



Books that cultivate community and connection.



2023 Catalogue
 **Storytorch.**

Storytorch Press

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Member, Small Press Network

Member, Australian Publishers Association

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Catalogue cover artwork by Ingrid Bartkowiak, from *Naturopolis*.

To stock our titles in Australia, please contact our national distributor,
Peribo Fine Books.

Storytorch titles are available in all Australian bookstores.
Reading copies available for all titles on request.

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PERIBO

DISTRIBUTORS OF FINE BOOKS

A new light on the horizon.

Storytorch Press is a small, independent and traditional publisher. We started our press at the peak of the COVID pandemic in 2020 as a celebration of the power of local community.

Our focus.

Storytorch Press publishes books that cultivate community and connection. We publish books that unite us.

We publish books that promote resilience, sustainability and community engagement. Our books are a window to a better world and encourage others to be part of it.

We are passionate about seeing the next generation overcome long-ingrained barriers to building an enlightened global community.

Our books empower individuals to build a path for others to follow, as we collectively navigate an ever-challenging future.

When you read a Storytorch title, you might learn more about who you are, how you are connected to others on this planet, and what's important during your time on it.

We hope you enjoy our carefully curated 2023 titles, with a strong focus on empowering and positive children's literature.

We are proud of the five recent award nominations across our four 2022 titles and we look forward to more as our program grows.

We trust that 2023 brings you closer to your own goals and that you find connection in your own communities.

