



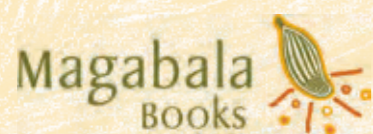
Magabala
Books 

2018 ANNUAL REPORT

Magabala Books acknowledges Yawuru, the traditional owners and custodians of Broome. We honour the Yawuru Elders past and present and are privileged to share and walk this special country together.

We also acknowledge the traditional lands of our authors, illustrators, staff and Board members, and pay our respects to their Elders, communities and families.

We respectfully caution Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander readers that this report contains images of people who have passed away.



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magabalabooks

ABN 56 764 219 082

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Australian Government



Australia Council
for the Arts



GOVERNMENT OF
WESTERN AUSTRALIA

Department of
Local Government, Sport
and Cultural Industries

Cover artwork by Dub Leffler, from *Black Cockatoo*

Overleaf: Rachel Bin Salleh, Margaret Whiskin and Anna Moulton with author-illustrators Bronwyn Houston and Josie Boyle at the Paper Bird Kombi, Perth Writers Festival.

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“Every decision we make we think about those old people who took on board that [publishing] challenge, and what a challenge it would have been.” – EDIE WRIGHT

Magabala Books is Australia's leading Indigenous publisher

Aboriginal owned and led, we are guided by our strong cultural foundations and the dynamism of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander stories.

Since 1987, we have balanced our relationship to country and culture with our status as a national publisher. We educate the Australian and international community on the multiplicity of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures and voices. We do this through the publication and distribution of quality titles by Indigenous writers, storytellers, artists and illustrators from all over Australia, and by supporting their professional development.

Our vision

To inspire and empower Indigenous people to share their stories.

Our purpose

To celebrate the talent and diversity of Australian Indigenous voices through the publication of quality literature.

Spreading the seeds of our culture

Magabala is the Nyul Nyul, Nyangumarta, Karajarri and Yawuru traditional language word for the bush banana:

“When the fruit dries up it splits and the seeds fly off and stick onto other trees and that’s where it grows and that’s our culture dispersing across the land and engraining itself in someone’s mind” – MERRILEE LANDS, MAGABALA AUTHOR, FORMER EDITOR AND DESIGNER



2018



A message from the Chair

Edie Wright



What a remarkable year! With a record number of new release titles and record sales of \$2.3 million (a 43% increase on 2017 sales), it gives me great pleasure to acknowledge Magabala Books' incredible achievements in 2018. The organisation continues to grow from strength to strength and in 2018 delivered over and above expectations, across all areas.

In 2018, Magabala was recognised as the 7th fastest growing independent publisher in Australia (with a turnover under \$10m). This is a monumental milestone for Magabala and we recognise that this was in a large part due to the success of *Dark Emu*, which, thanks to the strategic new edition published in 2018, continues to reach and change audiences across the country and beyond.

We published our most diverse list yet, ranging from poetry to junior fiction for reluctant readers, from cultural biography to speculative fiction. We continued our commitment to new and one-time authors and illustrators, with 55% of our 2018 creators published for the first time. The Board is very proud of Magabala's role in launching careers and providing a safe space where authors can, as Alison Whittaker has said, "push the boundaries".

Our titles continued to be acknowledged in national awards and we made our mark internationally, as *Dark Emu* was published in the UK, *Steve Goes to Carnival* in the US and a Galacian translation of *Once there was a Boy* (Spain). Magabala Books was also shortlisted for the *Bologna Prize for Best Children's Publisher of the Year* in the Oceania category.

Magabala significantly expanded its professional development programs offered to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander authors and illustrators, including the Kimberley Children's Art Series project, offering mentoring to artists in six art centres across the Kimberley. In 2018 we announced Johnny Warrkatja Malibirr as the inaugural winner of the Kestin Illustrator Award, and launched the Daisy Utemorra Award: a new national award for an unpublished manuscript of junior or YA fiction. We were especially thrilled to announce our partnership with the State Government of Western Australia to present this Award under the WA Premier's Book Awards.

Our commitment to culturally and historically important stories is ongoing, and we expanded the philanthropic Cultural Fund to support new and old works, and providing manuscript development support for significant elders' stories.

Our educational objective to ensure that Indigenous books are included in national and state reading lists from Foundation to Year 12 was progressed with our partnership with the Australian Association of Teachers of English and Reading Australia for the development of secondary teacher resources.

Celebrating this unprecedented success, the Board recognises that Magabala would not be in this position without the support of our funding bodies, and our growing partnerships with Trusts and Foundations. I would particularly like to acknowledge the incredible hard work of our small team of staff, who work tirelessly to make Magabala the best publishing house it can be for our creators and readers. I would also like to sincerely thank the CEO Anna Moulton and Publisher Rachel Bin Salleh for their hard work, leadership and ongoing commitment everyday to the organisation. The Directors continue to strategically guide Magabala to be the best it can be and I would like to acknowledge their professionalism, dignity and vision.

It strikes us that after 31 years of operation, Magabala Books has reached something of an exciting turning point. National interest in Indigenous stories is growing and Magabala is well positioned to ensure that the strength, talent and diversity of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander voices is recognised and celebrated.

