



# ABR

AUSTRALIAN BOOK REVIEW

## Annual Review 2017



# Australian Book Review

**A**BR is national in title, content, authorship, readership, influence, events, and partnerships. Founded in 1961 in Adelaide and revived in Melbourne in 1978, it is an independent, not-for-profit monthly magazine, managed by a small, experienced editorial and management team, and committed to publishing critical and creative writing of the highest standard. Through its print and digital publishing, website, prizes, fellowships, events, and partnerships, it makes a major contribution to Australia's culture of ideas.

The magazine publishes in-depth literary and arts reviews as well as new poetry and fiction, essays and commentaries, interviews, diaries, and travel writing. *ABR* reviews plays, films, television, music, theatre, dance, festivals, and art exhibitions.

*ABR* is a strong advocate of proper support and remuneration for freelance reviewers. We pay for everything we publish – print and online – and we pay increasingly well.

*ABR* is a powerful generator of ideas and creative writing, and a key supporter of fresh talent. No other Australian magazine supports writers and editors through such varied and lucrative programs. The magazine welcomes contributions from both established and emerging writers. We offer young writers national workshops, close editing, professional mentoring – and we pay them all, from the outset. Thus *ABR* contributes to the long-term health and renewal of the sector.

*ABR* supports Australian writers through a range of prizes, fellowships, themed issues, and events. The Calibre Essay Prize, the *ABR* Elizabeth Jolley Short Story Prize, and the Peter Porter Poetry Prize all reflect *ABR*'s support for major literary forms. These prizes, Fellowships, and events depend on support from private donors, and philanthropic foundations. Their donations go directly to Australian writers and editors.

The *ABR* office is located in a studio managed by the City of Melbourne's Creative Spaces program.

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## Staff and Consultants

Peter Rose, Editor and CEO  
Amy Baillieu, Deputy Editor  
Dilan Gunawardana, Deputy Editor (Digital)  
Grace Chang, Business Manager  
Christopher Menz, Development Consultant  
John Hawke, Poetry Editor

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Dr Terri-ann White  
Professor Rita Wilson

# Year in review

This was a notable year for *Australian Book Review*. Our three international prizes delivered quality shortlists and some exceptional winning features. The year also brought four new *ABR* Fellowship essays, all listed elsewhere.

The magazine – always committed to publishing new literary and critical talent – is delighted that 30% of the 300 writers featured in 2017 were making their first appearance in the magazine.

November 15 was a momentous day for *ABR*, as it was for thousands of organisations and millions of Australians. *ABR* was proud to play a public role in lobbying for marriage equality, this overdue social reform. The related articles and Open Letter form part of a new focus on cultural, political, and social commentary in *ABR*.

*ABR* was founded in 1961 and folded in the early 1970s. It was revived in 1978 under the aegis of the National Book Council. The coming year thus marks the fortieth anniversary of the second series. This milestone will be marked with major events and new programs. There will be some surprises!

The diversity of *ABR*'s programs and the quality of its publishing are due to the hard work, passion, and commitment of its small staff. Special thanks go to Amy Baillieu, Grace Chang, and Dilan Gunawardana. Christopher Menz's contribution as Development Consultant is immense. Funding from government, philanthropic foundations, and private donors enables us to continue expanding the magazine and pursuing new ventures.

Finally, we are grateful to all our readers, subscribers, Patrons, and partners.



