

# 2020 ANNUAL REPORT

Magabala  
Books






Magabala Books acknowledges Yawuru people, the Traditional Owners and custodians of Broome, and pay our respects to Yawuru Elders past, present and emerging. We are privileged to share and walk this special Country together.

Magabala also acknowledges the Traditional Owners of our many Nations across Australia. We recognise the continuing connection to lands, waters and cultures. Through what we publish, we honour our Elders, peoples and stories, past, present and future.

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



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Magabala Books receives financial assistance from the Australian Government through the Australia Council, its arts funding and advisory body, and the State Government of Western Australia through the Department of Local Government, Sport and Cultural Industries.



Cover artwork and graphic elements by Lisa Kennedy.

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*maar bidi* contributors Connie Gamble, Jarrad Travers, Brianne Yarran, Nancy Murray, Serena-May Brown, Savannah Cox and Mabel Gibson (not pictured Danny Howard and Angelica Augustine).



# Australia's leading Indigenous publisher

Magabala Books is Australia's leading Indigenous publishing house. Aboriginal owned and led, we celebrate and nurture the talent and diversity of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander voices.

## 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.



From left to right: Yornadaiyn 'Donny' Woolagoodja, Folau Umbagai, Matthew Martin, Janet Oobagooma.



Magabala Sales Officer Catelyn Dowell with her Mum Auntha's book.



*'I think where Magabala excels, like no other publishing house, is how we balance all our objectives – social, cultural and commercial. We work at so many levels and have cultural and political responsibilities to our mob to get things right; whether that's providing a platform for strong literary discourse, or how we handle significant, collectively-owned cultural stories.'*

**– RACHEL BIN SALLEH, PUBLISHER**



**34**  
years

**238**

publications

**281**

authors/  
illustrators



# 2020

18

new releases

2

new editions

69

reprints

24

new release  
authors and  
illustrators

40

contributors to  
anthologies

40%

first-time  
published

300,409

books sold

91

new titles under  
development

180

Indigenous creators  
and their families  
receiving royalties

28

professional  
development  
opportunities

4

strategic  
commissions

36

online/digital events

7

in person events



# The year in review

It cannot be understated, that 2020 was an incredibly challenging year. It tested our resilience, revealed our shared humanity and highlighted existing inequalities. The extent of global suffering was difficult to fathom from the Kimberley, where collective and individual efforts kept our communities safe from the virus. We acknowledge the strength and resilience of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities who are standing strong in the crisis, looking out for our Elders and each other.

For Magabala, 2020 was a year of contrasts – with significant challenges and incredible successes. The year began with a public attack on one of our authors and we doubled down on support for our creators. And then, the pandemic was upon us.

At the height of the pandemic, as shops closed across the country and book sales slumped, we made the decision to stand firm in our commitment to our creators and their 2020 titles – while some publishers pulled books from their schedule or postponed release dates, we pushed ahead because, as our Publisher Rachel Bin Salleh said, ‘the world needs our books’.

No one could have foreseen the impact of the #blacklivesmatter movement on book sales. However, our 34 years of publishing Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander voices and our strategic repositioning of Magabala over the last seven years under our CEO Anna Moulton and Publisher Rachel Bin Salleh, meant we were ready to actively embrace the new wave of audiences discovering our books. As the #blacklivesmatter movement gained momentum in this nation, we released Ambelin Kwaymullina's prose manifesto, *Living on Stolen Land* – a powerful book for our times and one of our best sellers.

In the face of all this, 2020 was our most successful year yet. We held our ground with record high sales, reaching \$5.6 million and selling 300,409 books. The excellence of our publishing program was recognised, with four books winning national literary awards and 21 shortlistings – a new record. We published 18 new release titles, another record in Magabala's history.

In February, our Publisher, Rachel Bin Salleh was awarded the inaugural WA Literary Lions medal for her contribution and commitment to West Australian literature. Congratulations Rachel! Such a deserving recipient.

In April, Magabala Books was awarded Small Publisher of the Year at the Australian Book Industry Awards. A momentous occasion, affirming our place as a leader in the publishing industry, and recognising the excellence of Magabala's publishing programme and its contribution to the overall success of the book industry – a remarkable feat for a small publishing house in the remote town of Broome.

We're especially proud of what we achieved in 2020 thanks to philanthropic support. Our Small Seeds program continued to grow. We gifted over 1200 books to organisations working with young people across Australia, with many community organisations requesting books for families at home in lockdown. We increased our Creative Development Fund expenditure by more than 400%, providing vital support to creators in a time of much uncertainty, and we announced a new Indigenous Publishing Cadetship program. The Cultural Fund supported the publication and commissioning of works of cultural and historical significance, including Yornadaiyn Woolagoodja's remarkable biography.



From left to right: Yornadaiyn 'Donny' Woolagoodja with Magabala Chairperson Tony Lee and Director Margy Dia at the book launch of *Yornadaiyn Woolagoodja*.

We wish to thank our authors, storytellers and illustrators for trusting Magabala with their stories, knowledge, legacies and creativity.

We thank staff and directors for their courage, resilience, adaptability, compassion and care in 2020. Each member of our team played an important role in realising our success, despite the challenging circumstances.

There are so many partners who support our work and to whom we are grateful, including our major funding bodies, philanthropic partners and individual donors. Our industry partners, including our distributor NewSouth Books and our champion booksellers, allow our books to shine in the world.

We also recognise that Magabala's success in 2020 is the culmination of 34 years of hard work and it has been my pleasure to have been a director of the Board of Magabala for 18 of those 34 years. We are in it for the long haul, committed to our role as an educator and enabler, and to celebrating the talent and diversity of Aboriginal and Torres Strait islander voices.

We are grateful to our readers, old friends and new. We hope this increasing interest in Aboriginal and Torres Strait islander voices is sustained, sincere and leads to profound and systemic change.

**Tony Lee**  
Chairperson



ABIA  
AUSTRALIAN BOOK INDUSTRY AWARDS

Magabala Books

2020 Small Publisher of the Year

# 2020 ABIA Small Publisher of the Year

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**For the first time in our history, Magabala Books was awarded Small Publisher of the Year at the Australian Book Industry Awards in May 2020.**

Receiving this award from our industry peers is an historic moment in Australian literature, confirming Magabala's place as a leading national publishing house and recognising the significant contribution of many people over many years.

*'This award is the culmination of 33 years of hard work. All those years ago, our Elders and cultural leaders showed such courage, vision and determination to establish Magabala Books. We dedicate this award to those Elders, and to all our storytellers, authors and illustrators from around Australia.'* – Magabala Director, Edie Wright.

Over the last five years we have set out to prove that Magabala Books, as an Aboriginal controlled and led publisher, can be an industry leader. Winning Small Publisher of the Year reveals that our journey of transformation has been realised.

*'It thrills me to see Magabala recognised by the ABIA 2020 Awards for Small Publisher of the Year. Magabala are the leaders in Australia's First Nations publishing, with their culturally safe, reciprocal and careful projects that honour our people, stories, languages, landscapes and cultures. I feel honoured to have been nurtured by them, and would not be the writer I am without Magabala's ongoing support and encouragement!'* – Kirli Saunders.

The ABIA award marked 2019 as a hugely successful year for Magabala, our authors and illustrators, who were shortlisted for and won a record number of awards.

*'This award, and Magabala's growing success reflects that readers are more interested in First Nations perspectives and stories today, than ever before. There are important shifts happening in this country, and we are incredibly optimistic about the future of Magabala Books and First Nations literature.'* – Magabala Chairperson, Tony Lee





## Rachel Bin Salleh, awarded the inaugural WA Literary Lions Medal

In February 2020, Magabala Publisher, Rachel Bin Salleh was awarded the inaugural WA Literary Lions Medal for her commitment and contribution to West Australian literature. The announcement was made in a ceremony at The Perth Mint by Sam Walsh AO, in his capacity as Chair of The Perth Mint.

The Literary Lions Medal was launched by Writing WA's private donors to turn a spotlight back onto the many passionate individuals and unsung heroes across the sector, who are quietly working to ensure our writing culture thrives now and into the future.

Magabala Books is incredibly proud Rachel has been recognised by her peers. Rachel has been associated with Magabala since she was 19 years old, starting as a trainee editor, and establishing herself over many years as a leading Publisher, making a substantial contribution to the vibrant landscape of Indigenous storytelling and Australian publishing.



Rachel Bin Salleh and Sam Walsh AO.  
Photo by Chris Gurney.

*'Rachel Bin Salleh has facilitated a whole new generation of Indigenous literary thinking, allowing us to make a new vision on the page for our shared future... I can't say where Indigenous literature would be without her, but I certainly wouldn't be part of it — nor would I want to be.'* – Alison Whittaker.





*‘Rachel has been involved in publishing for over twenty years and is an outstanding quiet achiever, not only on the WA literary scene, but nationally and internationally, through her involvement with Aboriginal writers, illustrators and storytellers.’*

*– Sally Morgan.*

Photo by Chris Gurney.



# 2020 Highlights



Leanne Mulgo Watson and Jasmine Seymour at the 2020 Prime Minister's Literary Awards. Supplied by the Prime Minister's Literary Awards.



Johnny Warrkatja Malibirr with a print from his book *Little Bird's Day*. Supplied by Gapuwiyak Culture and Arts Centre.

- Magabala was one of 12 Australian nominees for the prestigious **Astrid Lindgren Memorial Award** (the world's richest prize for children's literature).
- Record number of books awarded and excellence recognised: Four wins, 21 shortlistings and 7 longlistings.
- Record number of new releases: 18 new titles published.
- Second fastest growing small publisher in Australia (AC Neilsen's Top 10 Heatseekers list).
- **Dark Emu** selected for the inaugural Parliamentary Book Club.
- **Ruby Moonlight** film rights optioned by Arena Films.
- **Benevolence** international rights sold to Harpers US (signed early 2021).
- Johnny Warrkatja Malibirr's **Little Bird's Day** original artwork purchased by the State Library of Western Australia.
- Teela May Reid awarded the 2020 **Daisy Utemorrah Award** for her junior fiction manuscript, 'Our Matriarchs Matter'.
- Second Kestin Award title: **Found** by Bruce Pascoe and Charmaine Ledden-Lewis published.





Teela May Reid.