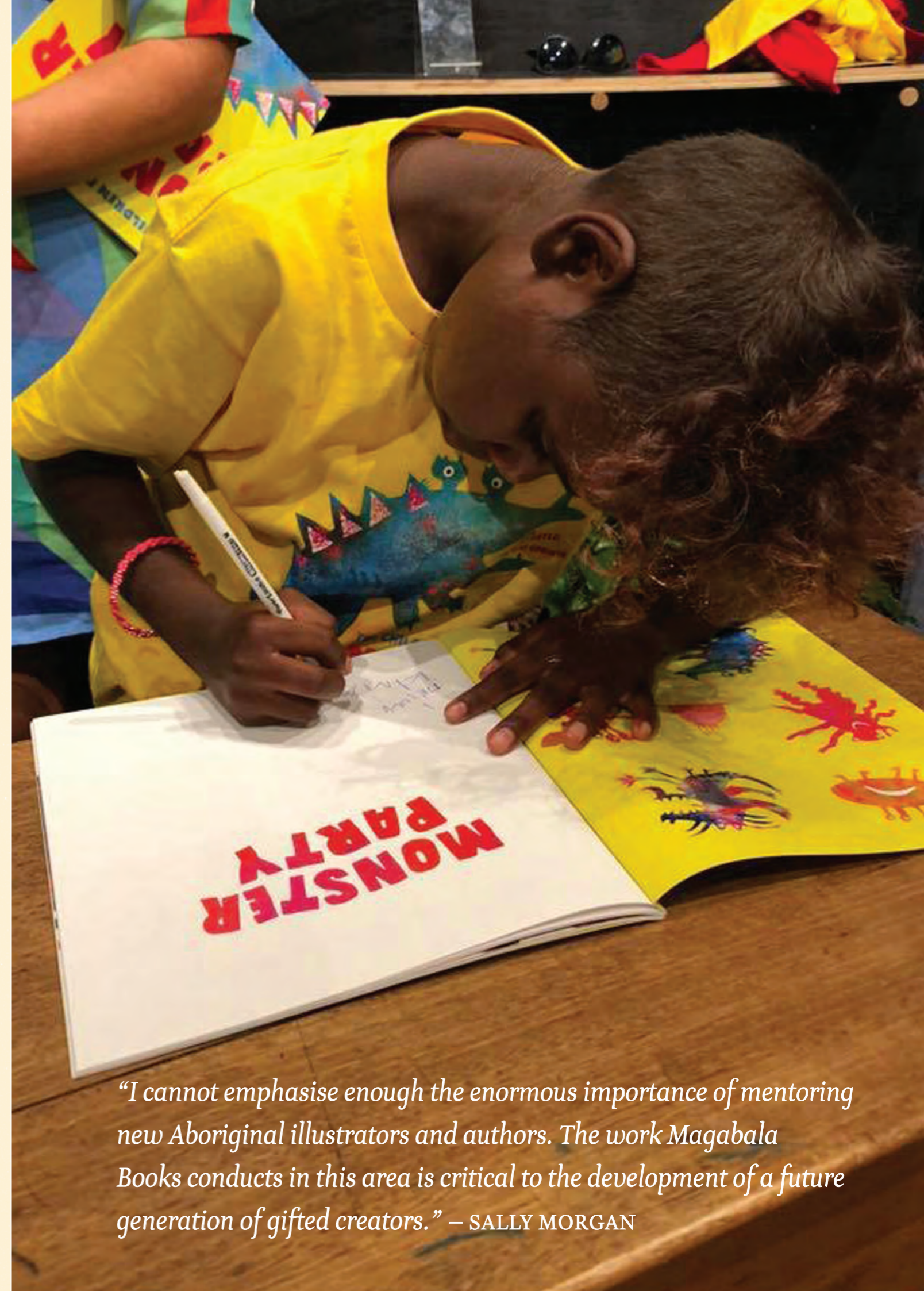
Thank you to our authors and illustrators, partners and distributors, and to our readers, who trust and support what we do.

Edie Wright, Chairperson

Highlights

- New records: 15 new release titles and 147,363 books sold.
- Publication across wide breadth of genres: 7x children's picture books, 2x poetry collections, 2x memoirs/cultural histories, 3x YA fiction, 1 adult fiction.
- No.7 in Nielsen BookScan's Top 10 Heatseekers list for 2018 – 7th strongest growth over the past 5 years of Australian small publishers.
- International rights: *Dark Emu* published in UK and US (Scribe UK). *Steve Goes to Carnival* published in US (Candlewick Press).
- Magabala shortlisted for the *Bologna Prize for Best Children's Publisher of the Year* in the Oceania category.
- New edition of *Dark Emu*: strategic redesign/released alongside Bangarra Dance production. New edition sold over 30,000 copies in 6 months.
- *Steve goes to Carnival* Exhibition at the State Library of Western Australia as part of the 'Awesome Arts Festival'.
- Announcement of the Daisy Utemorrah Award for an unpublished manuscript of junior or YA fiction, supported by CAL Cultural Fund. New partnership with State Government of Western Australia and the State Library of WA to present as part of the WA Premier's Book Awards.

Opposite: Next generation Rawa storyteller signs his book at the launch of *Monster Party* in Melbourne.



“I cannot emphasise enough the enormous importance of mentoring new Aboriginal illustrators and authors. The work Magabala Books conducts in this area is critical to the development of a future generation of gifted creators.” – SALLY MORGAN



“Magabala Books is a leading light in the Australian independent publishing sector... Their unique and worthy books are held in high regard by booksellers, schools and readers.” – NELLA SOETERBOEK, NEWSOUTH BOOKS

Hellen 'Ing' Nellie sign copies of her book with family at the launch of *Simply Ing* in Perth.



- Johnny Warrkatja Malibirr awarded the inaugural Kestin Indigenous Illustrator Award. The second Kestin Indigenous Illustrator Award launched.
- New partnership with Varuna Writer’s House, University of Sydney, and the Copyright Agency Limited’s Cultural Fund for the inaugural Fellowships for First Nations Writers.
- Kimberley Art Centre collaborations underway in Kalumburu, Warmun, Fitzroy Crossing, Halls Creek, Mowanjum and Kununurra.
- Creative Partnerships Plus1 matched funding – allowed us to raise \$50,000 for the Cultural Fund.
- 26 Magabala titles on the Copyright Agency’s Reading Australia list – 18 complete with teacher resources.

Opposite: Tori-Jay Mordey signs copies of her books at the launch of *In the City I See*.

2018 Publications



**(Young Art Series)
In the City I See**
Illustrated by **Tori-Jay Mordey (TSI)**

Early childhood board book

What children will see in the city: walking dogs and hungry pigeons, happy buskers and lots of people! The third in the Young Art series, promoting the work of Indigenous illustrators under the age of 30.

“The delightful, transient memories of childhood camping holidays for an Aboriginal elder are brought to the present in this poignant story with evocative text and velvety illustrations.”

ROMI SHARP, CBCA READING TIME



Alfred's War
Rachel Bin Salleh (WA),
Illustrated by **Samantha Fry (NT)**
Children's Picture Book

Alfred walks the countryside, billy tied to his swag, finding work where he can. He carries the past with him, remembering all his friends from the war. A poignant tribute to the Black Diggers.

“Country and land are separated by a schism of cultural practice and accumulated history ... Yet the beauty of this book is the courage to push on through pain and loss and see if an understanding of some sort is possible.”

DR LAURIE KEIM, SYDNEY SUN

“A beautiful board book that celebrates the wonderful sites that can be seen in Australian cities ... the book targets early childhood/ infants, but it still made this old chook smile with colourful images.”

ANITA HEISS, BLOG

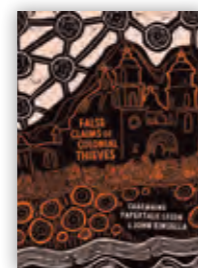


I Remember
Joanne Crawford, Illustrated
by **Kerry-Anne Jordinson (WA)**
Children's Picture Book

Set in the Geraldton area of Western Australia, an elderly woman remembers the camping trips of her childhood. As her recollections fade in and out, she is drawn to think about the elusiveness of her memories from so long ago.

