

*25th ANNIVERSARY
EYRE WRITERS AWARDS 2020
RESULTS*

Open Short Story Award

<i>1st Prize \$250 + Trophy</i>	Searching in Shadowland	Colleen Russell	Avalon Beach	NSW
<i>Highly Commended</i>	Things of Value	Diane Hester	Port Lincoln	SA
<i>Commended</i>	A Bunch of Flowers	Pamela Baker	Queenscliff	VIC

Tom Black Memorial Award: Open Poetry

<i>1st Prize \$250 + Trophy</i>	The Remittance Man's Table	Helen van Rooijen	Port Lincoln	SA
<i>Highly Commended</i>	Sober and Sane	Tom McIlveen	Port Macquarie	NSW
<i>Commended</i>	Limestone Coast	Janeen Samuel	Morgiana	VIC

Aileen Pluker: Junior Short Story Award

<i>1st Prize \$50 + Trophy</i>	This is Tragedy	Braden Windsor	Port Lincoln	SA
<i>2nd Prize \$30</i>	The Heist	Ryan Windsor	Port Lincoln	SA
<i>3rd Prize \$20</i>	Where's Charlotte?	Ahmari Guamen	Port Lincoln	SA

Helen van Rooijen: Junior Poetry Award

<i>1st Prize \$50 + Trophy</i>	Depressing Poem	Lachlan Forsyth	Port Lincoln	SA
<i>2nd Prize \$30</i>	The Homeland	Ethan Ma	Killara	NSW
<i>3rd Prize \$10</i>	The Indigenous Interpretation	Natasha Ngayen	Sunshine North	VIC
<i>4th Prize \$10</i>	Night of Wonder	Clara Neate	Port Lincoln	SA

JUDGES COMMENTS

Open Short Story Award – Dionie McNair

1st Prize - *Searching in Shadowland* captures the emotions well. Well written.

Highly Commended - *Things of Value* has great use of descriptions and captures the emotions of the characters well.

Commended - *A Bunch of Flowers* expresses the uncertainties of family connections.

Tom Black Memorial Award: Open Poetry – Jude Aquilina

It was an honour to judge the 2020 Eyre Writers 25th Anniversary Awards. The number of entries in the open poetry section was pleasing and the quality very high. I enjoyed the variety of poetic styles including traditional forms, free verse, narrative and humorous poems. The themes were also diverse and included dogs, fishing, politics, nature, old age, rural life, war, love, death and family. Congratulations to every poet who entered and whose poems entertained and enlightened me as I judged.

1st Prize - *The Remittance Man's Table*

Following the life an antique table, this narrative poem reminded me of the movie *The Red Violin*, where an object is the central thread. The Remittance Man's Table travels from an English manor to an Australian squatter's hut and through recent bushfires. Rich descriptions and vivid imagery made the poem stand out. For example, the image of a child's swing after a bushfire, *a smoking crisp tyre doughnut...* and morning sounds when *a magpie filled its throat to scat a melody*. This is the language of memorable poetry! Congratulations to the Tom Black Memorial Award winner!

Highly Commended – Sober and Sane

This poem, 'Sober and Sane' really resonated, with its tight rhyme and rhythm and its raw honesty. Themes of addiction, mental health and the justice system are topical, but not easy to write about. The poet has excelled in writing a hard-hitting, realistic narrative poem that shows how it is for many in our community. I like the sense of pride and resilience that shines through and balances the dark with light.

Commended – Limestone Coast

The poem 'Limestone Coast' captures a sense of timelessness, of slow change and the fleeting brevity of human life compared to nature's unhurried evolution. The language and word choices are apt. I like the sense of movement, the use of alliteration and the subtle rhythms.

Aileen Plaker: Junior Short Story Award

All entries were well presented. There was a good use of language, suitable to the characters they were representing. Some entries were over descriptive in developing their characters and seemed to have some difficulty finding a satisfactory ending.

A good effort.

Helen van Rooijen: Junior Poetry Award

1st Prize - Depressing Poem

One hopes that this poem is merely a deep discussion on suicide but it is saved by the usage of words.

I especially liked the opening - an 'ocean of concrete' and 'river of headlights' that so describes a city. The poet's struggle with the perceived weight of the world and betrayal by the powerful forces of society leads to the feeling to give up: but fate should intervene and let the wind make that decision. Though the 'ocean opened its arms' and the 'lights of its river dimmed' but at the conclusion there was a smile and the opening of the door one assumes can only lead to a positive reckoning.

I would have liked the title to have been included and at times elements of grammar let the poem down.

2nd - The Homeland

This entry described the effects of the drought - 'bone thin, their skin hanging on the very bones that, so long ago, threatened to snap under the weight of their flesh' was a fabulous contrast description of stock. But the poem became a downward spiralling list and had the descriptive element continued then it would have shone brighter as a piece of work. Still it was a worthy poem.

3rd - The Indigenous Interpretation

I think the poet's usage of rhyme, while it was reasonably attempted, curtailed word and feeling descriptions. The instructions to continue were un-necessary and the poem could have been improved without it. Linking the element of fog to European settlement, understanding and Indigenous ignorance was a clever way to tell the story and was an inspired method.

4th - Night of Wonder

This poem had the opportunity of becoming a little gem but there just wasn't enough words or description to get there. Learning to move away from ordinary or cliché words and phrases would enhance the piece. Next time give me more please...