- Launched a new mid-career **Fellowship**, worth \$10,000.
- Indigenous Cadetship program announced, with funding from The Ian Potter Foundation and the WA Government through the Kimberley Development Commission.
- Six Creative Development Scholarships awarded, and 22 other creative and professional development opportunities funded.
- New philanthropic partnerships with The Ian Potter Foundation, JTM Foundation, The Serp Hills Foundation and Australian Indigenous Coffee.



Shirley Purdie. Supplied by Warmun Art Centre.

- New digital storytelling partnership with Google Creative Lab.
- New digital storytime licence agreements with Storybox Library and Koori Curriculum.
- Magabala 'story hutch', storytime videos and exhibition panels launched at the new WA Museum Boola Bardip in Perth.
- First title in the Kimberley Art Centre Series published: **Shirley Purdie: My Story, Ngaginybe Jarragbe.**

# 2020 Publications

## New releases



### **Counting our Country**

**Jill Daniels (NT)**

CHILDREN'S BOARD BOOK

*Counting our Country* is a beautiful bilingual counting book by artist Jill Daniels, a Ritharrngu and Madarrpa artist who lives in Ngukurr in South-East Arnhem Land in the Northern Territory. Jill's paintings of animals from her country celebrate her distinctive style and bold use of colour. *Counting our Country* develops literacy and numeracy by introducing language and art in the early years.

*'Counting from one through ten provides the initial numerical education, but the benefit of this book is the cultural literacy and the language of colour... beautiful reds, oranges, teals and yellows that keep children's eyes on the page.'* – National Indigenous Times



### **Girls Can Fly**

**Sally Morgan (WA), Ambelin Kwaymullina (WA)**

GIFT

*Girls Can Fly* is an inspirational book for 'tweens' from award-winning writers and artists Sally Morgan and Ambelin Kwaymullina. Full of affirmations and advice that come from their life experiences, *Girls Can Fly* is a gift of positivity and encouragement for young girls. The participants of the Kimberley and Pilbara Girl program provided feedback and suggestions on early drafts. An acknowledgement, and photographs of the girls are featured at the back of the book.

*'Whenever you feel a little down and perhaps in need of some inspiration, this is the book to read. Written by two of Australia's finest authors... Girls Can Fly offers young girl's words to live and dream by.'* – The West Australian



### **Brother Moon**

**Maree McCarthy Yoelu (NT), illustrated by Samantha Fry (NT)**

CHILDREN'S PICTURE BOOK

Beneath the dark sky of the Wadjigany Country, Hippy-Boy is captivated when Great-Grandpa Liman tells him the mysterious story of his brother. Great-Grandpa Liman is a masterful storyteller and, as the tale unfolds, he reveals his brother is the moon. Hippy-Boy learns how his great-grandfather is guided by his brother when he goes hunting and fishing, and how important connection to Country is. A beguiling picture book for families to share together.

*'Explore deep connections with the natural world in Maree McCarthy Yoelu and Samantha Fry's 'Brother Moon'... Readers will be delighted to feel as if they are sitting in on an intimate storytelling session, and the hushed night-time illustrations are truly beautiful. For ages 4 and up.'* – Readings



### **Willy-willy Wagtail**

**Helen Milroy (WA)**

CHILDREN'S PICTURE BOOK

*Willy-willy Wagtail* is the first book in Helen Milroy's 'Tales from the Bush Mob' series and takes the reader back to before the Bush Mob is formed: a time when nobody understood each other and there were lots of fights. One day there is a terrible bushfire and in order to save the community Willy Wagtail, Gusto (the wind) and Crow manage to get all the Bush Mob working together.

*'Another wonderful book from this publisher...the first in the 'Tales from the Bush Mob' series. A high-quality production with striking illustrations.'* – Pinerolo: The Children's Book Cottage



### **Mum's Elephant**

**Maureen Jipyiliya Nampijinpa O'Keefe (NT), illustrated by Christina Booth (QLD)**

CHILDREN'S PICTURE BOOK

Maureen Jipyiliya Nampijinpa O'Keefe grew up in the remote community of Ali Curung in the Northern Territory. Her family lived a bush life. They did not own much but her mother had a very special 'elephant'. It was her mother's most prized possession, and she gave it tender loving care. *Mum's Elephant* is a beautiful story that will intrigue children and remind adult readers of the simple things that held a special charm when they were young.

*'Debut author Maureen Jipyiliya Nampijinpa O'Keefe has created something truly magical. This is a story that makes you feel. It makes you remember, and that is a very powerful thing. Christina Booth's illustrations, too, add to the magic — the red dirt, the smoke from a campfire, the shadows from the trees.'* – Kids' Book Review



### **What do you call a baby...?**

**Kamsani Bin Salleh (WA)**

CHILDREN'S BOARD BOOK

*What do you call a baby...?* is an entertaining way for all children to learn the nouns that describe some of our iconic Australian baby animals. Baby frogs are called tadpoles, but what do we call a baby goanna, a baby eagle, or a baby echidna? Kamsani's bright illustrations capture the tender bond between parent and baby animal and create a delightful journey of discovery for young children.

*'A charming, educative and uniquely Australian board book.'* – CBCA Reading Time





## New releases



### **Respect**

**Auntie Fay Muir (VIC),  
Sue Lawson (VIC), illustrated  
by Lisa Kennedy (TAS)**

CHILDREN'S PICTURE BOOK

*Respect* is the first title in the 'Our Place' series of children's picture books, which welcome and introduce children to important elements of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander culture. *Respect* whispers a soft and heartfelt message about the basic cultural principle that informs all Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Nations throughout Australia. It teaches children how we need to listen, learn, and share with respect.

*'Respect presents a code that everyone can live by — and it does so in a poetic and visually delicious package. It's a history lesson, a cultural lesson, and a universal creed rolled into one perfect picture book.'* – CBCA Reading Time

*'Lisa Kennedy's illustrations are luscious and vivid.'* – The South Sydney Herald



### **Benevolence**

**Julie Janson (NSW)**

FICTION

*Benevolence* tells the story of colonial-era Sydney from an Aboriginal perspective. Told through the fictional characterisation of Darug woman Muraging (Mary James), *Benevolence* is a compelling story of first contact. Set around the Hawkesbury River area, the home of the Darug people, in Parramatta and Sydney, Julie Janson's intensely visual prose interweaves historical events with detailed characterisation – she shatters stereotypes and gives voice to first contact experience.

*'Benevolence is a searing, unforgettable work... of immense importance'* – Paperbark Words

*'The text's undulation evokes the ever-changing interactions between settlers and Aboriginal populations following settlement, giving voice to an oft-overlooked Aboriginal perspective.'* – Australian Book Review



### **Family**

**Auntie Fay Muir (VIC),  
Sue Lawson (VIC), illustrated  
by Jasmine Seymour (NSW)**

CHILDREN'S PICTURE BOOK

*Family* is a thoughtful contemplation on the different ways that family makes us whole. The second book from the 'Our Place' series that introduces First Nations' cultural philosophies that Auntie Fay Muir, a Boonwurrung Elder, holds close to her heart. This beautifully illustrated children's picture book shows us 'family' can be about heart and home; an endless sky; stories and songs. It teaches us how to be with each other and with Country.

*'The text is simple yet full of meaning... The illustrations provide a lush background on which the story is told.'* – The West Australian



**Living on Stolen Land**  
Ambelin Kwaymullina (WA)

POETRY/VERSE NON-FICTION

*Living on Stolen Land* is a highly original, prose-styled look at our colonial-settler present. Educating a broad audience about the colonial context of Australia, it pulls apart the myths at the heart of our nationhood, and challenges Australia to come to terms with its past and place within and on Indigenous Countries. *Living on Stolen Land* is timely, thought-provoking and accessible.

*'There's not a single person who doesn't stand to gain something from this book.'* – Alison Whittaker

*'...a punch to the gut that white Australia so desperately needs.'* – Kill Your Darlings



**A Question of Colour**

Pattie Lees (QLD), Adam C Lees (QLD, WA)

MEMOIR

*A Question of Colour; My Journey to Belonging* provides a first-hand account of Pattie Lees' experiences during Australia's assimilationist policy era and recounts her survival following a decade of physical and emotional abuse as a Ward of the State. *A Question of Colour* is a deeply moving and powerful testimony to Pattie's resilience, her identity, and her journey to belong.

*'Lees combines history and memoir with such tact, delicacy and reverence that for all 334 pages, I felt strengthened by her crisp storytelling.'* – The Sydney Morning Herald



**Found**

Bruce Pascoe (VIC), illustrated by Charmaine Ledden-Lewis (NSW)  
CHILDREN'S PICTURE BOOK

This gentle story set in the Australian bush is about a small calf who becomes separated from its family. The little calf is alone and simply wants its mother, sisters, and brothers. So begins the little calf's journey to find its family. In *Found* we share the calf's point of view in an evocative story that comes alive with Charmaine Ledden-Lewis' stunning illustrations.

*'It's a simple, beautiful, optimistic story.'* – Stephen Romei, The Australian

*'Found has some of the most adorable cow drawings you'll ever see... Blue Mountains artist, Charmaine Ledden-Lewis, has engaged beautifully with Bruce Pascoe's story...'* – The South Sydney Herald



# New releases

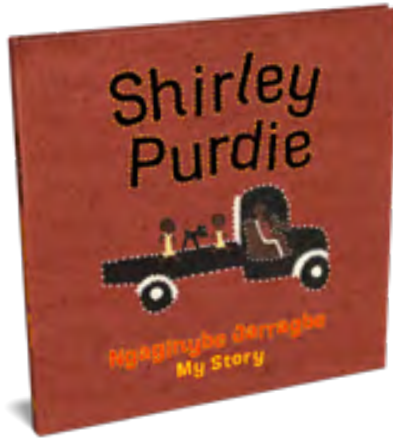


**Guwayu – For All Times**  
 Commissioned by Red Room  
 Poetry, edited by Jeanine Leane  
 (NSW)

POETRY

*Guwayu* is a collection of First Nations Poems, which is a radical literary intervention for its breadth of representation, temporal depth, and diversity of language. This fiercely uncensored collection features 61 poems from 32 First Nations poets in 12 First Nations languages, and together presents an exquisite expression of living First Nations culture. Journey through a range of poetic forms from lyric, confessional, protest, narrative and song, showcasing new voices and established poets.