Peter Rose, Editor and CEO



Colin Golvan QC, Chair

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## 2017 Highlights

More than 295 writers from around Australia  
– 88 of them new to the magazine

Record year for private donations and bequests  
– from 119 supporters

Publication of four *ABR* Fellowship essays

Marguerite Johnson is the inaugural *ABR*  
Gender Fellow

Creation of a special \$10,000 Fellowship to  
celebrate the fortieth anniversary of the  
second series of *ABR* in 2018

Total payments to *ABR* prize winners and  
Fellows since 2005 now exceed \$326,000

Strong creative partnerships with Monash  
University and Flinders University

*ABR* plays a prominent role in the marriage  
equality campaign

Successful second *ABR* tour in June, to the UK,  
with a focus on Shakespeare

Marked expansion in *ABR* Arts with  
a record number of 130 reviews

# Thanking our partners

*Australian Book Review* is assisted by the Australian Government through the Australia Council for the Arts, its arts funding and advisory body. *ABR* is supported by: the NSW Government through Arts NSW; the Victorian Government through Creative Victoria; the Queensland Government through Arts Queensland; the Western Australian Government through the Department of Local Government, Sport and Cultural Industries; and the South Australian Government through Arts South Australia.

We also acknowledge the generous support of our university partners Monash University and Flinders University; and we are grateful for the support of the Copyright Agency Cultural Fund; The Ian Potter Foundation; Eucalypt Australia; RAFT; Sydney Ideas, The University of Sydney; the City of Melbourne; and Arnold Bloch Leibler.



# ABR Patrons

Australian Book Review warmly thanks its Patrons and donors for their wonderful support.  
Donations help Australian writers and underwrite many of our programs.

‘What I appreciate so much about *ABR* is the range and depth of its reviews and articles. It is the sort of intellectual forum that is vital for a healthy nation. With the various prizes it has initiated, it is also encouraging more exciting and stimulating writing. I am delighted to be able to support the *ABR* team in their endeavours.’



Ian Dickson, *ABR* Patron since 2010

## Acmeist (\$75,000 or more)

Mr Ian Dickson

## Olympian (\$50,000 to \$74,999)

### Augustan (\$25,000 to \$49,999)

Peter Corrigan AM (1941–2016)  
Ms Anita Apsitis  
and Mr Graham Anderson  
Ms Morag Fraser AM  
Mr Colin Golvan QC  
Ms Ellen Koshland  
Mrs Maria Myers AC  
Mr Kim Williams AM  
Anonymous (1)

### Imagist (\$15,000 to \$24,999)

Dr Steve and Mrs TJ Christie  
Mr Peter and Ms Mary-Ruth McLennan

### Vorticist (\$10,000 to \$14,999)

Mrs Helen Brack  
Emeritus Professor David Carment AM  
Professor Ian Donaldson  
and Dr Grazia Gunn  
Emeritus Professor Anne Edwards AO  
Mrs Pauline Menz  
Ms Ruth and Mr Ralph Renard  
Peter Rose and Christopher Menz  
Mr John Scully  
Anonymous (1)

### Futurist (\$5,000 to \$9,999)

The Hon. John Button (1932–2008)  
Mr Peter Allan  
Hon. Justice Kevin Bell AM  
and Ms Tricia Byrnes  
Dr Bernadette Brennan  
Professor Glyn Davis AC  
and Professor Margaret Gardner AO  
Ms Marion Dixon  
Professor The Hon. Gareth Evans AC QC  
The Hon. Peter Heerey AM QC  
Mr Ian Hicks AM  
Dr Alastair Jackson  
Mr Allan Murray-Jones  
Professor Colin and Ms Carol Nettelbeck  
Estate of Dorothy Porter  
Lady Potter AC CMRI  
Mr David Poulton  
Ms Ruth Wisniak OAM  
and Dr John Miller AO  
Anonymous (2)

### Modernist (\$2,500 to \$4,999)

Ms Gillian Appleton

Ms Kate Baillieu  
Professor Jan Carter AM  
Mr Des Cowley  
Helen Garner  
Dr Gavan Griffith AO QC  
Ms Cathrine Harboe-Ree  
Professor Margaret Harris  
Ms Elisabeth Holdsworth  
Mr Neil Kaplan CBE QC  
and Ms Su Lesser  
Mr Geoffrey Lehmann  
and Ms Gail Pearson  
Dr Susan Lever  
Mr Don Meadows  
Ms Susan Nathan  
Mr Stephen Newton AO  
Margaret Plant  
Professor John Rickard  
Ilana Snyder and Ray Snyder AM  
Professor Andrew Taylor AM  
Dr Mark Triffitt  
Mr Noel Turnbull  
Ms Mary Vallentine AO  
Ms Nicola Wass  
Ms Jacki Weaver AO  
Anonymous (6)