“Alfred's War is particularly poignant due to its Indigenous lens and a story not often told ... Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander veterans are still fighting for the recognition they deserve.”

LAURA JONES, SOUTH SYDNEY HERALD



False Claims of Colonial Thieves
Charmaine Papertalk-Green & John Kinsella (WA)
Poetry

From well-known poets Charmaine Papertalk-Green and John Kinsella comes a tete-a-tete that is powerful, thought-provoking and challenges what we think we know about country, colonisation and understanding of land.



Ninu; Grandmother's Law
Nura Ward (NT, SA)
Biography, social history

The life story of Nura Nungalka Ward, that traces her significant role as Yankunytjatjara Law woman, custodian, mother and grandmother. Part biography, part customs manual and social history of women's governance in the Central Desert.

“Our Birds tells the stories of some of the birds and places of Yirrkala ... An enchanting vision of childhood in Australia, this book is also a lovely way to contemplate familiar birds in a different light”

CARA SCHULZ, AUSTRALIAN BIRDLIFE



Benny Bungarra's Big Bush Clean-up
Sally Morgan (WA),
illustrated by **Ambellin Kwaymullina (WA)**
Children's Picture Book

Benny journeys into the bush to help his friends get out of bottles, fishing lines and other rubbish predicaments. A colourful and clever depiction of the perils faced by our native animals.



Our Birds
Siena Stubbs (NT)
Gift Book

A delightful book of photography that introduces birds from around Yirrkala in North-east Arnhem Land. Siena Stubbs shares the English and Yolŋu names of the birds and their Yolŋu moiety and cultural context.

“Benny Bungarra's Big Bush Clean-up is an animal tale with a strong environmental message ... making this book a great teaching tool for the classroom. Kwaymullina's gorgeous, colourful art is always a joy, no matter your age.”

BRONTE COATES, BOOKS + PUBLISHING



Simply Ing
Helen (Ing) Nellie, as told to
Margaret O'Brien (WA)
Biography

A Noongar woman's story of survival. Her honest reflections give insight into her indomitable spirit and her return to her Noongar community.

“Told with humour and compassion, and despite her often desperate circumstances, Ing sums up her long life as a good one, with many joys.”

WRITING WA

Overleaf: Rachel Bin Salleh and her son Sam read her debut *Alfred's War*, illustrated by Samantha Fry.

'I really do think that writing for children is the most important thing we can do for humanity. It is essential that we encourage children to read, think critically and make up their own minds in regard to content. Inspired education is one of the ways to combat ignorance, prejudice and apathy towards to our past.'

— RACHEL BIN SALLEH,
WEST AUSTRALIAN



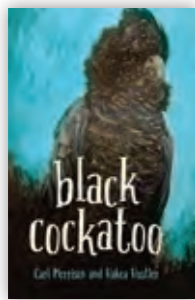


Brontide
Sue McPherson (QLD)
Young Adult Fiction

Four boys' reflections on family, friendship and risk-taking. A ground-breaking work from award-winning author of *Grace Beside Me*, recounted through storytelling sessions.

“Wraith was so impossible to put down and beautifully written. It is completely unique, something I have never read of before, each fantastic new idea plunging you deeper into a great adventure!”

SOFIA, AGE 14, KINGSGROVE NSW,
GOOD READING



Black Cockatoo
Carl Merrison and Hakea Hustler (WA)
Young Adult Fiction

Black Cockatoo follows Mia, a young Aboriginal girl as she confronts the fragility of family and culture to discover her own inner strength. An original and gentle tale about the power of culture and ever-present family ties.

“This debut is an oddly powerful and engaging story of two families connected by chance.”

KERRY GOLDSWORTHY,
SYDNEY MORNING HERALD

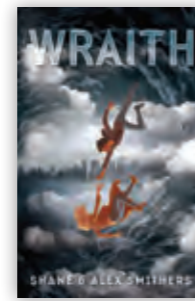


Blakwork
Alison Whittaker (NSW)
Poetry

From award-winning Gomerioi poet Alison Whittaker, comes a volume of work that is visceral, political, intelligent and far reaching. An original and unapologetic collection that defies both genre and gender to present new approaches to language.

“A fantastic book – providing a springboard into so many conversations relevant to young adults – conversations about family, belonging, racism and risk-taking.”

MADELAINE DICKIE, NIT



Wraith
Shane & Alex Smithers (NSW)
Young Adult Fiction

James can fly. His landings need some work but that's the least of his problems when he crashes into a city in the clouds. A darkly-humorous speculative adventure with a Dharug protagonist trying to find his way home.

“An evocative, short, illustrated book from Hakea Hustler & Carl Merrison in which a young Aboriginal teen girl learns to draw inner strength from her family and culture. I found it incredibly powerful.”

BRONTE COATES, READINGS



The Wounded Sinner
Gus Henderson (WA)
Fiction

On a hot desolate day in the West Australian hinterland, Matthew's car finally breaks down and an unlikely friendship is formed. In this unforgettable debut, the challenges of aging, fidelity and identity are exposed in all their gritty complexity.

“Blakwork expands horizons of possibility beyond instrumentalized domains, and, in its own brilliant ways, this book is an act of war, its sounds and shapes acting as both chthonic echoes and epistemological landmarks.”

DAN DISNEY, WORLD LITERATURE TODAY



Monster Party
Children from Rawa (WA)
with Alison Lester and Jane Godwin
Children's Picture Book

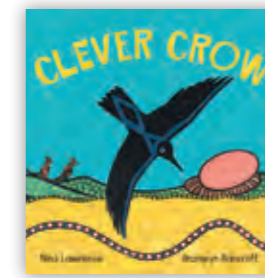
Naughty desert monsters come out of the ground and have a party on Dora Lake. 'Galumphing' all over the place with a drum and a bass! The monsters created by the students of Rawa will capture the hearts of the very young and the young at heart.

“Bancroft's illustrations are, as always, distinctively big, bold and beautiful and the story is simply told by first-time children's author, Nina Lawrence. But this is a story with a difference. It is a bilingual tale told in English and translated in Djambarrpuynu language.”

MERLE MORCOM, GOOD READING

“This is a glorious book for every home and classroom, perfect for igniting discussions about indigenous communities and inspiring collaborative storytelling projects.”

KIDS BOOK REVIEW



Clever Crow
Nina Lawrence (NT)
Illustrated by Bronwyn Bancroft (NSW)
Children's Picture Book

A bilingual story, English and Djambarrpuynu (Yolngu) language translations, about a clever crow that steals an egg. Bronwyn Bancroft's distinctive illustrations bring alive this cheeky tale.

New editions



Dark Emu
Bruce Pascoe (Vic)
Non-fiction

Bruce Pascoe's award-winning modern classic revised with new cover and new size to reach wider audiences.