*‘Guwayu gathers not only the strength, creative and cultural vitality of Indigenous poets, but simply, within these pages you will read some of the best and most vital artists writing in Australia today.’ – Tony Birch*



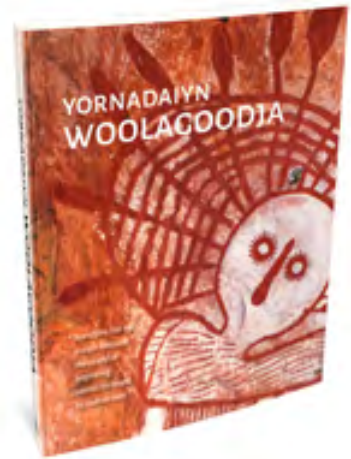
**Shirley Purdie: My Story, Ngaginybe Jarragbe**  
 Shirley Purdie (WA)

CHILDREN'S PICTURE BOOK

Told in English and Gija, this is the story of famous Gija artist Shirley Purdie. In *My Story, Ngaginybe Jarragbe*, Shirley shares stories of her childhood and family alongside images from her paintings from the 2018 Ngaalim-Ngalimboorro Ngagenybe exhibition created for the National Portrait Gallery. The first book in the Kimberley Art Centre Series, *My Story, Ngaginybe Jarragbe* celebrates the life and talents of a remarkable artist and community leader in Warmun, East Kimberley.

*‘...a captivating world for young reading enthusiasts and an ideal introduction to the diversity and exceptional talents of Kimberley Aboriginal visual artists.’ – Happy Mag*

*‘This is an important book that needs to be in every home and school library.’ – Good Reading*



**Yornadaiyn Woolagoodja**  
 Yorna (Donny) Woolagoodja (WA)

MEMOIR

*Yornadaiyn Woolagoodja* is not a typical biography. Rather it invites readers to explore an alternative worldview, a different way of being on Country. Yornadaiyn is a renowned Woddordda artist and this book is his explanation of his own personal interaction and relationship with the Wandjina and with Country. Full of extraordinary images of the landscape, rock art, stone arrangements and the artist's paintings – the result is a transformative experience for the reader – an intimate and privileged insight into Yorna's life, family, Culture and Country.

*‘This is not a typical biography. It is also a photographic journey, an art book, a history book and, I found, a cultural learning experience.’ – Good Reading*

*‘A landmark book we should all embrace.’ – Booktopia*



**maar bidi: next generation black writing**

Elfie Shiosaki (WA), Linda Martin (WA) (Editors)

Angelica Augustine, Serena-May Brown, Savannah Cox, Connie Gamble, Mabel Gibson, Danny Howard, Nancy Murray, Jared Travers, Brianna Yarran (Contributors).

ANTHOLOGY

In this beautifully crafted, evocative, and poignant anthology of prose and fiction, a diverse group of young black writers are encouraged to find strength in their voices and what is important to them. *maar bidi* is a journey into what it is to be young, a person of colour and a minority in divergent and conflicting worlds. All talk to what is meaningful to them, whilst connecting the old and the new, the ancient and the contemporary in a variety of ways.

*'A mix of poetry and prose, maar bidi provides the world with a candid collection from this continent's next generation of Black writers.'* – *The Saturday Paper*

*'A stunning display of truth, reckoning and love.'* – *Blackfulla Bookclub*



**I Want to be a Superhero**

Breanna Humes (WA, QLD), illustrated by Ambelin Kwaymullina (WA)

CHILDREN'S PICTURE BOOK

A beautifully told and illustrated story of Breanna, who wants to be a superhero. She asks family and friends if she can become a superhero by wishing upon a shooting star. She tries but it doesn't work. Breanna is finally happy with the idea of working hard and becoming a superhero doctor, lawyer, engineer, or vet. But she still wants to fly!

*'This book will appeal to kids who love superheroes and are trying to find the place of heroes in the world.'* – *Books+Publishing*

*'A beautiful children's book that explores the concept of heroism in the everyday.'* – *Underground Writers*



**Bindi**

Kirli Saunders (NSW), illustrated by Dub Leffler (QLD)

JUNIOR FICTION

Meet 11-year-old Bindi. She is not really into math's but LOVES art class and playing hockey. Her absolute FAVOURITE thing is adventuring outside with friends or her horse, Nell. Told in verse using both Gundungurra and English, this beautifully crafted work of junior fiction reflects a young girl's relationship with her family, her animals, her friends, her Country and her creativity. Written 'for those who plant trees', *Bindi* explores themes of climate change, bushfires, and healing.

*'...this story deals with feelings of anger, despair and frustration, while also rejoicing in growing up on country and surrounded by love... Beautiful and intricate illustrations from Leffler further enhance the story's emotional complexity.'* – *The Guardian*



# New editions



## **A Most Peculiar Act**

**Marie Munkara (NT)**

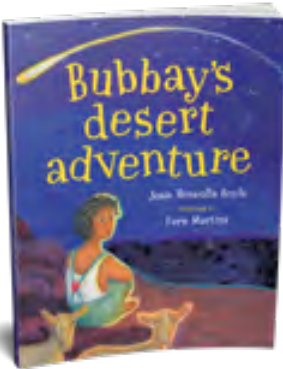
ADULT FICTION

First published in 2014.

*A Most Peculiar Act* casts a sardonic eye over the protectionist policies of the early 20th century from the perspective of an Aboriginal fringe-camp dweller by the name of Sugar. Against the background of the Aboriginal Ordinances Act and the ‘White Australia’ policy, Sugar’s resistance to assimilation turns into a protracted battle with the authorities and the chief protector Horatio Humphris (aka Horrid Hump). Interspersed with illicit affairs, stolen children and unwelcome foreigners, *A Most Peculiar Act* sees Sugar and her oppressors finally meet on a level playing field, with an outcome neither side could have foreseen.

*‘With growing interest in First Nations literature, it is time to revisit and highlight some of the extraordinary works in the backlist. There is no other Australian author of fiction who writes with such acerbic and uncompromising wit about Australia’s mission and colonial history.’*

*–Rachel Bin Salleh*



## **Bubbay’s Desert Adventure**

**Josie Wowolla Boyle (WA), illustrated by Fern Martins (NSW)**

CHILDREN’S PICTURE BOOK

First published as *Bubbay: A Christmas Adventure* in 2012.

Bubbay is lonely, with only the stars as friends. He lives in the desert tending his goats and sleeps under the stars. One night, Bubbay wishes for something he has never had – the stars hear him and, with the help of the magical Gubarlee and kangaroo, emu, crow and bower bird, Bubbay begins a quest to make his wish come true. A story full of magic, combined with richly textured illustrations.



### **VALE Josie Boyle**

Wonghi woman Josie Wowolla Boyle, one of our most treasured authors, passed away in December 2020. Her books include *Bubbay’s Desert Adventure*, *The Spotty Dotty Lady* and *Mrs White and the Red Desert*. Josie was a talented writer, artist, storyteller, educator and singer. We miss Josie’s endless energy and passion, and her generosity of spirit. Josie overflowed with the joy of storytelling in its many forms, delighting every child—and adult—she met with her singing, reading and yarning. Our deepest sympathies are with Josie’s family and friends.

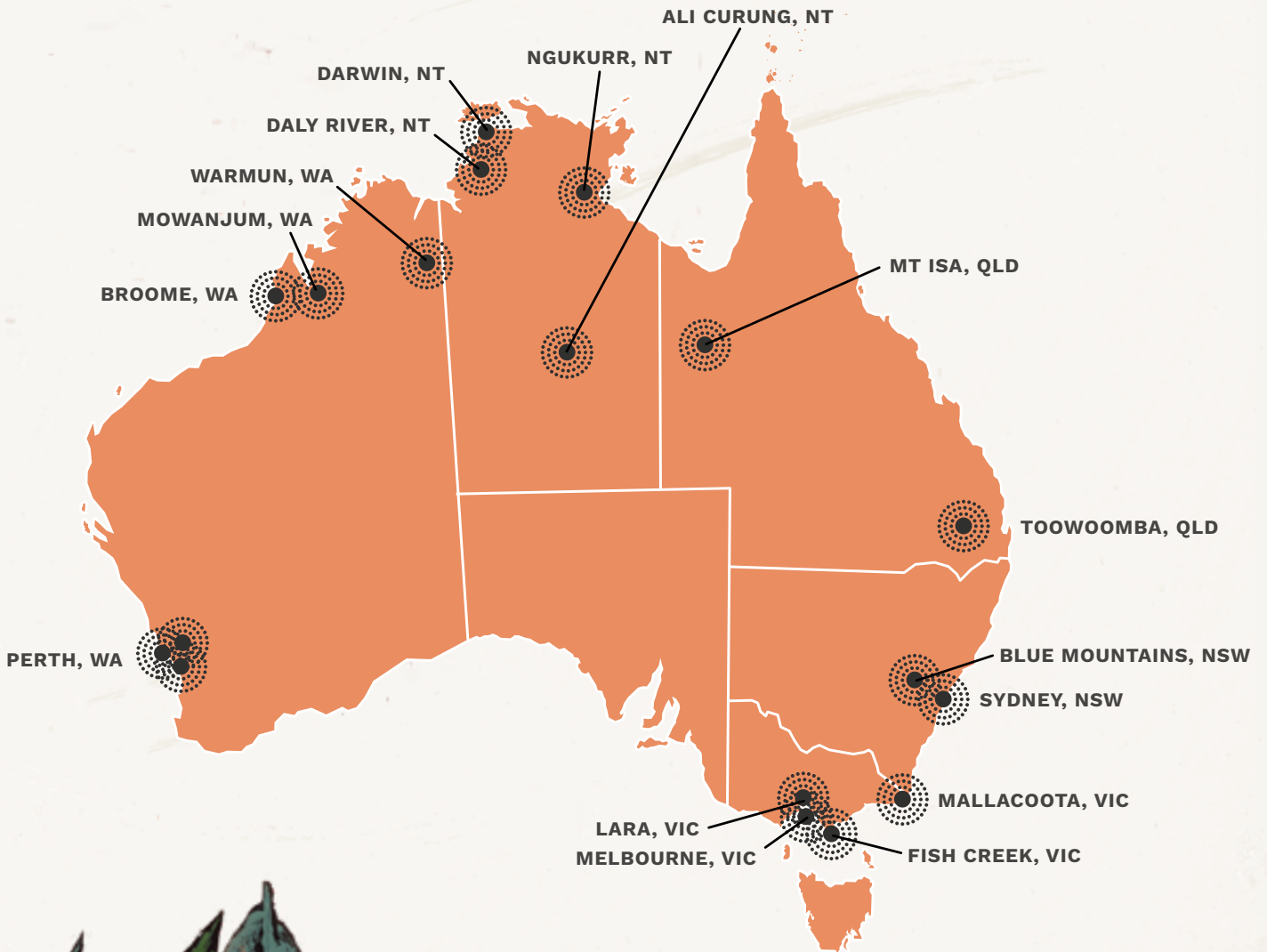






Breanna Humes with her debut title *I Want to be a Superhero*.