### Romantic (\$1,000 to \$2,499)

Mr Peter and Mrs Sarah Acton  
Professor Dennis Altman AM  
Helen Angus  
Bardas Foundation  
Professor Frank Bongiorno  
Mr Brian Bourke AM  
Mr John H. Bowring  
Mr John Collins  
Ms Donna Curran and Mr Patrick McCaughey  
Mr Hugh Dillon  
The Leo and Mina Fink Fund  
Professor Sheila Fitzpatrick  
Mr Reuben Goldsworthy  
Dr Joan Grant  
Professor Tom Griffiths AO  
Ms Mary Hoban  
Dr John Holt (1931–2013)  
Ms Claudia Hyles  
Dr Barbara Kamler  
Dr Stephen McNamara  
Professor Stuart Macintyre AO  
Mr Alex and Ms Stephanie Miller  
Dr Ann Moyal AM  
Dr Brenda Niall AO  
Ms Angela Nordlinger  
Ms Jillian Pappas  
Mr M.D. de B. Collins Persse OAM MVO

Professor John Poynter AO OBE  
Dr Trish Richardson  
and Mr Andy Lloyd James  
Dr Della Rowley (in memory of  
Hazel Rowley, 1951–2011)  
Ms Gillian Rubinstein (Lian Hearn)  
Mr Robert Sessions AM  
Dr John Seymour  
and Dr Heather Munro AO  
Mr Michael Shmith  
Dr Jennifer Strauss AM  
Dr John Thompson  
Ms Lisa Turner  
Dr Barbara Wall  
Emeritus Professor Elizabeth Webby AM  
Professor Terri-ann White  
Mrs Ursula Whiteside  
Mrs Lyn Williams AM  
Anonymous (7)

### Symbolist (\$500 to \$999)

Ms Nicole Abadee and Mr Rob Macfarlan  
Ms Jan Aitken  
Mr Douglas Batten  
Mr John Bugg  
Ms Michelle Cahill  
Mr Joel Deane  
Ms Jean Dunn  
Ms Johanna Featherstone  
David Harper AM  
Estate of Martin Harrison  
Ms Muriel Mathers  
Mr Rod Morrison  
Mr Mark Powell  
Ms Natalie Warren  
Dr Ailsa Zainu'ddin  
Anonymous (3)

### Realist (\$250 to \$499)

Dr Gae Anderson  
Dr Delys Bird  
Ms Donata Carrazza  
Ms Blanche Clark  
Professor Paul Giles  
Dr Anna Goldsworthy  
Professor Brian McFarlane  
Mr Michael Macgeorge  
Ms Diana O'Neil  
Mr J.W. de B. Persse  
Professor Wilfrid Prest  
Professor David Rolph  
Mrs Margaret Smith  
Joy Storie  
Professor Jen Webb  
Mr Robyn Williams AM  
Anonymous (4)



‘The editorial vision of *Australian Book Review* is to embrace a more inclusive, ethical, transnational and democratic literary identity, qualities I am very pleased to support in a literary magazine.’

Michelle Cahill, *ABR* Patron since 2016

# Travel with ABR

## Munich to Berlin: art, music & literature

June 2-15, 2018

Explore some of the great German cities with like-minded ABR readers and supporters, enjoying outstanding performances of opera and orchestral music, visiting a selection of superb art galleries and exploring Germany's literary heritage from Goethe to Nietzsche and beyond. The tour – led by ABR's Editor Peter Rose and seasoned tour leader Christopher Menz – builds on ABR's successful tours to the USA and the UK in 2016 and 2017.



