

MEDIA RELEASE

## Michelle de Kretser's *The Life to Come* wins the 2018 Miles Franklin Literary Award

**SUNDAY, 26 AUGUST 2018**

Michelle de Kretser has won the 2018 Miles Franklin Literary Award for her novel *The Life to Come*, published by Allen & Unwin. This win makes her the third woman in the Award's 61-year history to win the top prize more than once.

Michelle joins a select group of female multi-Award winners, including Thea Astley who won the Miles Franklin four times (1962, 1965, 1972, 2000) and is equal record holder with Tim Winton for most wins. Jessica Anderson won the Award twice (1978, 1980). Michelle's previous win was in 2013 for her novel *Questions of Travel*.

When describing how it feels to win the Miles Franklin for a second time, Michelle said: "I feel twice as lucky, twice as happy, and twice as honoured."

The Miles Franklin Literary Award, recognised as Australia's most prestigious literary prize, was established in 1954 through the will of *My Brilliant Career* author, Stella Maria Miles Franklin. The award is presented to novels of the "highest literary merit" that depict "Australian life in any of its phases". Perpetual serves as Trustee for the Award.

Michelle will receive \$60,000 in prize money. Her novel was selected from a remarkable shortlist, including: Felicity Castagna's *No More Boats*, Eva Hornung's *The Last Garden*, Catherine McKinnon's *Storyland*, Gerald Murnane's *Border Districts* and Kim Scott's *Taboo*.

When describing this year's winning novel, the judges said *The Life to Come* is a powerful novel that effortlessly blends sharp satire of the literary world with deeply compassionate portraits of lonely people and their strategies for survival.

"Sentence-by-sentence, it is elegant, full of life and funny. With her characteristic wit and style, Michelle de Kretser dissects the way Australians see ourselves, and reflects on the ways other parts of the world see us," said chair of the judging panel and State Library of NSW Mitchell Librarian Richard Neville.

Richard Neville was joined on the 2018 judging panel by *The Australian* journalist and columnist, Murray Waldren, Sydney bookseller Lindy Jones, book critic Dr Melinda Harvey and Emeritus Professor Susan Sheridan.

Perpetual's National Manager of Philanthropy, Caitriona Fay, said: "Perpetual has a long and proud history of helping philanthropists affect real change – change that can last for generations.

"The Miles Franklin Literary Award has been supporting authors since 1957. It continues to support and shape the Australian literary landscape and broader community. We are honoured to carry on Miles Franklin's legacy, and I congratulate all of this year's finalists for ensuring Miles' passion endures."

Adam Suckling, Chief Executive of The Copyright Agency, a long-term sponsor of the Award, said: "We are deeply committed to supporting Australian writers and publishers to ensure our uniquely Australian stories continue to be told. We are delighted by Michelle de Kretser's win. I also want to congratulate the other finalists as it is an impressive achievement to be shortlisted for this prestigious award that goes from strength to strength each year."

The award was announced at the 2018 Melbourne Writers Festival on 26 August.

For further information about the Miles Franklin Literary Award, visit <http://www.milesfranklin.com.au/>

**For enquiries related to The Miles Franklin Literary Award, Perpetual, Copyright Agency's Cultural Fund or to request an interview with finalists or judges please contact:**

Jane Morey  
Morey Media  
(02) 9929 9922  
0416 097 678  
jane@moreymedia.com.au

Join the Miles Franklin conversation on social media:

Twitter: @\_milesfranklin

Instagram: @milesfranklinliteraryaward

Facebook: [www.facebook.com/MilesFranklinLiteraryAward](http://www.facebook.com/MilesFranklinLiteraryAward)

#milesfranklin

#### **About the Miles Franklin Literary Award**

Perpetual is Trustee for the Miles Franklin Literary Award. The Award was established in 1954 by the estate of *My Brilliant Career* author Stella Maria Sarah Miles Franklin to celebrate the Australian character and creativity. It supports the betterment of Australian literature by each year recognising the novel of the highest literary merit which presents Australian Life in any of its phases. Since being established, the Award has distributed more than \$1.1 million in philanthropic funds to authors.

[www.milesfranklin.com.au](http://www.milesfranklin.com.au)

#### **About Perpetual Philanthropic Services**

Perpetual is one of Australia's largest managers and distributors of philanthropic funds with \$2.6 billion in funds under advice (as at 30 June 2017). Perpetual is trustee for approximately 1000 charitable trusts and endowments and provides individuals and families with advice on establishing charitable foundations and structured giving programs. Perpetual also assists charities and not-for-profit organisations with investment advice and management.

Perpetual's Philanthropic Services and advice are provided by Perpetual Trustee Company Limited (PTCo), ABN 42 000 001 007, AFSL 236643. This publication has been prepared by PTCo and contains information contributed by third parties. It contains general information only and is not intended to provide advice or take into account personal objectives, financial situation or needs. The information is believed to be accurate at the time of compilation and is provided by PTCo in good faith. To the extent permitted by law, no liability is accepted for any loss or damage as a result of any reliance on this information. PTCo does not warrant the accuracy or completeness of any information included in this document which was contributed by a third party.

#### **About the Copyright Agency and Cultural Fund**

Copyright Agency's Cultural Fund has been a proud supporter of the Miles Franklin Award since 2004, granting more than half a million dollars to this premier Australian literary prize.

The Copyright Agency provides simple ways for people to reproduce, store and share words, images and other creative content, in return for fair payment to creators. We are committed to encouraging the development of lively and diverse markets for published works with our range of commercial licences and through our Cultural Fund.

The Cultural Fund is the philanthropic arm of the Copyright Agency, contributing meaningfully to a wide range of Australian cultural, educational and artistic programs and creators. Through its support it fosters greater understanding and engagement of national culture both locally and internationally.

#### **Miles Franklin Literary Award 2018 Judges' Comments – Michelle de Kretser, *The Life to Come***

Michelle de Kretser's *The Life to Come* is a powerful novel that effortlessly blends sharp satire of the literary world with deeply compassionate portraits of lonely people and their strategies for survival. It keenly skewers certain contemporary ways of being such as our obsession with food, use of social media and modes of political activism. But it is, at its heart, a novel about character: it probes to expose foibles but also to understand and, ultimately, sympathise. Sydney is the principal setting - its weather, light, seasons and urban geography are vividly evoked - and the multiple stories detour to Paris and Sri Lanka as well. Sentence-by-sentence, it is elegant, full of life and funny. With her characteristic wit and style Michelle de Kretser dissects the way Australians see ourselves, and reflects on the ways other parts of the world see us.