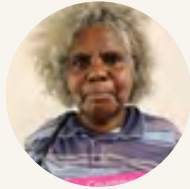
# A diversity of voices



 WHERE AUTHORS AND ILLUSTRATORS ARE BASED



**Kamsani Bin Salleh**  
(Nimunburr, Yawuru,  
Ballardong Noongar)  
*What do you call a baby...?*



**Jill Daniels**  
(Ritharrnju, Madarrpa)  
*Counting Our Country*



**Samantha Fry**  
(Dagiman)  
*Brother Moon* (Illus.)



**Breanna Humes**  
(Noongar, Gunditjmarra,  
Wiraderjiri, Jawoyn)  
*I Want to be a Superhero*



**Julie Janson**  
(Darug, Burruberongal)  
*Benevolence*



**Lisa Kennedy**  
(Trawlwoolway)  
*Respect* (Illus.)



**Ambelin Kwaymullina**  
(Palyku)  
*Girls Can Fly*  
*Living on Stolen Land*  
*I Want to be a Superhero* (Illus.)



**Jeanine Leane &  
Red Room Poetry**  
(Wiradjuri)  
*Guwayu – For All Times*



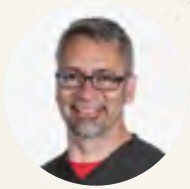
**Charmaine Ledden-Lewis**  
(Bundjalung)  
*Found* (Illus.)



**Adam C Lees**  
(Meriam, Yadhaigana)  
*A Question of Colour*



**Pattie Lees**  
(Meriam, Yadhaigana)  
*A Question of Colour*



**Dub Leffler**  
(Bigambul)  
*Bindi* (Illus.)



**Maree McCarthy Yoelu**  
(Wadjigany)  
*Brother Moon*



**Helen Milroy**  
(Palyku)  
*Willy-willy Wagtail*



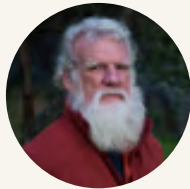
**Sally Morgan**  
(Palyku)  
*Girls Can Fly*



**Fay Stewart-Muir**  
(Boonwurrung, Wamba Wamba)  
*Respect*  
*Family*



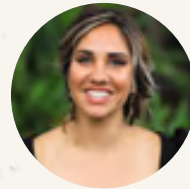
**Maureen Jipiyiliya  
Nampijinpa O'Keefe**  
(Kaytetye—Walpiri)  
*Mum's Elephant*



**Bruce Pascoe**  
(Yuin, Bunurong)  
*Found*



**Shirley Purdie**  
(Gija)  
*Shirley Purdie: My Story*,  
*Ngaginybe Jarragbe*



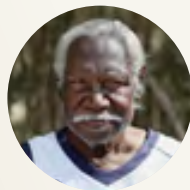
**Kirli Saunders**  
(Gunai)  
*Bindi*



**Jasmine Seymour**  
(Darug, Boorooberongal)  
*Family* (Illus.)



**Elfie Shiosaki**  
(Noongar, Yawuru)  
*maar bidi* (Editor)



**Yornadaiyn Woolagoodja**  
(Woddordda)  
*Yornadaiyn Woolagoodja*

**PLUS 40 CONTRIBUTORS  
TO ANTHOLOGIES**

**NON-INDIGENOUS COLLABORATORS AND CONTRIBUTORS**



**Christina Booth**  
*Mum's Elephant* (Illus.)



**Sue Lawson**  
*Respect*  
*Family*



**Linda Martin**  
*maar bidi* (Editor)

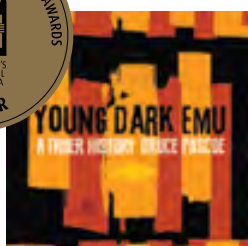
# Celebrating success



## WINNER: Prime Minister's Literary Awards, Children's Literature

### **Cooee Mittigar, Jasmine Seymour and Leanne Mulgo Watson**

*'Budyari budyari, this is amazing! We are completely shocked. We'd like to thank Magabala especially, because championing such incredible Indigenous stories is so important. Thank you to everyone who has loved this book and connected to its story. This is the story of us.'* – Jasmine and Leanne accepting the award



## WINNER: Children's Book Council of Australia, Book of the Year Awards, Eve Pownell Award

### **Young Dark Emu, Bruce Pascoe**

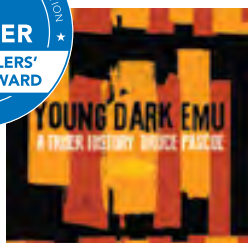
*'The CBCA awards are massively important. Parents rely on them to direct the reading of their children and I am extremely proud that this book will be presented to young Australians with that imprimatur of confidence.'* – Bruce Pascoe



## WINNER: Children's Book Council of Australia, Book of the Year Awards, New Illustrator Award

### **Baby Business, Jasmine Seymour**

*'I can't describe how it feels to win the new illustrator award. I am speechless. I wish my dad and my Nanna were here to see it. It is through their eyes that I see Country in Baby Business. Thank you to my Mudjin, my family.'* – Jasmine Seymour



## WINNER: Australian Booksellers Association, Children's Book of the Year

### **Young Dark Emu, Bruce Pascoe**

*'I'm so proud that the booksellers of Australia have chosen Young Dark Emu as their favourite book of 2020... I'm so grateful that booksellers can see that Young Dark Emu offers a different story, a more positive story for our country.'* – Bruce Pascoe



## WINNER: Daisy Utemorrah Award for an unpublished manuscript, WA Premier's Book Awards

### **Our Matriarchs Matter, Teela May Reid**

*'I am deeply humbled to receive this award and to be collaborating with my niece Jakayla, the little Wiradjuri and Wailwan artist who will illustrate this story with me.'* – Teela May Reid

# Shortlistings, notables and highly commended



## Adelaide Festival Awards for Literature

### CHILDREN'S LITERATURE AWARD

- *Young Dark Emu* shortlisted

### JOHN BRAY POETRY AWARD

- *False Claims of Colonial Thieves* shortlisted
- *Blakwork* shortlisted

## Australian Book Industry Awards

### BOOK OF THE YEAR FOR YOUNGER CHILDREN

- *Young Dark Emu* shortlisted

### SMALL PUBLISHERS' CHILDREN'S BOOK OF THE YEAR

- *Little Bird's Day* shortlisted
- *Cooee Mittigar* longlisted
- *Baby Business* longlisted

### SMALL PUBLISHERS' ADULT BOOK OF THE YEAR

- *Kindred* shortlisted

## Australian Independent Booksellers Association Indie Book Awards

### CHILDREN'S BOOK OF THE YEAR

- *Young Dark Emu* shortlisted

## Children's Book Council of Australia Book of the Year Awards

### NEW ILLUSTRATOR AWARD

- *Cooee Mittigar* Leanne Mulgo Watson shortlisted
- *Little Bird's Day* Johnny Warrkatja Malibirr shortlisted

### PICTURE BOOK OF THE YEAR

- *Baby Business* notable
- *Little Bird's Day* notable

### EARLY CHILDHOOD BOOK OF THE YEAR

- *Little Bird's Day* notable

### EVE POWNALL AWARD

- *Cooee Mittigar* notable

## Kate Challis RAKA Awards

### POETRY AWARD

- *Kindred* finalist and highly commended

## NSW Premier's Literary Awards

### INDIGENOUS WRITING PRIZE

- *Alfred's War* shortlisted

### PATRICIA WRIGHTSON PRIZE FOR CHILDREN'S LITERATURE

- *Young Dark Emu* shortlisted

## Mark & Evette Moran Nib Literary Award

- *Benevolence* longlisted

## Small Press Network Book of the Year Award

- *Cooee Mittigar* shortlisted

## Speech Pathology Australia Book of the Year Awards

Shortlisted titles:

- *Counting our Country*
- *Going to the Footy*
- *The Butterfly Garden*
- *Girls Can Fly*
- *Cooee Mittigar*
- *Mum's Elephant*
- *Baby Business*

## Victorian Premier's Literary Awards

### INDIGENOUS WRITING PRIZE

- *Kindred* shortlisted

# Sharing our stories

## We succeeded with

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A new marketing team structure.

A quick pivot to online events due to COVID-19 pressures. Julie Janson's online author talk was the second ever online event hosted by Gleebooks, and the *Living on Stolen Land* Blackfulla Bookclub talk was the first event hosted by the famous Instagram duo.

A focus on Indigenous Bookstagrammers and First Nations reviewers. The number of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander reviewers who receive our media copies grew from 16 to 34.

In the face of intense interest initiated by the upsurge in the #blacklivesmatter movement, the team created a fast and simple strategy to allow new audiences to access Magabala's books, with booklists on social media and online, and succinct introductory posts.

## Social media followers

# 32,231



## 14,471

11,908 (2019)



## 13,025

2,725 (2019)



## 4,735

4,194 (2019)

## Enewsletter subscribers

## 3,624

2,588 (2019)

## Unique Website users

## 121,356

(up 62% from 2019)

## Website page views

## 961,592

(up 68% from 2019)

## Titles reviews and media

## 410\*

(potential audience 18,067,400)

## "Magabala Books" mentions

## 1,157\*

(potential audience 38,327,100)

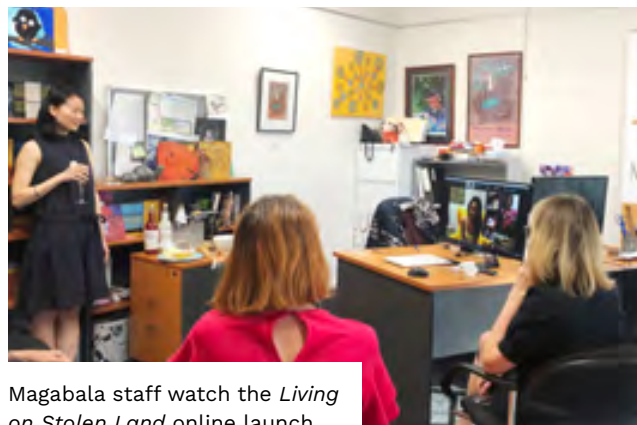
\*syndicated mentions combined

The way we shared our stories in 2020 required flexibility, creative thinking and a 'Covid-19 pivot'.