Reprints

54 reprints in 2018:

11 x frontlist titles

34 x backlist titles

A diversity of voices



TORI-JAY MORDEY
In the city I see



JOANNE CRAWFORD & KERRY-ANNE JORDINSON
I Remember



NURA WARD (dec)
Ninu: Grandmothers' Law



GUS HENDERSON
Wounded Sinner



RACHEL BIN SALLEH & SAMANTHA FRY
Alfred's War



SIENA STUBBS
Our Birds



SHANE SMITHERS & ALEX SMITHERS
Wraith



CARL MERRISON & HAKEA HUSTLER
Black Cockatoo



SUE MCPHERSON
Brontide



**CHARMAINE PAPERTALK-GREEN
& JOHN KINSELLA**
False Claims of Colonial Thieves



ALISON WHITTAKER
Blackwork

"We have all different kinds of representations being imposed on Indigenous communities and they have real world implications ... to have a publishing house that gives us the ability to push back against that representation, is so crucial"

– ALISON WHITTAKER



SALLY MORGAN & AMBELLIN KWAYMULLINA
Benny Bungarra's Big Bush Clean-up



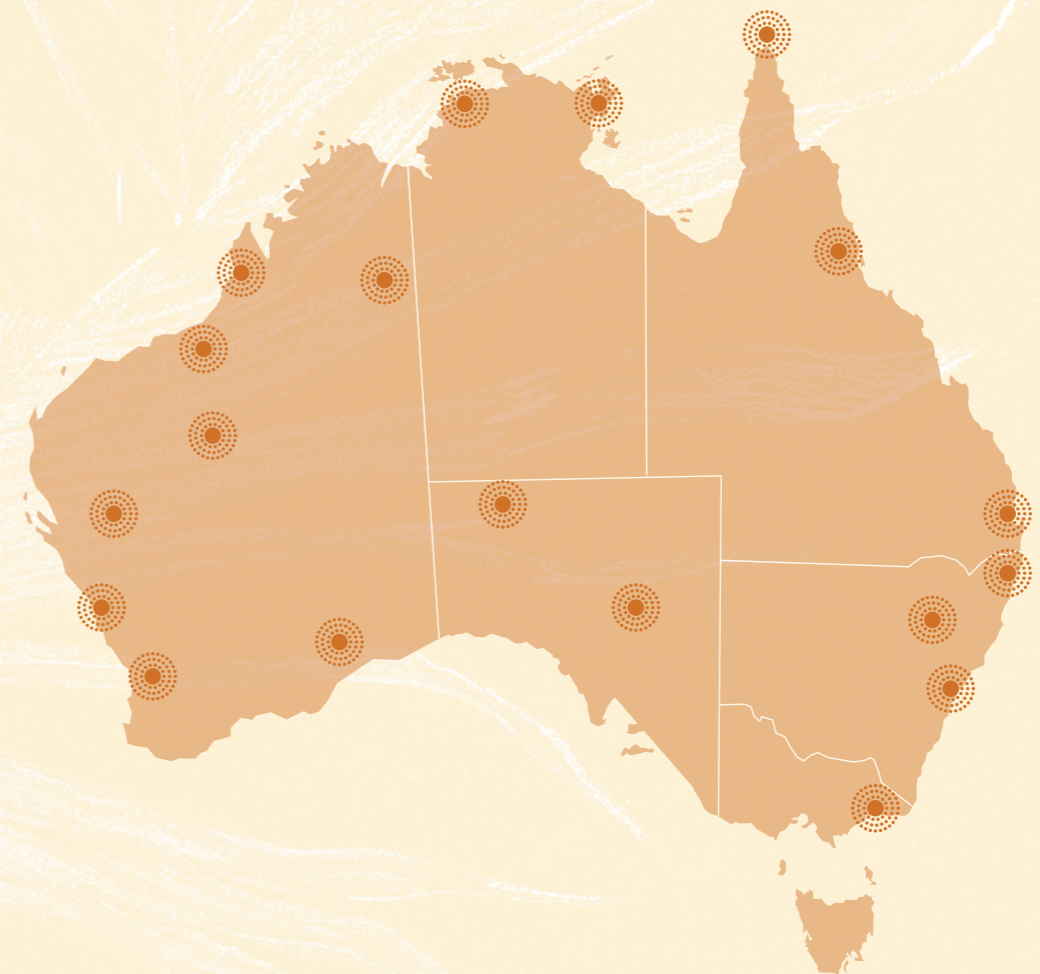
NINA LAWRENCE & BRONWYN BANCROFT
Clever Crow



**CHILDREN FROM RAWA
WITH ALISON LESTER & JANE GOODWIN**
Monster Party



HELEN (ING) NELLIE & MARGARET O'BRIEN
Simply Ing



546
radio and
media activity/
reviews

41,359
unique
website
visits

20,202
followers on social media

10,956
Facebook

3,724
Twitter

1,678
Instagram

3,519
Linkedin

13
regional/WA
promotional
events

70
national
festivals/
events

5
international
festivals/
events

Celebrating success/ sharing our stories

Festivals
events
highlights



Perth Writers Festival

- Bronwyn Houston
- Charmaine Papertalk-Green
- John Kinsella
- Josie Boyle
- Kamsani Bin Salleh



India/Jaipur Bookmark
Literary Festival -
CEO, Anna Moulton

The Australian Comic Arts Festival (ACAF)

- Brenton McKenna

JANUARY

FEBRUARY

Book
Launches



*False Claims of Colonial
Thieves* at the Perth Writers
Festival with Charmaine
Papertalk-Green, John Kinsella,
Anna Moulton, Rachel Bin
Salleh and Margaret Whiskin



Bologna Children's Book Fair, Italy
 • Bronwyn Houston and Senior Editor, Margaret Whiskin

Leading Edge Conference
 • Charmaine Papertalk Green & John Kinsella (via Skype)



Woylie - Aboriginal Kids Story Festival, PaperBird Books and City of Fremantle
 • Rachel Bin Salleh
 • Samantha Fry
 • Gregg Dreise
 • Dub Leffler
 • Kamsani Bin Salleh

Newcastle Writers Festival
 • Bruce Pascoe
 • Gregg Dreise
 • Charmaine Papertalk Green & John Kinsella via Skype

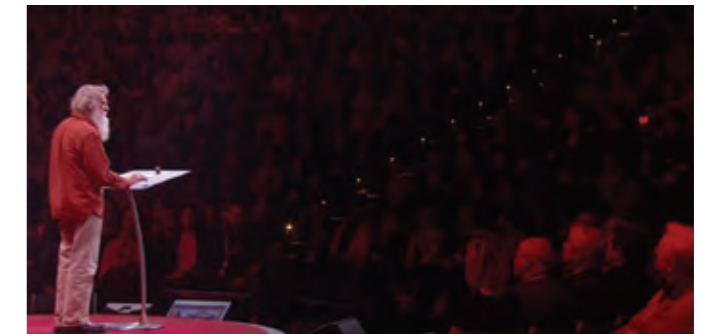
Revealed Aboriginal Arts Market, Fremantle
 • Magabala Books represented with a market stall by staff Lisa Burton, Catelyn Dowell and Danielle Dowell.