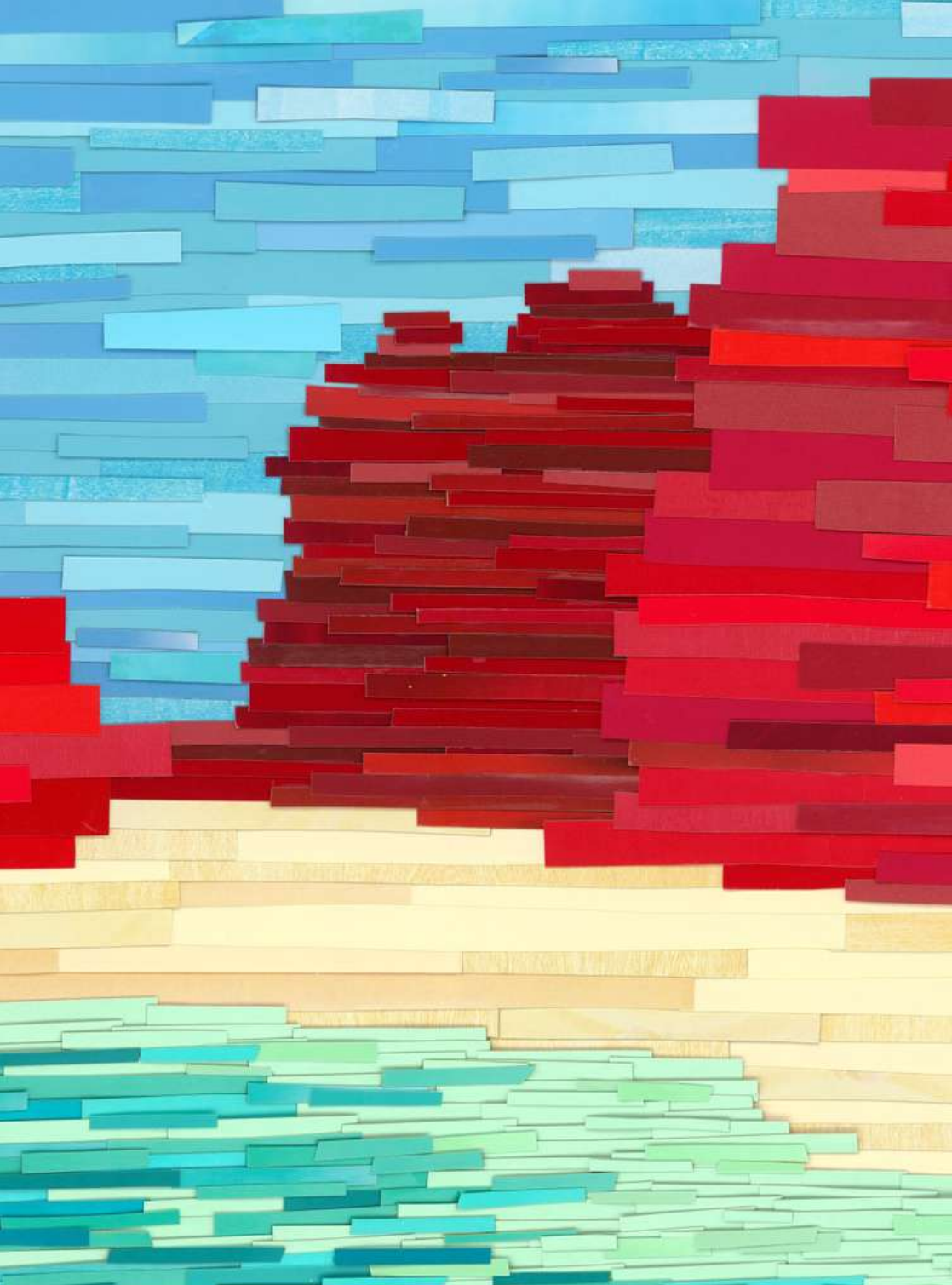


Artwork by Connah Brecon from *Great and Small*



Our brand values.

Storytorch Press publishes books that cultivate community and connection. We publish books that unite us.



Artwork "Cape Leveque" by Jessica Moore for *The Happiness Jar*

2023 List

2023 Releases

ADULT FICTION

The Happiness Jar

Written by Samantha Tidy

Adult Commercial Fiction

1 February 2023

MIDDLE GRADE FICTION

Starberries and Kee

Written by Cate Whittle

Middle Grade Solarpunk Fiction

1 May 2023

CHILDREN'S PICTURE BOOKS

What Will You Make Today?

Written by Maura Pierlot

Illustrated by Triandhika Anjani

Illustrated Children's Picture Book (Non-Fiction)

1 June 2023

Backlist

MIDDLE GRADE FICTION

The Riddle of Tanglewood Manor

Written by Tracey Hawkins

Middle Grade Fiction - Historical Mystery

1 February 2022

Ocean Warriors: The Rise of Robo-Shark

Written by Candice Lemon-Scott

Middle Grade Fiction - Environmental Adventure

1 March 2022

CHILDREN'S PICTURE BOOKS

Great and Small

Written by Alison McLennan

Illustrated by Connah Brecon

Illustrated Children's Picture Book (Fiction)

1 July 2022

Naturopolis

Written by Deborah Frenkel

Illustrated by Ingrid Bartkowiak

Illustrated Children's Picture Book (Non-Fiction)

1 September 2022



Artwork by Triandhika Anjani from *What Will You Make Today?*

Picture Books

What Will You Make Today?

Written by Maura Pierlot

Illustrated by Triandhika Anjani

RRP \$27.95

Release date: 1 June 2023

Hardback Illustrated Picture Book (Creative Non-Fiction)

(suitable ages 4+)

SPOT UV gloss on matt laminate cover

FSC and woodfree (post-waste) paper

32pp

Rights held: World



Maura is an award-winning author and playwright based in Canberra. Maura's widely acclaimed play *Fragments* is being produced as a web series, due for release in 2023.

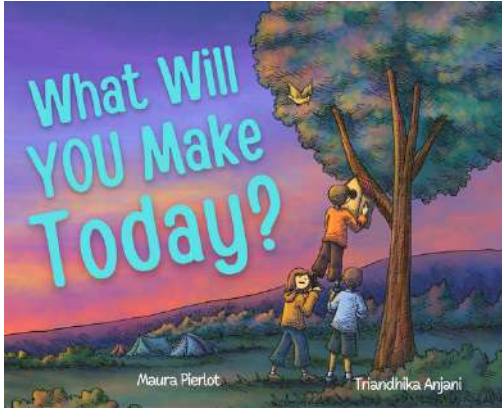
Her debut picture book, *The Trouble in Tune Town*, won the 2018 ACT Writing and Publishing Award (Children's category) and overseas honours.

Maura has a Ph.D. in philosophy, specialising in ethics. She has another picture book coming out with Affirm Press (2024).