# Online event highlights



Ambelin Kwaymullina and Teela Reid launch *Living on Stolen Land* online.



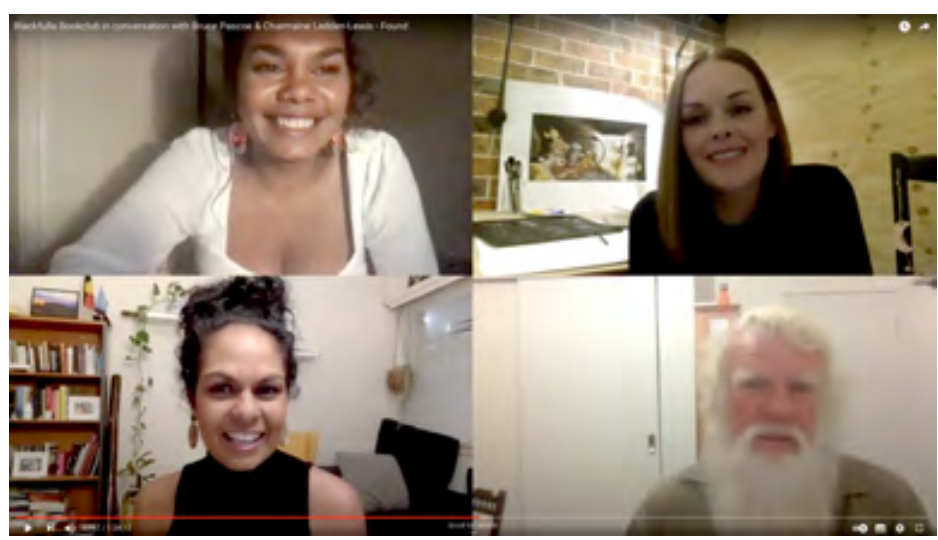
Magabala staff watch the *Living on Stolen Land* online launch.

- Julie Janson ***Benevolence*** online launches – Avid Reader and Better Read than Dead
- Ambelin Kwaymullina ***Living on Stolen Land*** launch – Teela Reid from Blackfulla Bookclub
- **Alison Whittaker** – Bendigo Writer’s Festival online event
- **Guwayu** launch, Red Room Poetry online – Jeanine Leane, Kirli Saunders
- **Guwayu** X Blackfulla Bookclub Instagram live – Nardi Simpson, Claire G. Coleman, Kirli Saunders, Yvette Holt, Nicole Smede
- Tracey Spicer’s Wednesday Night Bookclub – **Bruce Pascoe** and **Charmaine Ledden-Lewis**
- **Found** book launch – Glee Book hosted by Blackfulla Bookclub
- **Family** book launch – Squishy Mini, hosted by Lucky
- Rose Scott Women’s Writers Festival – **Julie Janson** keynote, **Jeanine Leane** panel event
- State Library Victoria – Online Storytime – **Respect** with Auntie Fay Muir
- Squishy Mini Love Your Bookshop Day online storytime – **Maree McCarthy Yoelu** and **Auntie Fay Muir**





An Instagram story celebrates the online launch of *Bindi*.



Bruce Pascoe and Charmaine Ledden-Lewis join Blackfulla Bookclub's Teela Reid and Merinda Dutton at the online launch for *Found* hosted by Gleebooks.

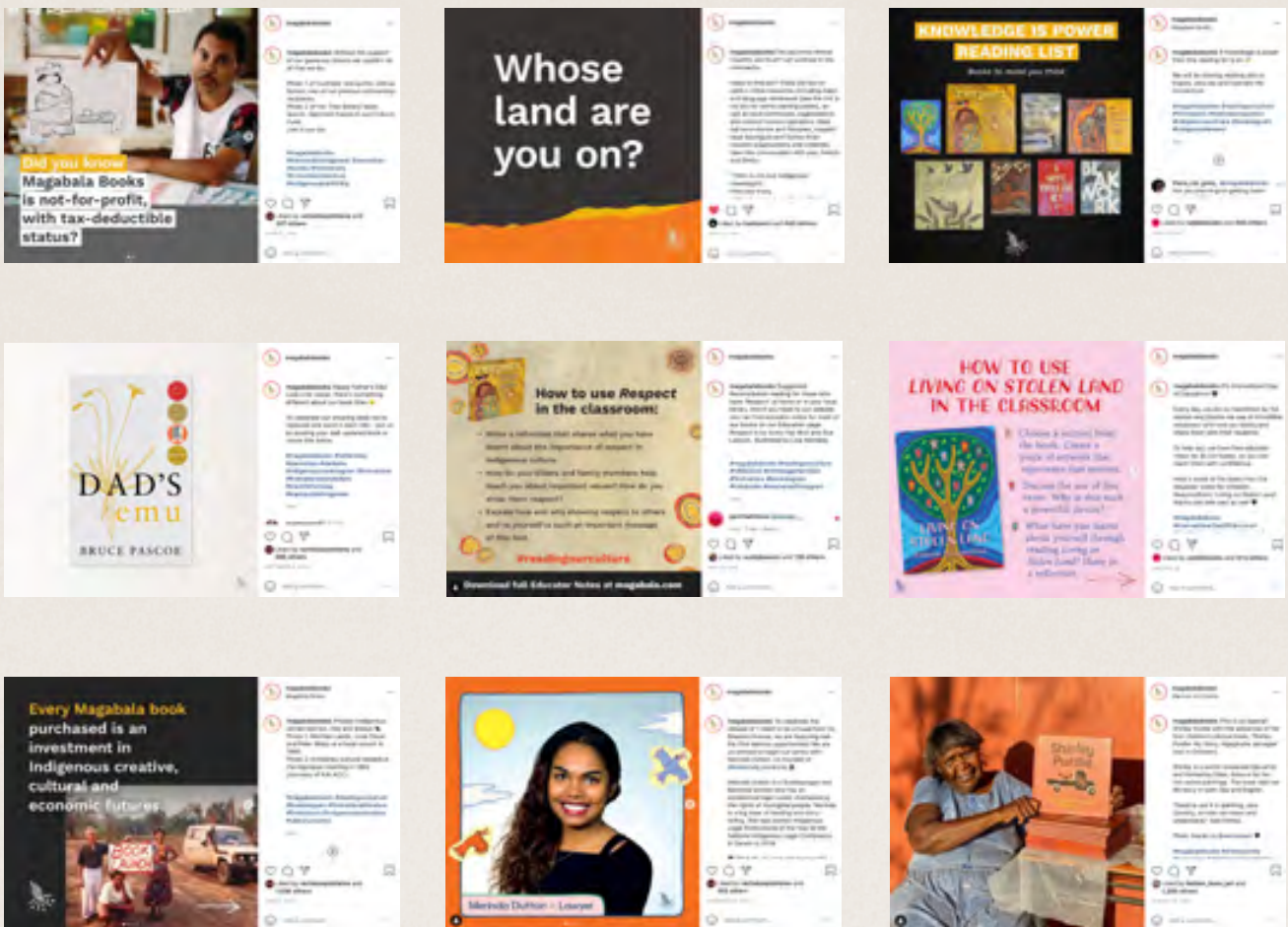
- National Portrait Gallery online storytime, kids activities, and launch – **Shirley Purdie**
- Griffith University Keynote – **Bruce Pascoe**
- The Arthur and Hilda Winch annual lecture: Sydney University – **Bruce Pascoe**
- ANU Wilson Dialogue – **Bruce Pascoe**
- CBCA AAA Educators Professional Development Conference, online sessions – **Aunty Fay Muir**, Magabala Director **Edie Wright**
- The Mumbai Lit Fest – Live Online Festival: **Kirli Saunders**
- Word for Word Festival online – **Bruce Pascoe, Kirli Saunders, Aunty Fay Muir, Sue Lawson & Magabala Director Edie Wright**
- Vincent Lingiari Memorial Lecture, Charles Darwin University – **Bruce Pascoe**
- *Bindi* book launch online – Better Read than Dead, with Ellen van Neerven
- Wollongong Writers Festival online – **Bruce Pascoe**
- CBCA Taronga Zoo online event – **Charmaine Ledden-Lewis**

# In person event highlights

- **Dark Emu** at the inaugural Parliamentary Book Club – Bruce Pascoe, Anna Moulton
- NT Writers Festival – Maree Yoelu McCarthy and Samantha Fry **Brother Moon** children’s event, Siena Stubbs **Our Birds** mangrove reading, Marie Munkara panel appearances
- **Yornadaiyn Woolagoodja** book launch at Mowanjum Arts Centre
- **maar bidi** launch at the University of Western Australia



Young dancers at the *Yornadaiyn Woolagoodja* book launch at Mowanjum Art Centre.



## Publicity/promotional highlights

- ‘Reading Our Culture’ PR strategy and EDM (targeted direct marketing emails) to promote our teacher notes during lockdown and to assist parents home schooling
- Guwayu live Instagram in conversations on @blackfulla\_bookclub
- *I Want to be a Superhero* digital campaign celebrating everyday First Nations ‘superheroes’
- Increasing Magabala coverage in mainstream outlets: Vogue, Women’s Weekly
- Video created for the ABA ‘Australia Reads’ 2020 booksellers virtual event





**LONG TIME NOW**  
Aili Taylor

After 10 years, Aili Taylor's first novel is a small children's novel set in New York's Westchester. An immigrant family is in a small town. Since the 1950s, the country and their lives have been intertwined. The published authors include Aili Taylor, Doreen Green and Long Time Now (Magabala Books).

**ALFRED'S WAE**  
Rachael Bin Salleh

Alfred is a young boy from the Kimberley and his family is moving to a new town. Alfred is a young boy from the Kimberley and his family is moving to a new town. Alfred is a young boy from the Kimberley and his family is moving to a new town.

**YOU CALL IT DESERT? WE USED TO LIVE HERE**  
Jimmy Pike and Pat Lowe

Jimmy and Pat were born in separate parts of the north. Jimmy grew up in the United States and Pat grew up in the United States. Jimmy and Pat were born in separate parts of the north. Jimmy grew up in the United States and Pat grew up in the United States.

**MIS WYDIE TO RED DESERT**  
Josie Wowola Boyle

Josie is a young woman from the desert of Western Australia. She is a young woman from the desert of Western Australia. She is a young woman from the desert of Western Australia.