### Some highlights

- ABR literary event and reception at the Australian Embassy in Berlin
- Janáček's *From the House of the Dead* in Munich, Verdi's *Rigoletto* in Dresden, Offenbach's *Bluebeard* and Puccini's *Tosca* in Berlin
- Kandinsky and the Blue Rider artists of the early 20th century in Munich
- Dresden's outstanding museums, including the Green Vault and the Old Masters Picture Gallery
- Weimar, Goethe's city and Germany's capital during the Weimar Republic, also home of the Nietzsche Archive
- Bayreuth, home of Wagner's Festspielhaus



ACADEMY  
TRAVEL

ABR  
AUSTRALIAN BOOK REVIEW

# ABR Fellowships in 2017

ABR published four Fellowship essays in 2017.

## ABR Gender Fellowship

Marguerite Johnson is the 2017 ABR Gender Fellow. Her essay 'Picnic at Hanging Rock Fifty Years On' examines themes of gender and sexuality in Joan Lindsay's 1967 novel, drawing on studies of Mediterranean classics. Her essay appeared in the 2017 December issue of ABR.



The Gender Fellowship was funded by Emeritus Professor Anne Edwards AO.



## ABR RAFT Fellowship

Elisabeth Holdsworth is the 2017 ABR RAFT Fellow. Her essay 'If This Is a Jew' explores the nature of Progressive Judaism as practised in Australia, Israel, and the United States. Her essay appeared in the November 2017 Arts issue of ABR.

This Fellowship was funded by the Religious Advancement Foundation Trust (RAFT).

## ABR Eucalypt Fellowship

Stephen Orr is the 2017 ABR Eucalypt Fellow. Stephen Orr's essay 'Ambassadors from Another Time' explores Australia's complex relationship with the eucalypt throughout history. His essay appeared in the 2017 October Environment issue of ABR.



This Fellowship was funded by Eucalypt Australia and the ABR Patrons.



## ABR Patrons' Fellowship

Philip Jones is the ABR Patrons' Fellow. His essay 'Beyond Songlines' is a revisionist article examining the Bruce Chatwin phenomenon thirty years on. The essay appeared in the September 2017 issue of ABR.

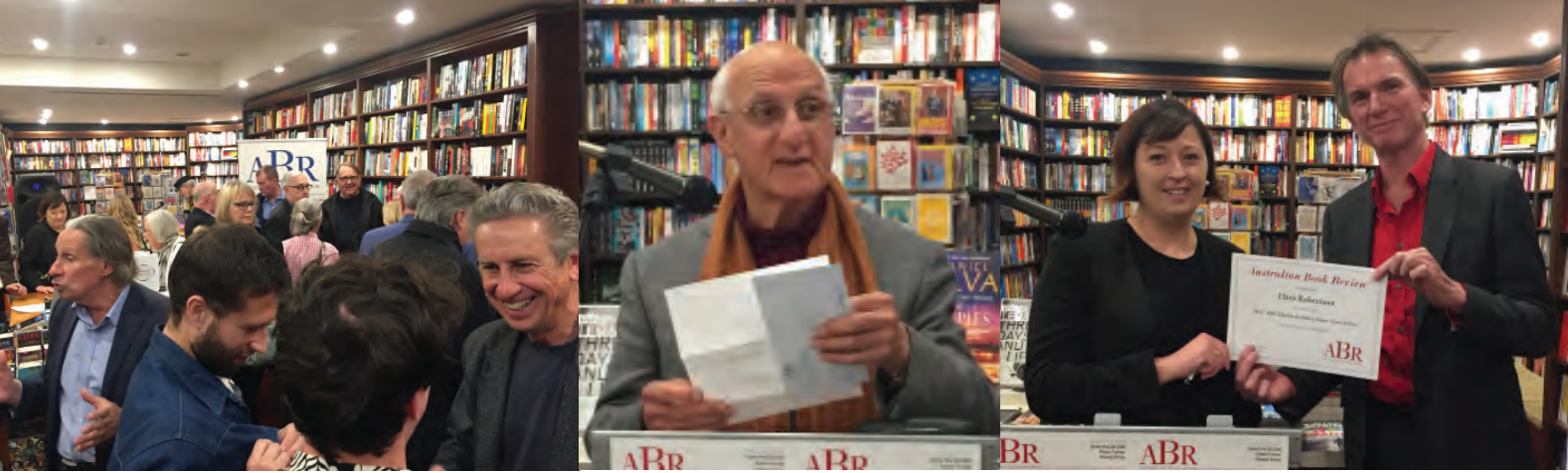
This Fellowship was supported by the ABR Patrons.