Triandhika Anjani is originally from Indonesia and studied illustration in Japan. She lives in Canberra and works remotely as an illustrator. She has loved reading (and looking at) picture books ever since she was small, and always dreamed of making illustrations for stories.

Dhika received 3rd place at the New England Illustration Prize 2022. The sky, light, and nature landscapes are sources of inspiration for her and the subjects of many of her artworks.



In a world bursting with possibilities, what will you make today?

Will you make believe? Will you make noise? Will you make a wish?

Will you make an excuse?
Will you make things right?
Will you make up your mind?
Will you make a difference?

A series of questions subtly builds perspective from a personal standpoint, culminating in a wholistic view of the world and the steps to take that will make a difference.

- Explores young people taking empowering action together to solve a problem with no adult input or influence
- Schools will find the backmatter on the 6Cs of *21st Century Learning* rich for classroom exploration
- A message of hope for the future, based on youth leadership
- A young, talented comic artist paired with an award-winning playwright/author/ethicist



Great and Small

Written by Alison McLennan
Illustrated by Connah Brecon



Shortlist, Foreability Awards 2023

RRP \$26.95

Release date: July 2022

Hardback Illustrated Picture Book
(suitable ages 4+)

SPOT UV gloss on matt laminate cover
FSC and woodfree (post-waste) paper
32pp

Rights held: World

Rights Sold: North America, Online audio-visual

Great and Small is a charming reminder that everyone is gifted and unique in their own special way.

ELLIE COLE OAM
Australian Paralympian



Alison McLennan is a children's author from Brisbane. *Hotel For Bees* was published by the State Library of Queensland in 2020, as part of the Stories For Little Queenslanders Series. *Growing Pains*, was published by EK Books in June 2021. Her graphic novel, *A Flood in the Village*, was published by Library For All, as part of their Natural Disaster Education Series. *Birdie Lights Up the World* will be released by EK Books in 2023.

Alison is a proud member of SCBWI, a mother of two beautiful teenagers and one fur baby and when not writing children's books, works as a professional voiceover artist and singer.



Connah Brecon, originally from the UK, is an author-illustrator based in Victoria, Australia, where he lives with his wife, daughter, cat and plants.

Connah has written and illustrated six of his own picture books, and illustrated many more stories written by Australian authors. While it is true that dogs like books, Connah illustrates books mostly for people, some of whom happen to be temporarily short.

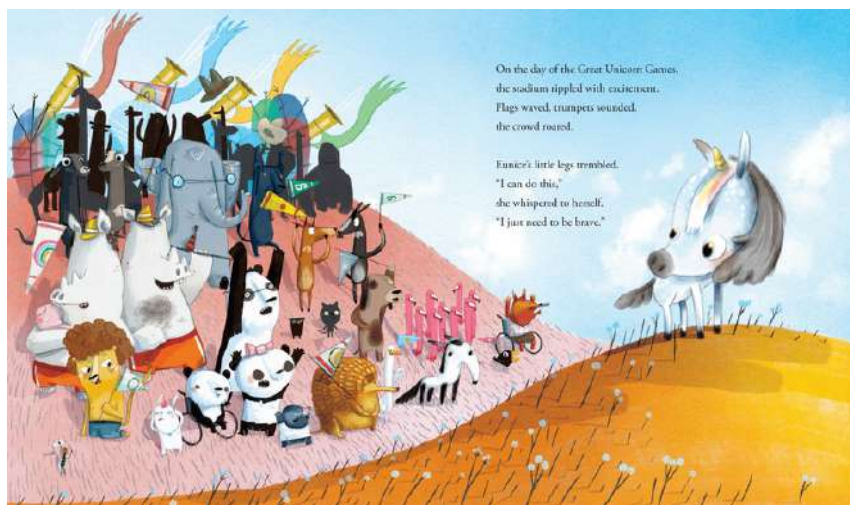
If he wasn't illustrating children's books, Connah would like to trade places with David Attenborough, although he would prefer a younger David if at all possible. This is Connah, holding the tooth of a five-million-year-old physeteroid.



For a tiny unicorn, Eunice has big dreams.

She really wants to compete in the Great Unicorn Games, but even with all the effort and practice she can muster, she's just no competition for all these able-bodied athletes. That's when the most wonderful idea turns into a truly great reality.