**ALFRED'S WAE**  
Rachael Bin Salleh

Rachael is a young girl from the Kimberley and her family is moving to a new town. Rachael is a young girl from the Kimberley and her family is moving to a new town.

**NGA NAJU NGU**  
Charmaine Paparatakis Green

Charmaine is a young girl from the Kimberley and her family is moving to a new town. Charmaine is a young girl from the Kimberley and her family is moving to a new town.

**THE TALK GO TROUBLED THE ALPES**  
Daisy Utomomah

Daisy is a young girl from the Kimberley and her family is moving to a new town. Daisy is a young girl from the Kimberley and her family is moving to a new town.

**THE WORLD'S UNDERBOGS**  
Brenton Ezra McKenna

Brenton is a young boy from the Kimberley and his family is moving to a new town. Brenton is a young boy from the Kimberley and his family is moving to a new town.

**KIM SCOTT THAT DEADMAN DANCE**  
Kim Scott

Kim is a young boy from the Kimberley and his family is moving to a new town. Kim is a young boy from the Kimberley and his family is moving to a new town.

**AN ALPHABETIC CLASSIC MY PLACE SALLY MORGAN**  
Sally Morgan

Sally is a young girl from the Kimberley and her family is moving to a new town. Sally is a young girl from the Kimberley and her family is moving to a new town.

**Continuing the tradition of storytelling**  
Through oral and written stories, Aboriginals passed on their traditions of storytelling. This tradition is now being passed on to the next generation through the Magabala Books.

**Magabala Books – Australia's leading Aboriginal publisher**  
Magabala Books is a leading publisher of Aboriginal literature and art. It is a leading publisher of Aboriginal literature and art. It is a leading publisher of Aboriginal literature and art.

**Which book will you choose from the selection here? Why did you choose that one?**

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**KIM SCOTT THAT DEADMAN DANCE**  
Kim Scott

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**AN ALPHABETIC CLASSIC MY PLACE SALLY MORGAN**  
Sally Morgan

Sally is a young girl from the Kimberley and her family is moving to a new town. Sally is a young girl from the Kimberley and her family is moving to a new town.



Mabel enjoys the Magabala titles at the WA Museum Boola Bardip.



Anna Moulton and Bruce Pascoe at the inaugural Parliamentary Book Club.

## WA Museum Boola Bardip

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Magabala Books permanent exhibits in the new museum in Perth: ‘story hutch’ with Magabala books, panel with high-profile WA creators, story-time videos for *Mrs White and the Red Desert*, *Alfred’s War* and *Lucky and Spike*.

## Nurturing industry and trade connections

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- Membership of Australian Publishers Association.
- The Small Press Network (Rachel Bin Salleh, committee member).
- Independent Publishers Committee of the APA (Anna Moulton, committee member).
- Varuna First Nations Fellowship (Rachel Bin Salleh, judge).
- Case study provided for the Australia Council for the Arts Indigenous Cultural and Intellectual Property protocol update.
- Children’s Book Council of Australia – Magabala Director Edie Wright presented at the online AAA PD conference.

## New partnership with Google Creative Lab

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In 2020 we began a new partnership with Google Creative Lab to undertake a digital storytelling workshop and pilot project. The project will engage two Magabala creators to explore the potential for digitally-enabled storytelling and how we may use new technology to amplify Indigenous stories. The project will commence in 2021.



# Investing in creative futures

Magabala Books is committed to nurturing and celebrating the talent of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander storytellers, writers, artists and illustrators.

## Daisy Utemorrhah Award

The 2020 Daisy Utemorrhah Award was awarded to Wiradjuri and Wailwan lawyer, activist and storyteller, Teela May Reid, for her powerful work of junior fiction, 'Our Matriarchs Matter'. Presented via video-link at the WA Premier's Book Awards ceremony at the State Library of Western Australia, Teela received a \$15,000 prize and a publishing contract with Magabala Books.

Teela Reid was born and raised in Gilgandra western NSW, and is the co-founder of @blackfulla\_bookclub on Instagram and works as a criminal defence lawyer based in Sydney. Inspired by her nine-year old niece Jakayla May Reid and Daisy Utemorrhah's own story, Teela said:

*'I felt an urge to submit my story having learned more about Daisy Utemorrhah, but also the fact that I have been strongly shaped by all the Matriarchs in my life. The story is something that comes from my soul and my spirit. I am deeply humbled to receive this award and to be collaborating with my niece Jakayla, the little Wiradjuri and Wailwan artist who will come through and illustrate this story with me.'*

The Daisy Utemorrhah Award seeks to grow Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander writing for younger readers and is generously supported by the Copyright Agency's Cultural Fund and the State Government of Western Australia. Teela Reid's manuscript will be published in late 2021.



Teela May Reid accepting the Daisy Utemorrhah Award via video link, at State Library of Western Australia. Courtesy WA Premier's Book Awards.



Kirli Saunders and *Bindi*

## Daisy Utemorrah Award-winning title *Bindi* published

Kirli Saunders' Daisy Utemorrah Award-winning manuscript 'Mother Speaks', was published as *Bindi* in November 2020. Told in verse using both Gundungurra and English, *Bindi* is a beautifully crafted work of junior fiction that explores themes of Country, creativity, climate change, bushfires, and healing.

*'The Daisy Utemorrah Awards gave me a space to create. I had the time to shape the story. It was a career highlight. Writing Bindi was soul work – being part of the conservation of language and storytelling.'* – Kirli Saunders

## Kestin Indigenous Illustrator Award

*'The mentorship has been fantastic, in that it has introduced me to the magic (and hard work) that takes place to achieve something as profound as a picture book... it's been a fantastic ride... it's about healing and hope.'* – Charmaine Ledden-Lewis

In the midst of COVID-19 lockdowns, the beautiful children's picture book *Found*, by Bruce Pascoe and Kestin Award-winning illustrator Charmaine Ledden-Lewis, was launched into the world via Zoom. Although we were unable to celebrate in person with all the usual fanfare of a Kestin Award book launch, *Found* received an excellent reception in the media and enjoyed strong sales

into the market. A stunning debut by Charmaine Ledden-Lewis, *Found* showcases the power of visual storytelling that illustrators bring to their craft.

The Kestin Indigenous Illustrator Award is a national biennial award that identifies new talent in children's picture book illustration. Awarded to an Indigenous artist or emerging illustrator, the winner receives \$10,000, a professional mentorship and the opportunity to illustrate a children's picture book by a renowned Indigenous author. The Award is generously supported by the Kestin Family Foundation. The next award will open in 2021.



# Creative Stimulus

2020 was a challenging year for our creators. The loss of income from live events and school engagements, coupled with lockdowns and travel restrictions, meant many creators faced significant hardships. Recognising this, we sought to expand our creative development funding allocations in 2020. Creative development support

averages \$3,000 per person and may include creator fees or mentoring support. Expenditure from the Creative Development Fund increased by 426% in 2020 – redefining, for many creators, the challenges of COVID-19 into an opportunity to undertake professional development and initiate new creative work.

## Magabala Fellowship

Thanks to the generosity of The Serp Hills Foundation, in 2020 we launched the Magabala Fellowship: a new opportunity, worth \$10,000, providing a mid-career author valuable ‘time to write’. The Fellowship opened in August 2020 and applications were received from a range of established and early-career First Nations writers.

The inaugural Fellowship was awarded to **Tristan Michael Savage**: a Brisbane-based, Kalkadoon man who grew up in Townsville, North Queensland. Tristan is the author of the young adult sci-fi adventure novel *Rift Breaker* (Magabala Books 2014) and has written for the Logie nominated children’s television series, *Grace Beside Me*. Tristan’s other creative pursuits include the performing arts, filmmaking, and stand-up comedy.

Of the Fellowship win, Tristan said:

*‘I’m absolutely stoked and consider it a great honour to be chosen as the inaugural winner of the Magabala Fellowship, and I look forward to further developing my current work-in-progress. The funds from the Fellowship will be of great help in going towards living expenses so that I may be able to continue paying rent, support the people I love, and dedicate more time to write in a focused and safe environment.’*

Fellowship runner-up **Jared Thomas** received an AIC Creative Grant and **Maree McCarthy Yoelu** was awarded a discretionary scholarship for her highly-commended work.



Tristan Michael Savage, winner of the inaugural Magabala Fellowship.





Siena Stubbs reads from her book *Our Birds* during the NT Writers Festival.



Kirsty Burgu shows off her artwork, which will appear in the second book in the Kimberley Art Centre Series.

## Creative Development Scholarships

In 2020, six Creative Development Scholarships were awarded to creators working on new works or undertaking professional development activity:



### Carl Merrison

Carl Merrison is a Jaru/Kija author/Youth Worker/Australian Rules Football Coach, and the co-author of *Black Cockatoo* (Magabala 2018) and future title *Tracks of the Missing* (unpublished title). The winner of the 2020 black&write! Fellowship for a series of picture books, Carl has two co-authored picture books forthcoming with Hachette. Carl is passionate about AFL, mentoring Aboriginal youth, hunting, looking for gold and time out bush with family.

Carl received a scholarship to complete a series of professional development courses to further develop his writing for children and support to purchase new writing equipment.



### Gaberyah Cox

Gaberyah Cox is a young artist from Broome. Of Wongai and Banjima descent on his mother's side and Nimnurr/Bard and Noongar descent on his father's side, Gaberyah is keen to explore comic book writing and graphic illustration. Gaberyah has been an artist for most of his life and is now seeking support to develop the skills to publish his work.

Gaberyah will undertake an online comic book masterclass and received support to purchase illustration materials and equipment.



### Uncle Greg Simms

Uncle Greg Simms is an Elder, Gadigal of the Dharug nation/Gundungurra/Budawang of the Yuin nation. Uncle Greg Simms is known as an activist for reconciliation, a traditional woodcarver, a storyteller and an Aboriginal cultural educator. Uncle Greg grew up in La Perouse and now lives in Greater Western Sydney.

Uncle Greg was awarded a scholarship to continue transcribing his life story with his niece Dr Danièle Hromek, a Budawang woman of the Yuin nation, and will receive an editorial mentorship to develop his story into a manuscript for publication.



### Kirli Saunders

Kirli Saunders is a proud Gunai woman and award-winning writer. She is a teacher, cultural consultant and artist. In 2020, Kirli was named the NSW Aboriginal Woman of the Year. Her published works include *The Incredible Freedom Machines*, shortlisted for the Prime Minister’s Literary Awards and CBCA notable, *Kindred*, shortlisted for the ABIA 2020 Book Awards and VPLA’s, and *Bindi*, shortlisted for the CBCA Awards, 2021 ABIA Awards and Readings Children’s Book Prize.