Geraldton Big Sky Festival
 • Charmaine Papertalk-Green
 • John Kinsella

Scribblers Children's Literature and Arts Festival, Perth
 • Josie Boyle

Sydney Writers Festival
 • Bruce Pascoe

Wordstorm, NT Writers Festival, Darwin
 • Paul Seden
 • Samantha Fry



Readers and Writers Festival, Bellingen
 • Bruce Pascoe

Myall Creek and Beyond Symposium, Armidale
 • Bruce Pascoe

TEDx, Sydney
 • Bruce Pascoe



NAIDOC, Broome
 • Josie Boyle

MARCH

In the City I See with Tori-Jay Mordey at Mary Ryan's Bookshop Hervey Bay, QLD

APRIL



Alfred's War with Rachel Bin Salleh and Samantha Fry at Paperbird Books' Woylie Festival in Fremantle

I Remember with Joanne Crawford, Rachel Bin Salleh and Edie Wright at Readings, Carlton

MAY

False Claims of Colonial Thieves at Geraldton's Big Sky Writers Festival with Charmaine Papertalk-Green and John Kinsella (second launch)

JUNE



JULY



Corrugated Lines: A Festival of Words, Broome
 • Charmaine Papertalk-Green in person and John Kinsella via Skype

Bendigo Writers Festival

- Bruce Pascoe

Melbourne Visiting Poets Program,

Wheeler Centre
 • Alison Whittaker

Queensland Poetry Festival

- Alison Whittaker

Sandcliffe Writers Festival

- Sue McPherson

Edinburgh International Book Festival

- Bruce Pascoe



Giiyong Festival, Eden

- Ali Cobby Eckermann
- Bruce Pascoe

Brisbane Writers Festival - Wordplay

- Sue McPherson
- Jared Thomas

Awesome International Arts Festival, Perth

- Joshua Button
- Robyn Wells

'Internationales literatur festival', Berlin

- Bruce Pascoe



Steve goes to Carnival Exhibition State Library of WA, Sept-Dec 2018

Presented by the Awesome Arts Festival and the State Library of WA, who acquired the collection of original artworks, the *Steve goes to Carnival* exhibition showcased the ten-year creative journey of the book, *Steve goes to Carnival* (2016) by Joshua Button and Robyn Wells. An exquisite celebration of how the story came to be through the dynamic collaboration and friendship between Joshua and Robyn, the exhibition ran for three months and was visited by over 30,000 people. As part of their involvement in the program, Josh and Robyn lead guided tours of the exhibition and participated in an author Q&A and book signings.

Above: Author-illustrators Joshua Button and Robyn Wells with Joshua's family at the *Steve Goes to Carnival* Exhibition, State Library of Western Australia, Perth.

AUGUST



Ninu: Grandmothers' Law at the NPY Women's Council in Alice Springs with Nura Ward's family members

The Wounded Sinner at Maker + Co, Bunbury with Gus Henderson, Margaret Whiskin and ECU staff

SEPTEMBER

Benny Bungarra's Big Bush Clean-Up at the North West Alliance/Veolia (with Blaze Kwaymullina)

Simply Ing at Mattie Furphy House (Fellowship of Australian Writers WA) in Swanbourne with Ing Nellie, Margaret O'Brien and Kim Scott

Blakwork with Alison Whittaker, Dr Sandra Phillips and Anna Moulton at Gleebooks Sydney

Wraith at Gallery888, Katoomba with Shane and Alex Smithers



Dark Emu – Bangarra Dance Theatre National tour

Adapted as a dance production by Bangarra Dance Theatre, *Dark Emu* premiered in Sydney in 2018 and toured the country to sold-out shows in Canberra, Perth, Brisbane and Melbourne. Inspired by Bruce Pascoe’s award-winning modern classic, *Bangarra’s Dark Emu* explored the vital life force of flora and fauna in a series of dance stories directed by Stephen Page.



Above: Anna Moulton, with Bangarra performer Rika Hamaguchi, Rika’s mum Lucille Bin Sulaiman and the Hon. Alannah MacTiernan, Minister for Regional Development, at Bangarra’s performance of *Dark Emu* in Perth.

Literature Centre’s Celebrate Reading National Conference, Fremantle

- Jared Thomas

Art on the Move Open Day, Fremantle

- Josie Boyle

Marvel-ous Graphic Novel Workshop,

NT Writers Centre, Darwin

- Brenton McKenna

Feminist Writers Festival, Sydney

- Alison Whittaker

Singapore Writers Festival

- Ali Cobby Eckermann

OCTOBER



Monster Party with the AISWA, Rawa school children, Alison Lester and Jane Godwin at the Little Bookroom Melbourne

NOVEMBER

Nurturing trade and industry connections

- Children’s Book Council Australia 2018 AAA Development Conference, Sydney – March (Anna Moulton presented about the educational application of *Dark Emu*).
- Leading Edge Conference, Tasmania – March (Charmaine Papertalk-Green, John Kinsella and CEO, Anna Moulton)
- Children’s Book Council Australia VIC State Conference, Geelong – May (Chairperson, Edie Wright)
- Association of Independent Schools of Western Australia Conference, Broome – May (Joshua Button, Robyn Wells and Marketing Manager, Lisa Burton)
- 2018 Australian Association for the Teaching of English/Australian Literacy Educators Association National Conference, Perth 8-11 July (Rachel Bin Salleh)
- ACT Rediscovering History Symposium, Canberra – August (Rachel Bin Salleh)
- CBCA Lady Cutler event, Sydney – September (Bruce Pascoe and CEO, Anna Moulton)
- Reading Australia text selection meeting, Sydney (Bruce Pascoe)
- Neilma Sidney Prize (Rachel Bin Salleh, judge)
- Varuna First Nations Fellowship – (Rachel Bin Salleh, judge)
- Small Press Network Board – (Rachel Bin Salleh)
- Children’s Publishing Committee of the APA – (Rachel Bin Salleh)
- Independent Publisher’s Committee of the APA – (Anna Moulton)
- Ongoing working partnership with the First Nations Australia Writers Network (FNAWN)