A celebration of universal design and our unique abilities, **Great and Small** celebrates what unifies us - our glorious diversity.



On the day of the Great Unicorn Games,
the stadium rippled with excitement.
Flags waved, trumpets sounded,
the crowd roared.

Eunice's little legs trembled.
"I can do this,"
she whispered to herself.
"I just need to be brave."

- celebrates all-abilities approach to sport, play and inclusion
- illustrations are humorous, incredibly unique, and colourful
- gender neutral colours and appeal for a wide audience
- great 'repeat read appeal' for both kids and adults
- valuable primary school resource for celebrating diversity
- analogy for both the Paralympics and the Special Olympics
- Main character inspired by Eunice Shriver, philanthropist
- Beautiful endpapers, SPOT UV matt laminate cover

Naturopolis

Written by Deborah Frenkel

Illustrated by Ingrid Bartkowiak



Notable, CBCA Eve Pownall Award

Shortlist, CBCA Best New Illustrator Award

Longlist, ABIA Small Publisher Children's Book of the Year

RRP \$26.95

Release date: September 2022

Hardback Illustrated Picture Book (suitable ages 4+)

SPOT UV gloss on matt laminate cover, debossed title

FSC and woodfree (post-waste) paper

32pp

Rights held: World

A book that speaks to young people on every level, as is exactly what they need now.

JACKIE FRENCH



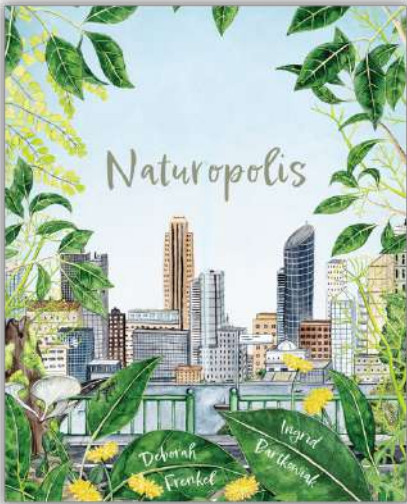
Deb is a human (*Homo sapiens*). She lives in Melbourne with her young family and a number of ringtail possums (*Pseudocheirus peregrinus*) who occasionally drop by. When she's not writing for kids, she's usually copywriting for TV commercials, billboards, and the labels of shampoo bottles. Kids, thankfully, are usually more appreciative.

This is her first picture book, and her second, *The Sydney Harbour Fairy* (with Affirm Press) is due out in 2023.



An artist and illustrator based in Brisbane, Australia, Ingrid works in watercolour and oils. Her practice revolves around her fascination with nature and its intricacies. Ingrid completed her Bachelor of Fine Art in 2019 at the Queensland College of Art. Engaging with native flora and fauna, her illustrations are whimsical and encourage an appreciation for nature. There is a focus on detailing and pattern, with one of Ingrid's earlier interests being in the visual tropes of the arts and crafts movement.

A highly talented artist, this is her first children's book.



Look closer, look with care And you may find a forest...

Among the steel and stone canyons of the city, nature flourishes in tiny, tenacious ways. Follow the ant (*Iridomyrmex purpureus*) to discover the scraps of wilderness hiding in plain sight in this lyrical celebration of urban flora and fauna.

Naturapolis is a wonderful acknowledgement of the unseen, and the world that awaits the viewer, eager to connect with nature. You don't have to go far to find what is waiting for us beneath our feet.



- Stunningly hand-painted artist illustrations
- Celebrates finding nature in the metropolis
- Great read for nurturing connection with nature, particularly for inner-city dwellers
- Themes of resilience and community
- High end production values, beautiful endpapers, SPOT UV matt laminate cover with debossed title text
- Creative non-fiction, quality resource for the classroom



Middle Grade Fiction

Starberries and Kee

Written by Cate Whittle

Release date: May 2023

RRP \$17.95

Middle Grade Solarpunk Fiction (Suitable ages 7 - 12)

Matt laminate with spot UV cover, FSC paper

302pp

Rights held: World

- An excellent read aloud for the classroom with discussion notes provided
- A positive story about the world young people will create in response to preventing the worst of climate change
- Cliffhanger tension as the story comes to a climax

This is a thought-provoking, optimistic novel not to be missed.