Kirli received creative development fees to undertake an editorial mentorship to further develop a children’s picture book series called ‘Cloud Spotting’.



### Linda Augusto

Linda Augusto is a proud Wiradjuri woman and early childhood teacher who is a passionate advocate for children and their families. She currently works at the Indigenous Literacy Foundation as the Early Literacy Manager and has extensive experience across the early childhood sector as an educator, manager and consultant.

Linda received support to enrol in a number of online creative writing courses to further develop her craft as an emerging writer.



### Tyrown Waigana

Tyrown Waigana is a multidisciplinary artist and designer working out of Perth. He is both Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander with connection to the Wardandi Noongar people in south-west WA and the Ait Koedha people from Saibai island in the Torres Strait. Tyrown is an established artist and an emerging writer. He holds a BA from Curtin University majoring in Creative Advertising and Illustration.

Tyrown was awarded creative development fees to further develop his comics and undertake a comic writing course.



Johnny Warrkatja Malibirr works on his second book *The River*.

## 2019 Scholarship outcomes

- Robyn Jean completed her poetry mentorship with Ellen van Neerven and her draft poetry collection is being finalised.
- Neville Poelina continued working with Ross Addison to take down his stories and develop his biography towards publication.
- Rowena Morgan worked with illustration and design mentors to translate her artistic practice into illustrations for a children's picture book.
- Dub Leffler undertook his writing mentorship with Cathie Tasker and completed his draft manuscript *Once there Was a Girl*.
- Johnny Warrkatja Malibirr continued his illustration mentorship, developing illustrations for the forthcoming title *The River*, to be published in 2021.

*'Working with [my] mentor has truly been one of the most rewarding experiences for me. I respectfully appreciate Magabala for having faith in me to use this incredible opportunity... I feel confident and proud... I am even more driven now to continue to write and hopefully see my collection of poems published.'* – Scholarship recipient Robyn Jean.

# Celebrating our creators' successes and career journeys

Many of our creators go on to achieve success with other publishers and we celebrate our role as incubator, or springboard for our creator's professional journey:



## Samantha Fry

2016 Scholarship recipient Samantha Fry illustrated her first book *Alfred's War* with Magabala in 2018. Samantha has gone on to illustrate *Brother Moon* by Marie McCarthy Yoelu (Magabala 2020), and *My Aunty's Wedding* by Miranda Tapsell (Allen & Unwin 2020) and is fast establishing herself as a sought-after career illustrator.



## Charmaine Ledden-Lewis

2019 Kestin Illustrator Award winner, Charmaine Ledden-Lewis published her first illustrated title *Found* by Bruce Pascoe, with Magabala in 2020. She has since been contracted by Penguin and is currently completing illustrations for her second Magabala title.





Magabala casual, Oly Ward, celebrates Love Your Bookshop Day at the Kimberley Bookshop.



*maar bidi* contributors Jarrad Travers and Brianne Yarran at the *maar bidi* book launch.

## Indigenous Publishing Cadetship

In 2020, Magabala announced the creation of a new publishing cadetship program. Developed in response to the lack of employment pathways for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people in the publishing industry, and with succession and career development in mind, the cadetship is a significant opportunity for an Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander person interested in a career in publishing.

Thanks to significant multi-year funding from The Ian Potter Foundation and the Kimberley Development Commission, the cadetship program will provide extensive on-the-job training, professional development and sustainable employment to an Indigenous cadet, under the supervision of Rachel Bin Salleh.

*'This cadetship is about achieving real employment outcomes. A career in publishing needs to be the right fit for the right person and must be culturally safe. We want to support First Nations professionals to pursue the career they're interested in.'* – Rachel Bin Salleh.

The first cadetship will open for applications in early 2021. Over a two-year program, cadets will gain experience across all areas of the organisation. At the successful completion of the program, the cadet will be offered an ongoing position as an employee of Magabala and a second cadet will be appointed.



# Ensuring our cultural legacy is continued...

Beyond our regular publishing schedule, we initiate and deliver a wide range of cultural projects to ensure stories with enduring social, cultural and educational value continue to be read by new generations of Australians.

## Kimberley Art Centre Series

In October, we published the first title in the Kimberley Art Centre Series: *Shirley Purdie: My Story, Ngaginybe Jarragbe*. Shirley Purdie is a prominent leader in Warmun community and an incisive cross-cultural communicator. Her children's picture book shares her life story in both English and Gija and celebrates her talent as an artist of increasing significance and seniority.

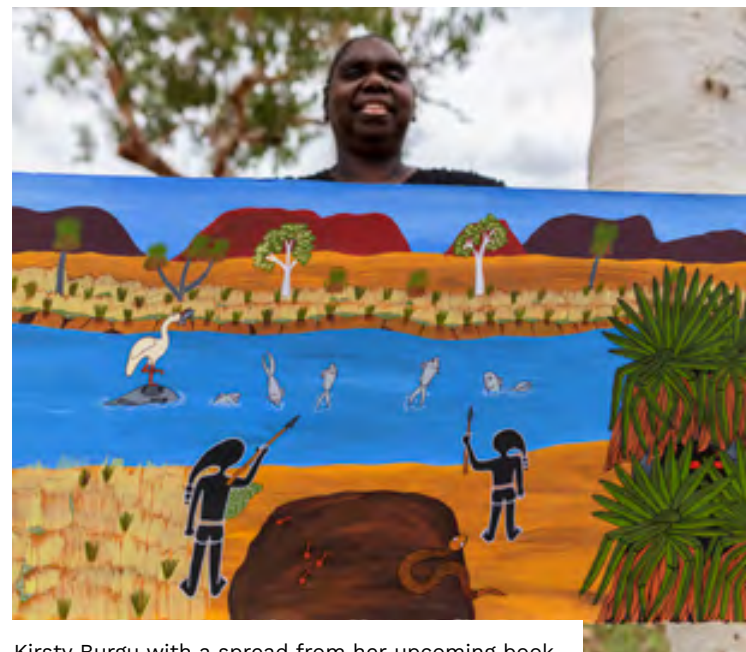
The release of *Shirley Purdie: My Story, Ngaginybe Jarragbe* was celebrated with a zoom event hosted by the National Portrait Gallery of Australia, where families and school groups tuned in from around Australia to hear Shirley read the book and do activities. Shirley Purdie's exhibition *Ngaalim-Ngalimboorro Ngagenybe* was rehung at

the National Portrait Gallery to coincide with the launch.

The Kimberley Art Centre Series focuses on developing the skills of Kimberley Aboriginal artists in book illustration. As part of this project, Magabala is working with six artists and their art centres to publish a series of children's picture books. We would like to acknowledge the support of the Warmun Art Centre and the generous support of the Kimberley Development Commission through a Regional Grant. We look forward to publishing the second title in the series: *Argula* by Kirsty Burgu in 2021, in partnership with the Mowanjumb Aboriginal Art and Culture Centre.

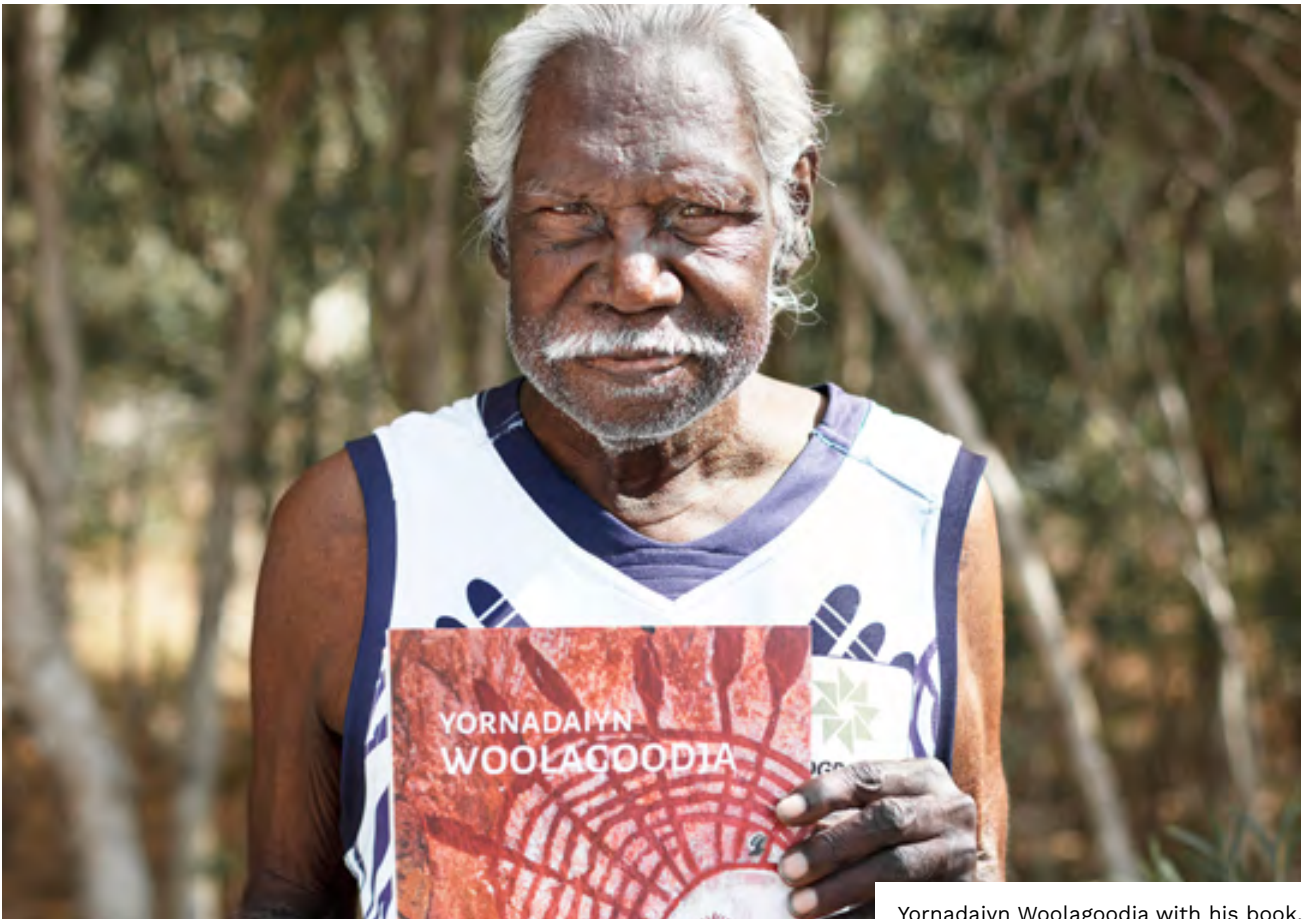


Shirley Purdie with her book. Photo supplied by Warmun Art, Jennifer Gorey and Maria Bec.



