Siang Lu wins Miles Franklin Award


By Perpetual
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Announced today by Perpetual, first-time shortlistee Siang Lu has won the 2025 Miles Franklin Literary Award for his novel, *Ghost Cities* – a bold and satirical reimagining of Australian storytelling.

On winning the award, Lu said: “I am honoured beyond belief, and beyond words. I didn't dare dream of this. It didn't seem possible. My most heartfelt thanks to Perpetual as trustee for the Miles Franklin Literary Award estate, the Copyright Agency, my publisher Aviva Tuffield and the wonderful team at UQP, and my agent Brendan Fredericks.”

Established through the will of *My Brilliant Career* author, Stella Miles Franklin, for the “advancement, improvement and betterment of Australian literature,” the Miles Franklin Literary Award recognises a novel of “the highest literary merit” that presents “Australian life in any of its phases.” Perpetual serves as Trustee for the Award.

Perpetual’s National Manager – Philanthropy & Non Profit Services, Community, Social and ESG Investment, Jane Magor, said: “Miles Franklin established this Award to celebrate literature that reflects the evolving spirit of Australian life. In *Ghost Cities*, Siang Lu not only captures the complexities of identity and belonging but also redefines what Australian literature can be. His win is a powerful reminder that our stories are ever-changing – and that the literary tradition Miles Franklin envisioned continues to grow in daring and unexpected ways.”

Siang will receive $60,000 in prize money.

When describing this year’s winning novel, the judges said, “Siang Lu’s *Ghost Cities* is at once a grand farce and a haunting meditation on diaspora. Sitting within a tradition in Australian writing that explores failed expatriation and cultural fraud, Lu’s novel is also something strikingly new. In *Ghost Cities*, the Sino-Australian imaginary appears as a labyrinthine film-set, where it is never quite clear who is performing and who is directing. Shimmering with satire and wisdom, and with an absurdist bravura, *Ghost Cities* is a genuine landmark in Australian literature.”

The 2025 judging panel comprises Richard Neville, Mitchell Librarian of the State Library of NSW and Chair; literary scholar, A/Prof Jumana Bayeh; literary scholar and translator, Dr Mridula Nath Chakraborty; literary scholar and author, Prof Tony Hughes-d'Aeth; and author and literary scholar, Prof Hsu-Ming Teo.

The award was announced at a ceremony in Sydney on 24 July.

The award's media partner for 2025 is the ABC.

About the Miles Franklin Literary Award www.milesfranklin.com.au

Perpetual is the 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 over $1.54 million in philanthropic funds to authors. Those wishing to be part of the Miles Franklin legacy can donate to the Franklin Support Fund to become a friend of the Award. Please visit the website for further details.

About Perpetual Philanthropic Services

Perpetual is one of Australia's largest managers of philanthropic funds, with $3.6 billion in funds under advice for charitable trusts and endowment funds (as at 30 June 2024). Perpetual is trustee for over 1000 charitable trusts and endowments and provides individuals and families with advice on establishing charitable foundations and structured giving programs. Each year Perpetual distributes more than $123 million to community organisations on behalf of its clients. Perpetual also assists charities and not-for-profit organisations with investment advice and management.

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About the Copyright Agency and Cultural Fund

The Copyright Agency is an Australian not-for-profit organisation that has been standing up for creators for 50 years. We enable the reuse of copyright-protected words and images in return for fair payment to creators. 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 appreciation and engagement with Australian writing, publishing and the visual arts in Australia.

Copyright Agency’s Cultural Fund is a long-time supporter of the Miles Franklin Literary Award, providing $5,000 to each of the shortlisted authors and granting more than half a million dollars to this premier Australian literary prize since 2004.

About Australian Broadcasting Corporation (ABC):

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