# Current Fellowship on offer

## ABR Fortieth Birthday Fellowship

To celebrate its fortieth birthday in 2018, *Australian Book Review* is offering a special Fellowship worth \$10,000 – the ABR Fortieth Birthday Fellowship. The chosen Fellow will write four substantial features (2,000 words or longer) for publication in the magazine during 2018. The features can be review essays, commentaries, or interviews. Published writers/critics/commentators have until 31 December to apply.

The ABR Fortieth Birthday Fellowship is funded by the ABR Patrons.



Left to right: Jolley Prize ceremony attendees at Potts Point Bookshop; Author David Malouf announces the winner of the 2017 Jolley Prize, Eliza Robertson; Managing Director Bloomsbury Publishing ANZ Kate Cubitt accepts the first prize on behalf of Eliza Robertson, with Peter Rose

## *ABR* Elizabeth Jolley Short Story Prize



**E**liza Robertson was the winner of the 2017 *ABR* Elizabeth Jolley Short Story Prize for her story ‘Pheidippides’. Author David Malouf named the overall winner at a ceremony at Potts Point Bookshop, Sydney. Dominic Amerena was placed second for his story ‘The Leaching Layer’ and Lauren Aimee Curtis came third with her story ‘Butter’. All three stories were published in the August 2017 Fiction issue of *ABR*.

The *ABR* Elizabeth Jolley Short Story Prize, established in 2010 and named after acclaimed short story writer Elizabeth Jolley (1923–2007), is one of the country’s most prestigious awards for short fiction. This year it attracted over 1,200 entries from forty-two countries, most of them newly written for this competition. The judges for the 2017 Jolley Prize were Amy Baillieu, Chris Flynn, and Ellen van Neerven. The total prize money awarded was \$12,500.

*The Jolley Prize is funded by Mr Ian Dickson.*



# ABR Arts

‘As the space allotted to the arts in mainstream newspapers continues to shrivel, magazines such as *Australian Book Review* step up to fill the gap, become increasingly important, providing reliable reviews to an intelligent and interested public.’

Leo Schofield AM

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*ABR* actively engages with all the arts – not just literature. In 2017 *ABR* Arts carried about 130 reviews of films, plays, television programs, operas, concerts, festivals, and art exhibitions. Our critics around Australia offer cogent, expert, substantial reviews of a length and quality rarely found in our newspapers. This free online service is funded by The Ian Potter Foundation.

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‘Bell Shakespeare’s new production is a brilliant, illuminating, dramatically compelling interpretation ... It has made me see the play anew.’ ★★★★★

Andrea Goldsmith on *The Merchant of Venice* (Bell Shakespeare)

‘Janine Jansen gave a most exhilarating performance of this work ... her playing was crisp, technically superb, and altogether commanding.’ ★★★★★

Zoltán Szabó on *Sibelius and Mahler* (Sydney Symphony Orchestra)

‘*Hamlet* is an important and significant addition to contemporary opera.’ ★★★★★

Michael Halliwell on *Hamlet* (Glyndebourne Opera Festival)

‘There is no film that speaks to this political moment with greater force or fury.’ ★★★★★

Beejay Silcox on *I Am Not Your Negro* (Madman Films)