Kirsty Burgu with a spread from her upcoming book.





Yornadaiyn Woolagoodja with his book.

## Yornadaiyn Woolagoodja

With the support of the Cultural Fund, we were honoured to publish Yornadaiyn Woolagoodja's significant cultural biography and life story in 2020. Full of extraordinary images of the landscape, rock art, stone arrangements and the artist's paintings, *Yornadaiyn Woolagoodja* is an invitation to explore an alternative worldview, a different way of being in Country.

Yorna Woolagoodja is a renowned Kimberley artist whose giant Namaralay Wandjina featured in the opening ceremony of the Sydney 2000 Olympic Games. He is the Chairman of the Mowanjum Artists Spirit of the Wandjina Aboriginal

Corporation. Born at Kunmunya Mission, Yorna was moved along with his family to Mowanjum, well south of their Woddordda homeland. There he watched his Elders painting the Wandjina on bark and boards, and learnt the stories of Lalai (creation).

We were proud to be able to launch *Yornadaiyn Woolagoodja* in person with Yorna and his family at Mowanjum Art Centre in November. It was a momentous occasion, honouring Yorna as a senior Elder, Lawman, community-leader, and artist, with speeches, dancing and a big curry cook up.

## Elders Stories

Through our Cultural Fund, Magabala continued to support the following projects capturing and sharing the life stories and knowledge of significant Elders:

- Bill Dempsey, *The Boy from Birdum*, published early 2021.
- Griffiths book project: the life story of senior Ngarinyman Law man and artist A. Griffiths.
- Uncle Max Harrison book project.

# Planting seeds

We seek to extend the impact of our books through a range of education and community engagement projects.

## Education projects

- 'Reading our Culture' PR strategy – promoting teachers notes for homeschooling
- New digital storytime licence agreements with Storybox Library and Koori Curriculum
- Jasmine Seymour and Leanne Mulgo Watson, Edie Wright and Aunty Fay Muir at CBCA NSW AAA Professional development conference.
- Education newsletter

## Magabala Teacher notes

Magabala produces teacher notes for new release titles based on the education strategy for each title. Teacher notes are written by qualified teachers and curriculum experts and are made freely available on our website. In 2020 we commissioned teacher notes for:

- **Brother Moon**
- **Willy-willy Wagtail**
- **Respect**
- **Benevolence**
- **Family**
- **Living on Stolen Land**
- **Found**
- **I Want to be a Superhero**
- **Bindi**
- **Cunning Crow**
- **Shirley Purdie: My Story, Ngaginybe Jarragbe**





Maya Giiguy, little Gumbaynggirr, Yawuru, Bardi, Kija girl enjoying our books.



Book Week warrior DJ dressed as Alfie from Alfie's Search for Destiny. Photo supplied by his mum Sarah.

## Education partners

In addition to a growing number of school and educational buyers, Magabala supplies books to, and partners with, the following organisations who support work with young people, including:

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

## Small Seeds Big Reads

Our Small Seeds program supports early childhood literacy and ensures children across Australia have access to culturally relevant books they love. 100% funded by our generous donors, we gift book packs to organisations where children may have limited access to books.

In 2020, we donated **1,252 books** (double the number in 2019) to a range of playgroups, early childhood centres, parenting programs, out of home care units, women's refuges, and family support programs, including:

- Meerilinga Children's Services, Perth, WA
- City of Armadale Aboriginal Community Centre, WA
- Pilbara Girl Program Goolarri Media, WA
- Kullarri Aboriginal Corp, Ardyaloon, Djarindjin, Bidyadanga and Beagle Bay, WA
- Gunawirra Aboriginal Corp, Regional NSW
- VACCA – Koorie Kids Playgroup, Melbourne, VIC
- KindiLinks, Cable Beach Broome, WA
- Wagga Aboriginal Women's Group, Wagga Wagga, NSW
- Banyule Community Health – Aboriginal Early Years program, Heidelberg West, VIC
- Albury Wodonga Aboriginal Health Service, NSW
- Marninwarntikura Women's Resource Centre, Fitzroy Crossing, WA
- Aboriginal Legal Service, Perth, WA
- Bawa Gawiy Early Childhood Centre Marninwarntikura, Fitzroy Crossing, WA
- Babagarra Nyirrwa Residential Care House, Broome, WA
- Jalygurr Guwan Early Childhood Centre, Broome, WA





Maree McCarthy Yoelu reads her book *Brother Moon* to children at the NT Writers Festival, as illustrator Samantha Fry looks on.



# Partners



Our partnerships are vital to ensuring that the diversity and dynamism of our publishing program is realised. We couldn't do all that we do without the incredible support of our major government, industry, corporate, community and philanthropic partners.

## Our industry partners

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Our thanks to:

- The wonderful team at our distributor, NewSouth Books, and at our warehouse, Australian Distribution Services.
- The team at Ovato (formerly Griffin Press), our Australian printers.
- Post Pre-press Group, our typesetters
- Booksellers: our champions, we thank you all. We would particularly like to acknowledge the independent booksellers who represent the majority of our customers and who contribute so much to Australia's vibrant literary culture.

## Our funding partners

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Magabala Books receives financial assistance from the **Australian Government through the Australia Council, its arts funding and advisory body**, and the **State Government of Western Australia** through the **Department of Local Government, Sport and Cultural Industries**. We are grateful to both the Australia Council and DLGSC for their significant investment in First Nations literature through the ongoing support of Magabala Books.

We would also like to acknowledge the following for their generous support:

- The Shire of Broome for their support of Magabala.
- The Kimberley Development Commission for their support of the Kimberley Art Centre Children's Book Series, and the Indigenous Publishing Cadetship program through Regional Economic Development Grants.
- Copyright Agency Limited, for their support of the Daisy Utemorra Award.
- State Library of Western Australia and the State Government of Western Australia for their support of the Daisy Utemorra Award within the Western Australian Premier's Book Awards.

Magabala thrives on creating meaningful, long-term relationships with philanthropic partners who share our values and we acknowledge the following Trusts and Foundations for their generous support:

- AESOP Foundation
- Australian Executor Trustees (AET)
- Donnelly Garner Foundation
- Kestin Family Foundation
- Oranges and Sardines
- Spinifex Trust
- Tate Family Foundation
- The Jon & Caro Stewart Family Foundation

In 2020, we gratefully initiated new partnerships with:

- The Ian Potter Foundation
- The JTM Foundation
- The Serp Hills Foundation

We would also like to acknowledge the wide range of individual donors, whose generous contributions enable our ongoing cultural and social initiatives.



Left to right: Charmaine Ledden-Lewis, Johnny Warrkatja Malibirr and the late Harry Kestin.

### VALE Harry Kestin

**It is with great sadness we acknowledge the passing of long-time Magabala supporter and friend Harry Kestin, in November 2020.**

We met Harry Kestin when he first visited our bookshop in 2013 – when we were just beginning our journey in philanthropy and Harry was embarking on his. For us, philanthropy was about realising the dreams we’d had for a long time but didn’t have the resources to turn into reality. And Harry was a man who wanted to make a real difference. Together we established the Kestin Indigenous Illustrator Award – to support an emerging illustrator to learn the art of children’s picture book illustration. Though this Award and the careers he has helped launch, Harry Kestin’s legacy continues. Thank you for your support and friendship Harry. You will be missed.



Department of  
**Local Government, Sport  
and Cultural Industries**



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CULTURAL FUND

**State Library**  
OF WESTERN AUSTRALIA



the Aesop Foundation



**Kestin Family  
Foundation**

# Governance

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

At the AGM in May, Tony Lee assumed the role of Chairperson and Steve Kinnane the role of Deputy Chairperson. We would like to thank Edie Wright for her dedication and commitment to Magabala as Chairperson for more than six years, and to thank

Tony for taking on the role during a challenging year. At the AGM Josepha Howard joined the Board and assumed the role of Treasurer. Josepha is a proud Kija, Yawuru, Jabirr Jabirr woman and is the General Manager of Waardi Limited.



**TONY LEE**  
Chairperson



**STEVE KINNANE**  
Deputy-Chairperson



**EDITH WRIGHT**  
Director



**LENKA VANDERBOOM**  
Director



**MARGY DIA**  
Director



**CLINTON BENJAMIN**  
Director



**RYAN ATKINSON**  
Director



**JOSEPHA HOWARD**  
Director





Magabala staff celebrating the ABIA Small Publisher Award. Left to right: Enid Ketchell, Rebecca Ross, Rachel Bin Salleh, Gene Eaton, Anna Moulton, Kate Rendell, Catelyn Dowell and Xenica Ayling (not pictured: Margaret Whiskin, Irene Huang).

# Staff

**CEO** – Anna Moulton

**PUBLISHER** – Rachel Bin Salleh

**SENIOR EDITOR** – Margaret Whiskin

**PUBLISHING ASSISTANT** – Rebecca Ross

**MARKETING MANAGER** – Xenica Ayling

**DIGITAL AND DESIGN OFFICER** – Gene Eaton

**BUSINESS MANAGER** – Irene Huang

**PROJECT OFFICER** – Kate Rendell

**SALES AND ADMIN OFFICER** – Catelyn Dowell

**RECEPTION AND RETAIL OFFICER** – Enid Ketchell

Olivia Ward, Abilene Lee Tong, Leilani Sampi, Jasmin Bin Swani and Sonya Barone worked as casuals, helping us to keep up with the increased web-sales and postage demands from mid-year.

## Our broader team

We were also supported by an exceptional team of publishing and publicity professionals including: Maryann Ballantyne, Bruce Sims, Rachael Christensen, Cathie Tasker, Ariana Klepac, Jo Hunt, Donna Rawlins, Kelly Somers, Post Pre-Press, Morey Media, Scott Rochfort (Blackwattle Media), Anna Abignano, Christina Wheeler, Erika Dizon.

We would also like to acknowledge the fabulous team at NewSouth and ADS – ensuring our books got to where they needed to be, in very challenging circumstances.



2020  
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