim Sinclair, Erin Gough, and Ursula Dubosarsky (the Current Australian Children's Laureate).

Prizes totaled nearly \$4000. Sponsors of the Award are: North Sydney Council, Ensemble Theatre, Sydney Living Museums, Taronga Zoo, Wildlife Sydney Zoo, World Book, Books Kinokuniya, and The Constant Reader Bookshop.

The 2020 major prize winners for the five age groups were:

11 years: Gemma Clark for *Home*

12 years: Jessica Ellis for *Veritas*

13 years: Emma Baldwin for *A Piece of Home*

14-15 years: Elizabeth Sutherland for *Somewhere Else*

16-18 years: Bessie Yuan for *My Father*

Information about the winners, a link to the announcement video and to the published eBook is available on the Council website at www.northsydney.nsw.gov.au/YWA



Samples of email feedback received:

Thank you so much for having notified me about this as I'm very glad to have been recognised by the prize! I hope that you're keeping safe. Once again, thank you so much! Kind regards,
- Quang [Highly Commended Prize 16-18 yrs]

I appreciate the time you have taken to organise the delivery of the prize and the logistics of this competition.
- Bessie [Winner 16-18 yrs]

I have just watched the video and it's sensational! The best online awards ceremony I've seen by a mile. Congratulations to all. Very much looking forward to seeing everybody in person for next years' awards.
- Erin Gough [Judge]

Wonderful Yasmin! congratulations on making it all happen again this year. ...it was a real pleasure to be involved and I'll certainly put up my hand for next year. Warm wishes,
- Ursula Dubosarsky [Judge]

Fantastic work Yasmin, and the entire Stanton team! So good that you could keep it going in this strangely strange time! ...and of course, count me in for next year!
- Tim Sinclair [Judge]

Congrats for keeping the competition thriving in such a strange time.
- Will Kostakis [Judge]

Congrats on making this happen even under such difficult circumstances. As always, a pleasure to be involved!
- Ceridwen Dovey [Judge]

Thank you for your much-appreciated emails and correspondence! I was thrilled to hear that I have received a Merit Certificate!! ...I am extremely grateful and honoured to be receiving this award!
- Angelique [Merit certificate 12 yrs]

Thanks again for the wonderful news. I really appreciate the chance to participate in such a fun competition, and I'm really looking forward to attending the writer's masterclass.
- Annie Ming [Commended Award 14-15 yrs]

Aaron is very proud of his story and has brought his work and certificate to the school and spoken to his teacher about this. ...They talked about writings in the class yesterday and teacher introduces another writing competition into the class. Sounds like Aaron's work is promoting more good writings in school. Thanks again for your time to organize this amazing event!
- Amy [Parent]

Thanks for organising the competition- it's great to have the opportunity to challenge our students in this way. And what challenge in term of organisation!! Looking forward to the pre-recorded video.
- Karen [Teacher]

Oh wow! That's exciting 😊 I'll definitely let the Teachers and the school know. I'm so pleased that we had someone enter; I did encourage them before we left for the term so

it's great to see that it worked. I look forward to hearing her work read aloud.

- Sharlene [Teacher-Librarian]

I would like to thank you and your colleagues for running such a great competition for our young writers. Kind regards

- Megan [Headmistress]

Sample pages from the published eBook
YWA 2020 Finalists



Nan Manefield Young Writer's Award

**Nan Manefield Young Writer's Award
2020 : the finalists / North Sydney
Council**

Gemma Clark, North Sydney Council

Award winning stories and poems from the 2020
North Sydney Council Young Writer's Award.

For
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PREVIEW

BORROW 



Sample pages from the published eBook
YWA 2020 Finalists

INTRODUCTION

Welcome to North Sydney Council's first eBook of the Nan Manefield Young Writers Award. These awards are usually announced at an event in Stanton Library and copies of the winning entries published on Council's website and displayed in the library.

With the COVID-19 pandemic, we've had to change many things in our lives, and our Young Writers Award is one of them. In place of a presentation we have created a video which includes the young authors and poets talking about their inspiration and reading their winning entries, as well as a few words from our judges. You can find a link to it on our website.

To complement the presentation video, we have created this wonderful eBook that will allow you to browse the winning entries at your leisure.

Before you delve in, I would like to acknowledge and thank our fantastic panel of judges:

- children's author and current Australian Children's Laureate; Ursula Dubosarsky,
- award winning young adult author Erin Gough,
- young adult author and poet Tim Sinclair,
- award winning young adult author Will Kostakis,
- and
- internationally published author and social anthropologist Ceridwen Dovey.

Page 6 of 63

Sample pages from the published eBook
YWA 2020 Finalists

I would also like to thank all the marvellous authors and poets who took part, as well as the parents, carers and teachers who support them. Finally, I would like to thank our library team, especially Yasmin Greenhalgh, Megan Tolnay and Eliza Luciano, who have allowed the work of our young authors to shine, despite the difficult circumstances of this year.

I am always amazed at the depth of talent of the young people who enter the Young Writers Award. This year is no exception. I hope you enjoy reading the entertaining, comforting, challenging and inspiring short stories and poems presented here.

Jilly Gibson
Mayor

Sample pages from the published eBook
YWA 2020 Finalists

WINNER

My Father

by Bessie Yuan

I grew up in the furniture store.

The faithful little store stood in the midst of main street, a cobalt blue sign next to a moon reminiscent of the 'DreamWorks Animation' logo, proclaiming it's goods. Behind the gated windows, people would peek in to see the wide array of furniture. It was a small store, with a single aisle that you could pick your way through, admiring the rounded or carved chair legs, feel the springiness of the mattresses.

My father, the furniture deliverer.

I'd wait for him in the store, watching him leave from the back steps, the truck pulling away with the promise of return.

I loved it there, my own personal haven. There were mattresses separated by tallboys, single wardrobes and dressers. Chairs were stacked up the walls, dusty, worn cardboard price tags hanging from their legs.

The first hours I would annoy the shopkeeper, a frazzled, greying lady. I still remember the smell – her perfume, musty mixed with the smell of

Page 53 of 63

Sample pages from the published eBook
YWA 2020 Finalists

HIGHLY COMMENDED

Lord of the flies

by Duy Quang Mai

10:07 at central station,
platform one, too many
overcoats. walked
wide steps. lord of the
flies, roslyn theatre.
led bulbs reddened
with flesh. it is what it is.
returned under dense night.
now soundless, thinking.
said people like flies.
i laughed. moon
the head of pig. then cried,
preying by want. through
the bloodied landscape.
of quickening restaurants
and stale-dough perfume.
talks measured in meters,
windless. walking with friend.
said the play something
about silenced democracy.
couldn't vote for the lord.
this body. tumbling feet.
soreful winter. too cold
tonight. how are you.

Page 57 of 63

Sample pages from the published eBook
YWA 2020 Finalists

COMMENDED

La rivière de mes pensées

by Annie Ming Kowalik

For AM

Green is such a fickle colour.
Wavering between the deep water-logged depths of
aquamarine –
straw like the ash of chartreuse
it likes to hover around the edges
pulsing with mint and a hint of something chemical.
And in the paint-freckled cervices of the wrinkled
skin
on the sweaty broken palms of my twitching hands.
And in the end arcing of the sparks
between connections turning off and on again,
My neurons synapse:
They tell me that inside the hollow vase
The box
The eggshell cracked, webbed with veins, of my
skull.
There should be light. Laughter.
They tell me that inside that coloured canvas,
The delicate structure of the amygdala.
The brain – wider than the sky, deeper than the sea
should be warm and oiled. It all works and whirs like
the clichéd mental clock.