Literary awards and acknowledgements

ABIA's: Small Publishers' Children's Book of the Year

- Shortlisted: *Big Fella Rain* by Beryl Webber, illustrated by Fern Martins
- Longlisted: *At the Beach I See* by Kamsani Bin Salleh; *At the Zoo I See* by Joshua Button and Robyn Wells

CBCA Awards: Notable mentions

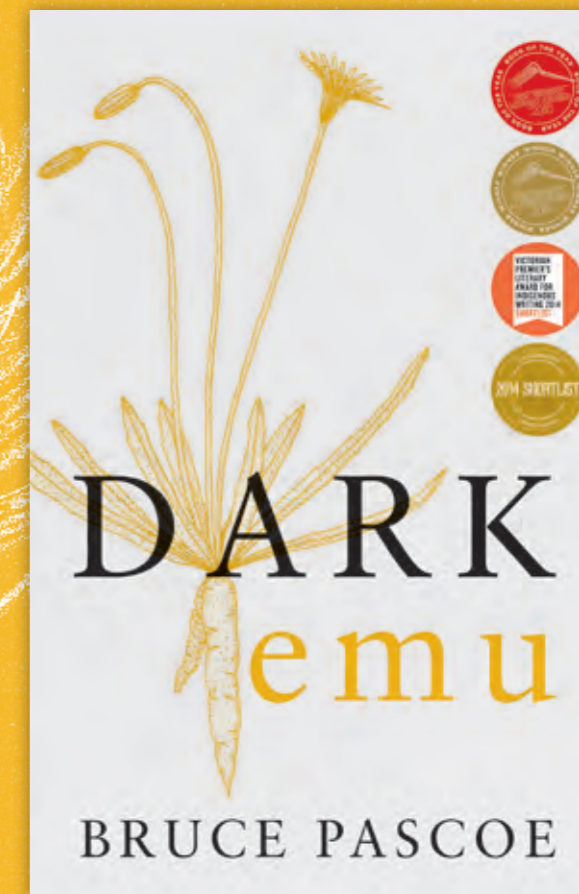
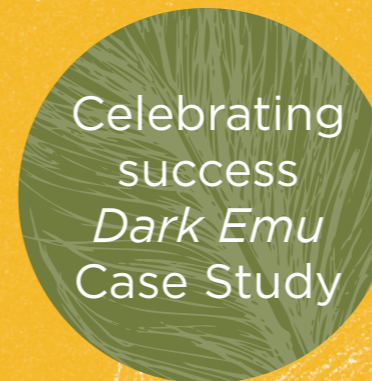
- Early Childhood Book of the Year: *At the Zoo I See* by Joshua Button and Robyn Wells; *On the Way to Nana's* by Frances and Lindsay Haji-Ali, illustrated by David Hardy; *Molly the Pirate* by Lorraine Teece, illustrated by Paul Seden
- Picture Book of the Year: *Big Fella Rain* by Beryl Webber, illustrated by Fern Martins

Speech Pathology Book of the Year Awards: Shortlisted

- Birth to three years: *At the Zoo I See* by Joshua Button and Robyn Wells; *At the Beach I See* by Kamsani Bin Salleh; *In the City I See* by Tori-Jay Mordey
- Five to eight years: *Molly the Pirate* by Lorraine Teece, illustrated by Paul Seden
- Eight to ten years: *Alfred's War* by Rachel Bin Salleh, illustrated by Samantha Fry
- Indigenous children: *Benny Bungarra's Big Bush Clean-Up* by Sally Morgan, illustrated by Ambelin Kwaymullina; *Mrs White and the Red Desert* by Josie Wowolla Boyle, illustrated by Maggie Prewett

Related awards

Bruce Pascoe: 2018 Australia Council for the Arts Lifetime Achievement Award for Literature, Person of the Year Award at the National Dreamtime Awards



This timely break-through title from 'living national treasure' Bruce Pascoe, continues to reach new and ever-expanding audiences. The new edition, published in June 2018 with high production values and a more economical price point, was released to coincide with the Bangarra Dance adaptation and the release of the UK edition (Scribe). A modern classic in the making, *Dark Emu* sold more than 77,000 units between 2014 and 2017. The new edition sold 35,000 copies within 6 months, including an estimated 26,000 through the trade (AC Nielsen Bookscan) and in late 2018 consistently remained in the top 10 best-seller list of independent booksellers.

"At the risk of repeating myself, Dark Emu by Bruce Pascoe is the most life changing book I've read in the last year. So many examples of jaw-dropping achievements on this continent which occurred pre 1788 and are under-lionised. Read and exult."

ANNABEL CRABB

"Just finished Dark Emu. Honestly, reading it should be a prerequisite to non-Indigenous citizenship. Flush with shame at how little we know about Indigenous engineering; marvel at the potential of 65,000+ years of Indigenous knowledge to forge a better country. A masterpiece."

BENJAMIN LAW

“When I heard I had won the award I felt really proud with my whole family. I like it that kids can learn reading and see my artwork. I hope kids around Australia will like this book. I can’t wait for my nieces and nephews to see it.”

— JOHNNY WARRKATJA MALIBIRR



Investing in creative futures

Professional and creative development is core to Magabala’s commitment to celebrating and growing diverse Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander voices across all genres. 2018 saw an expansion of our focus on mentorships, scholarships and awards.

Kestin Indigenous Illustrator Award

In February 2018 Johnny Warrkatja Malibirr was announced as the inaugural winner of the Kestin Illustrator Award. Johnny is an artist from the Ganalbingi clan in the remote community of Gapuwiyak in the Northern Territory, where he is Chairman of the Gapuwiyak Culture and Arts Centre Aboriginal Corporation. He comes from a family of artists including his uncle, Djardi Ashley, and his mother, Lucy, who is a distinguished fibre artist.

Throughout 2018, Johnny worked on the illustrations for Sally Morgan’s manuscript *Little Bird’s Day*, under the professional guidance of Senior Editor Margaret Whiskin.

In June, Margaret travelled to Johnny’s home community Gapuwiyak to continue this mentorship in person. *Little Bird’s Day* was released in April 2019 and is a stunning first Kestin Award publication, combining Sally Morgan’s gentle poetic text with Johnny Malibirr’s exquisite illustrations.

In late 2018 entries opened for the second Kestin Indigenous Illustrator Award offering the opportunity to illustrate Bruce Pascoe’s first children’s picture book manuscript *Lonely*. The Award closed in February 2019 and the winning artist, Charmaine Ledden-Lewis, will complete her illustration mentorship throughout 2019-2020.

“I love to see new people coming into the business of writing and illustration ... I’m proud that my story will create an opportunity for someone to learn about illustration and to find their voice as a visual storyteller.” – BRUCE PASCOE

Opposite: Johnny Warrkatja Malibirr illustrating spreads for *Little Bird’s Day* and reading the published book to school kids in Gapuwiyak, NT.