‘The performance style is as farcically broad as it is possible to be, but Kip Williams and his magnificent cast still manage to put across moments of genuine anguish.’ ★★★★★

Ian Dickson on *Cloud Nine* (Sydney Theatre Company)

‘It was a magnificent performance from this fearless young Canadian singer [Erin Wall], and it came as no surprise at the end when she rose to the fiendish, repeated high D in the duet that closes the opera.’ ★★★★★

Peter Rose on *Thaïs* (Melbourne Symphony Orchestra)

‘What this production offers the audience is an astonishing series of images, always linked to the music and the stage action, never blandly repetitive.’ ★★★★★

Michael Morley on *Saul* (Adelaide Festival)

‘*Moonlight* – ground-breaking cinema – is both expansive and deeply personal; a must-see for all lovers of the silver screen.’ ★★★★★

Whitney Monaghan on *Moonlight* (Roadshow Films)

‘All the singers were in fine voice ... Rarely has four and a half hours of opera been so engrossing from start to finish.’ ★★★★★

Christopher Menz on *Parsifal* (Opera Australia)

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To subscribe to *ABR* Arts and receive regular, comprehensive reviews of the latest performances, films, and exhibitions, visit our website and click on ‘*ABR* newsletters’ under the ‘Subscribe’ tab.

***ABR Arts is generously supported by The Ian Potter Foundation.***

# *ABR Calibre Essay Prize*

**M**ichael Adams is the winner of the eleventh Calibre Essay Prize, worth \$5,000. The judges – award-winning author and historian Sheila Fitzpatrick, *ABR* Editor Peter Rose, and Picador Publisher Geordie Williamson – chose Michael Adams’s essay ‘Salt Blood’ from a field of almost 200 essays submitted from fourteen countries.

This year *ABR* has added a second prize, worth \$2,500. The winner is Darius Sepehri, a researcher and PhD student at the University of Sydney. His essay – entitled ‘To Speak of Sorrow’ (published in the August issue) – is about the many kinds of grief and their different expressions in writing and culture, as lament, testimony, or ritual.



Michael Adams and Darius Sepehri

**‘Winning the Calibre Essay Prize is an incredible honour, and a total surprise. I have followed *ABR* and Calibre for many years, and drawn much inspiration and insight from previous winners.’**

**Michael Adams**

The judges have also commended essays by Sara Dowse (‘Making Things’) and Meng Jin (‘Change, We, Art’).

The Calibre Essay Prize was established in 2007 and since then has generated numerous essays on important themes.

*The Calibre Essay Prize is supported by Mr Colin Golvan QC and the ABR Patrons*

# Peter Porter Poetry Prize

Louis Klee and Damen O'Brien are the joint winners of the 2017 Peter Porter Poetry Prize for their poems 'Sentence to Lilacs' and 'pH'. Morag Fraser named them as the winners at a ceremony at Collected Works Bookshop in Melbourne. The winners each received \$2,500 for their poems which were selected from almost 1,000 entries, the Porter Prize's largest field to date.

The other shortlisted poets – Ronald Dzerigian (USA), Anthony Lawrence (NSW), Michael Lee Phillips (USA), Jen Saunders (NSW), and Jessie Tu (NSW) – each received \$500. The seven shortlisted poems appeared in the March 2017 issue.



Louis Klee and Damen O'Brien

**'What an honour, a shock, and a delight to share this award with Damen O'Brien, and indeed all the past winners, whose work I love and admire. I am immensely grateful to the judges and to the *Australian Book Review*.'**

**Louis Klee**

The judges were Ali Alizadeh, Jill Jones, and Felicity Plunkett.

The total prize money for the Peter Porter Poetry Prize was \$7,500. The Porter Prize, named after distinguished poet Peter Porter (1929–2010), is now in its thirteenth year. In that time it has generated thousands of new poems.

***The Porter Prize is supported by Ms Morag Fraser AM and the ABR Patrons.***