KIDS BOOK REVIEW

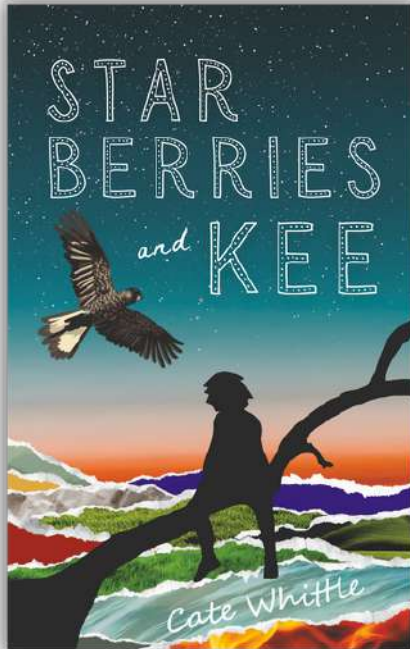


Cate writes fantasy and adventure fiction for children and young adults. She writes about relationships and rediscovery (and dragons and magical worlds), seeking to empower her young readers to become problem-solvers and to see their world in a positive light. Fascinated by the natural world, Cate is fortunate to live on a bush block in a beautiful rural valley near the nation's capital.

Cate is the author of the *Trouble* junior fiction series (Omnibus Scholastic), *Wyrd* (Omnibus Scholastic) and *Emergency Rescue Angel* (Omnibus Scholastic).

Trouble and the New Kid (2017) was shortlisted in the CBCA Book of the Year Awards for that year.

Cate also has two books coming out in the next couple of years with Scholastic Australia, *Millie*, *The Littlest Puppy*, and *Millie and Miss Sparrow's School of Dance*.



The stars linked them through space - and even through time.

Those same stars had looked down on all the people that had come before her and would still twinkle when she was as old as Libby and maybe even if she had great-grandchildren of her own.

Wren is a Wild Child who has been brought up on the mountain by Old Man, learning everything he knows from nature, while Hannah has always lived in the city. When their paths collide, a secret friendship brings a family full circle, linking the past to the present and the old with the new.

Starberries and Kee is solarpunk climate-fiction told with positivity and hope. It confirms that in the face of crisis, it is community and compassion that defines us, connecting us to the future we choose to create.

The Riddle of Tanglewood Manor

Written by Tracey Hawkins

Shortlisted, BOOK OF THE YEAR AWARD

Speech Pathology Australia (Eight - 10 yrs)



Release date: 1 February 2022

RRP \$16.95

Middle Grade Fiction (Suitable ages 7 - 12)

High gloss cover, FSC paper

242pp

Rights held: World

- Excellent read aloud for the classroom
- Australian historical context of 1919, explores lifestyle, clothing, hobbies, gender, schooling, architecture
- Historical element of Spanish flu against backdrop of current pandemic
- Family tree change, exploring the complexities of a city versus a country childhood
- celebrates sibling relationships



Tracey Hawkins is an award-winning author of children's books and adult non-fiction. Hidden beneath her stairs, Tracey keeps a secret stash of skeletons and an interesting collection of fake arms, legs and hearts for her crime workshops for children. Tracey has won awards for her picture books, including a CBCA Notable for *Leaping Lola*. Tracey is an ambassador for the Chief Minister's Reading Challenge and a May Gibbs Children's Literature Trust Fellow.



Once you open this book, you too, will be tangled.

To Sam and Harry, a tree change means a TREEHOUSE... and time travel!

150-year-old Tanglewood Manor is Sam and Harry's new home in the country. As their parents set about renovating the ruin, the brothers explore its secrets.

One book in the dusty library is different. They open it and read a riddle.

Now the house is suddenly full of the dead people from the portraits on the walls. And they are very much ALIVE.

Will Sam and Harry ever be able to return home, or will Tanglewood Manor keep them in its grip forever?

The historical references add an extra layer to the narrative, with the opportunity for humour when the kids' modern lives conflict with the new one they've found themselves in. The family dynamics are well written, and this would be a perfect book to share or read aloud among adults and children. Sam and Harry have a relatable sibling bond, and they grow closer as their time-travelling caper progresses. The Riddle of Tanglewood Manor would suit readers aged seven and up who like a mysterious adventure tale that follows the much-appreciated conventions of the genre, including a satisfying conclusion.