Daisy Utemorrah Award

In 2018, we launched the Daisy Utemorrah Award for an unpublished manuscript of junior or YA fiction, supported by the Copyright Agency Limited's Cultural Fund and the State Government of Western Australia. It will be presented as part of the WA Premier's Book Awards in July 2019. The winning writer will receive \$15,000 and a publication contract with Magabala Books.

The Daisy Utemorrah Award affirms Magabala Book's commitment to younger readers and our desire to grow Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander junior and YA fiction.

"Our young people need stories ... They need stories that speak of how to get through tough times, and stories that celebrate who they are and who they can be. The Daisy Utemorrah Award is an incredible opportunity for a First Nations voice to speak, and the story they will tell will help to nurture the next generation of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander storytellers." – AMBELIN KWAYMULLINA

The award is named in honour of the late Daisy Utemorrah, who was an elder of the Wunambal people from the Mitchell Plateau area in the far-north Kimberley, and one of the founders of Magabala Books. Utemorrah was an award-winning poet, author, community leader and passionate educator, who saw writing as a tool for change.

"Makes me real proud what she left for us, stories and all the things she taught me"
– JEREMY KOWAN, GRANDSON OF DAISY UTEMORRAH, ABC KIMBERLEY

Magabala Scholarships

Established in 2013, Magabala Scholarships continue to support Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander writers and illustrators to develop skills, meet professional goals and increase creative career opportunities. Magabala Scholarships are funded entirely by our generous donors.



"The Magabala Books Scholarship allows me to further develop my craft in writing picture books for children... I can't wait to get busy and get through the next stage of my writing journey!" –

BARBARA SHEEHY

In 2018 six awarded scholarships were implemented:

- Barbara Marie Sheehy (QLD) supported to enrol in the 'Create A Picture Book' online course and mentoring program.
- Magabala author and illustrator Bronwyn Houston (TAS) supported to travel to the Bologna Children's Book Fair, Italy in March.

"This opportunity has allowed me to meet a large body of Australian publishers and illustrators and make invaluable contacts that will no doubt strengthen my own work and my scope of opportunity. Thank you for the chance to have this experience."

– BRONWYN HOUSTON



- Natalie Davey (WA) was appointed a mentor through the Australian Writers Centre to support her professional development.
- Magabala author and illustrator Gregg Dreise (QLD) attended a digital illustration workshop with David Hardy (Magabala illustrator and former Disney illustrator) in Sydney.
- Brenton McKenna (WA), Magabala author of the *Ubyy's Underdog's* trilogy, attended the Australia Comic Arts Festival in Canberra.
- Marie McCarthy (NT) received a mentorship to develop her writing for children's books with publishing industry expert Helen Chamberlain.

We also used reserve scholarship funds to support Magabala authors and illustrators, Sam Fry (NT), Dub Leffler (NSW) and Gregg Dreise (QLD), to participate in the Woylie: Aboriginal Australian Kids Story Festival in Fremantle. Kestin Indigenous Illustrator Award winner, Johnny Warrkatja Malibirr, also received mentoring from Magabala Senior Editor, Margaret Whiskin, in his home community of Gapuwiyak.

Varuna Partnership – First Nations Writers Residency

In 2018 Magabala Books partnered with Varuna the National Writers' House, University of Sydney and the Copyright Agency Limited's Cultural Fund on the inaugural Copyright Agency's Fellowships for First Nations Writers. Rachel Bin Salleh, together with Dr Peter Minter from the University of Sydney, assessed over 32 submissions and awarded four First Nations Fellowships:

- Lisa Fuller for her fiction work, *Capital Punishment*
- Dustin Mangatjay McGregor for his non-fiction work, *Intersectionality of Identity*
- Caitlin Smith for her YA fiction novel, *Pilbara Moon Rising*
- Adam Thompson for his short stories compilation, *Honey & Sonny*

As part of the fellowship, Magabala Books provides each fellow with the option of a publishing appraisal for any work completed as a result of this fellowship.

Non-Fiction Prize

Thanks to the generous support of an individual donor, we are thrilled to expand our award list in 2019 to include a non-fiction prize for an unpublished manuscript. This Award will be launched in late 2019.

Cultural development and commissioning

While all our books reflect the cultural diversity of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples, our Cultural Fund projects ensure key culturally and historically significant titles (which may have subtle commercial appeal) are published and kept in print; stories with enduring social, cultural and educational value that need to be read by new generations of Australians.

2018 strategic commissioning, manuscript development and publications:

Kimberley Art Centre Collaboration – *Children's Book Series* – manuscript development underway, first title in series to be published in 2019

Working in collaboration with Aboriginal Art Centre's across the Kimberley, this project supports artists to develop children's picture books from concept through to manuscript development and publication. Following on from the workshops in 2017, Senior Editor Margaret Whiskin worked with five artists from Waringarri Aboriginal Arts in Kununurra, Kira Kiro Art Centre in Kalumburu, Warmun Art Centre in Warmun, Yarliyil Arts in Halls Creek and Mowanjum Art Centre to develop their stories into a children's picture book. The first publication, by Betty Bundamurra, will be published in 2020.

This project is made possible thanks to funding from the Kimberley Development Commission and the State Government of WA. In 2019, the series will also be expanded to include another Art Centre thanks to the support of the Oranges and Sardines Foundation.

Overleaf: Melissa Thompson, niece of Nura Ward, celebrating the launch of *Ninu; Grandmothers' Law*. Image courtesy of Ngaanyatjarra Pitjantjatjara Yankunytjatjara Women's Council, photo by Emma Murray.

NINU
GRANDMOTHERS'
LAW

The autobiography of Nura Nungalka Ward





Ninu: Grandmothers' Law – published 2018

“This is my history. I am talking about the early days of my life ... for all the younger generations to read and hear. I want them to be able to look at the photographs of us, and for them to read the stories.” – NURA WARD

Ninu; Grandmother's Law is the extraordinary autobiography of Yankunytjatjara woman Nura Nungalka Ward. Accompanied by exceptional archival photographs, it is an evocative chronicle of culture and history. Part biography, part customs manual and food guide, part traditional social history and governance, it is a rare testament to one woman's advocacy for her family, people and culture.

Young Dark Emu – manuscript development throughout 2018, released May 2019

Bruce Pascoe has brought together the research and compelling first-person accounts of *Dark Emu* in a book for younger readers. *Young Dark Emu – A Truer History* asks young readers to consider a different version of Australia's history. Thanks to the Jon & Caro Stewart Family Foundation and donor Mr. David Dureau, the Cultural Fund supported the manuscript development and the engagement of an educational consultant.



Alan Griffiths Story Project – research and manuscript development underway, to be published 2020

A collaboration between Magabala Books, Waringarri Art Centre and the Griffiths family, this project is to develop a manuscript of the life story of senior Ngarinyman Law and Culture man, the late Alan Griffiths. Research and oral recording commenced for this project in early 2018. Sadly, Mr Griffiths' passing in May 2018 has meant this project is now taking a different approach to include the testimony of others who knew him, as well as archival material and a review of his artistic catalogue. Manuscript development, including a field trip on country, will continue with Mr. Griffiths' family throughout 2019, with publication expected in 2020. This project is possible thanks to the support of the AESOP Foundation and represents Magabala's commitment to recording Elder's stories through the Cultural Fund.

Opposite top: Nura Ward (dec) carrying freshly cut spearvines for her grandsons, accompanied by her dog Mutjaru, Black Hill, 1999 from *Ninu: Grandmothers' Law*.

Opposite bottom: Alan and Peggy Griffiths sharing art, culture and story with the next generations on country.

Planting seeds

Magabala has a special commitment to promoting Indigenous voices in early childhood programs and the Australian curriculum. Teacher Notes are available for many of our titles to assist in integrating and contextualising Magabala publications for classroom settings, while our literacy partners and Small Seeds program enable us to reach a wide range of little readers.

School visits/workshops

Our authors and illustrators are actively engaged with schools around Australia. Some 2018 highlights:

Children's Book Week (August)

- Kamsani Bin Salleh - *Carnarvon Public Library*
- Josie Boyle - *Melville and Mullewa schools*

St Mary's Broome - *Black Cockatoo*

Year seven students at St Mary's College in Broome recently studied *Black Cockatoo* and came to visit Magabala Books to learn more about the book, publishing and the industry. Following the visit they shared their responses to *Black Cockatoo*, writing that they enjoyed the book because it relates to "young community kids and their way of living, including language, land and culture". The kids expressed a connection to the book because they felt like they "were in the story and that it taught how to be strong in your own way". These young readers highly recommended the book to both Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal kids.

Reading Australia

The Cultural Fund of the Copyright Agency Limited funded a partnership between the Australian Association for Teachers of English and Reading Australia to produce teacher resources for secondary titles.

"All eight texts have been really enjoyable to work with: Magabala Books is such a strong promoter and publisher of high-quality Indigenous writing! We've all found it to be a privilege to work with you." – PHIL PAGE, AUSTRALIAN ASSOCIATION FOR TEACHERS OF ENGLISH



Opposite top: Author-illustrator Josie Boyle being interviewed by young readers at the Perth Writers Festival.
Opposite bottom: Author-illustrator Paul Seden signs books for his young fans at Provenance Arts, Darwin.



The Reading Australia website provides teachers with resources, to ensure good quality literature is read by students and good quality units are implemented by teachers. Reading Australia is in its fifth year and now has more than 350 books, 95 essays and over 140 teaching resources available to Australian teachers. In 2018 teacher resources were in development for the following titles, to be available online in late 2018/early 2019: *Uby's Underdogs* by Brenton E. McKenna, *Us Mob Walawurru* by David Spillman & Lisa Wilyuka, *Songs that Sound like Blood* by Jared Thomas, *Ruby Moonlight* by Ali Cobby Eckermann, *Jandamarra and the Bunuba Resistance* by Banjo Woorunmurra and Howard Pedersen, *Grace Beside Me* by Sue McPherson, *Dark Emu* by Bruce Pascoe, *Becoming Kirrali Lewis* by Jane Harrison.

Literacy and educational partners

In addition to a growing number of school and educational buyers, Magabala supplies books to, and partners with, the following organisations who support literacy and promote books within the education market, including:

- Indigenous Literacy Foundation
- Books in Homes
- Scholastic
- Reading out of Poverty
- Oxfam

Small Seeds

The Small Seeds program represents Magabala's commitment to developing children's literacy and ensuring all children have access to books they love. The program, funded entirely by philanthropic support, invites requests for book donations from organisations where children may have limited access to books.

In 2018, we delivered the Kimberley and Pilbara Small Seeds donation drive, supported by Rio Tinto. Donated 331 Children's Picture Books to seven early-childhood and family support organisations ranging from women's refuges, community houses and early childhood centres:

Karratha Community House - Karratha

Gumala Aboriginal Corporation - with centres in Karratha, Roebourne, South Hedland, Marble Bar, Warralong and Wakuthuni

Marnin Bowa Dumbara Aboriginal Corporation - Derby

Little Nuggets Early Learning Centre - Halls Creek

Kununurra Neighbourhood House - Kununurra

Jalygurr Guwan Aboriginal Corporation - Broome

Baya Gawiy Early Learning Unit - Fitzroy Crossing

Opposite: An early-childhood worker reads *Big Fella Rain* to little ones at the Gumala Aboriginal Corporation's Karratha Early Childhood Centre, and a young reader at the Kununurra Neighbourhood House enjoys *Alfie's Big Wish*, thanks to Small Seeds book donations.

Governance

Magabala Books is governed by a dedicated Board of Kimberley Aboriginal educators, business professionals, cultural leaders and creative practitioners drawn from the Magabala Books Aboriginal Corporation general membership.



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Chair



TONY LEE
Deputy Chairperson



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Director



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Director

Philanthropy

Magabala's Philanthropy program is vital to ensuring the diversity and dynamism of our publishing program is realised. Philanthropic funding allows us to achieve what has long been imagined, but for which there have been few resources. In 2018 our focus was on furthering our relationships with Trusts and Foundations and fundraising for specific strategic projects and manuscript commissions.

“From the very beginning the partnership with Magabala Books has been a wonderful process. An interesting, iterative and collaborative process.”

– HARRY KESTIN, KESTIN FAMILY FOUNDATION

We're grateful to the following philanthropic partners for their generous support in 2018:

- Jon & Caro Stewart Family Foundation – *Young Dark Emu, Scholarships/ Cultural Fund*
- Spinifex Trust – *Scholarships/ Cultural Fund*
- Donnelly Garner Foundation – *Cultural Fund*
- Kestin Family Foundation – *Kestin Indigenous Illustrator Award*
- Oranges and Sardines – *Kimberley Art Centre Series*
- AESOP Foundation – *Alan Griffiths Story Project*
- Rio Tinto – *Small Seeds Fund*

We would also like to acknowledge the wide-range of individual donors, whose generous contributions support our ongoing philanthropic projects. Thanks also to Creative Partnerships Australia for their Plus1 Matched Funding of \$25,000 which leveraged support for the Cultural Fund.

*“Thank you for the love of learning and
storytelling you bring to our country and to
our First Nations young people.”*

SENATOR PAT DODSON TO MAGABALA BOOKS