BOOKS+PUBLISHING

Karys McEwen

President Victorian Branch CBCA



Ocean Warriors: The Rise of Robo-Shark

Written by Candice Lemon-Scott

Release date: March 2022

RRP \$16.95

Middle Grade Fiction (Suitable ages 7 - 12)

Matt laminate with SPOT UV cover, FSC paper

206pp

Rights held: World

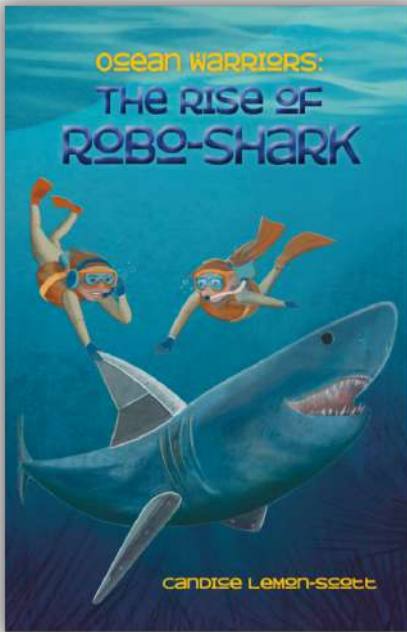
- Excellent read aloud for the classroom
- Equal male and female lead characters
- Encourages an appreciation of the whole ecosystem, including apex predators
- excellent cross-curriculum text to study oceans and conservation
- speculative fiction

Candice Lemon-Scott is an award-winning Australian author of 13 books for children, and one for adults. Her books have been published in Australia, the US, the UK and China.

Her quirky style, fast-paced narratives and originality appeal to young readers in particular. Candice's first series, *Jake in Space*, is a six-book series of space adventure stories about turbo space cars, hurtling asteroids and evil villains.

Candice was moved to write her second series, *Eco Rangers*, after helping with a couple of koala rescues from her own backyard. The first book *Eco Rangers: Pelican in Peril* was the Honor Book Award winner in the Green Earth Book Award and her second book *Eco Rangers: Microbat Mayhem* was shortlisted in the Wilderness Society's Environmental Award for Children's Literature. She continues to be inspired by her own children, Krystalin and Aliena, who love and care for nature and wildlife.





Being sent to a submarine to help restore extinct sea creatures for summer camp is not exactly Kai's idea of fun.

Then he discovers a cyborg great white shark in the ocean, but no one believes it could be real. After all, the last shark vanished years ago.

Now he must prove the shark exists and save the species. Except not everyone likes the idea of bringing the great white back from the brink.

Join the Ocean Warriors on this page turning, wave making, speculative environmental adventure.

"What a fun, fast-paced and FIN-tastic underwater adventure! Dive in with these ocean warriors as they try and save our seas one animal at a time. This is a JAW-some tale full of hope, friendship and conservation. Dr Sue Pillans (aka. Dr Suzie Starfish)



It's fair to say that for me, on a scale of 1 - 10, sharks normally rate -5. Thankfully, this rocking new fiction by environ-guru extraordinaire, Candice Lemon-Scott, is about to turn all that on its head. The first of what could be an exciting new series by an exciting new publishing house, *Ocean Warriors: The Rise of Robo-Shark* is a slippery-paced futuristic tale with a commanding conservational twist.... Lemon-Scott's penchant for infusing action-thrills-and-spills-adventure with serious ecological concerns and dressing them all with humour, quirky characters and moments of sabotage and betrayal makes Rise of Robo-Shark compelling reading for middle primary schoolers. Snappy chapter titles and rapid scene changes ensure non-stop page turning. The delicious paradox of falling in love with a great white shark is not lost on this afore mentioned shark-fearing individual. I am sure youngsters will find Melvin alluring in every possible way too, which is handy, for he becomes the incongruous hero and champion of marine conservation. Dimity Powell, Kids Book Review





Adult Fiction

The Happiness Jar

Written by Samantha Tidy

RRP \$32.95

Release date: 1 February 2023

Commercial Literary Fiction

Sales to date: 5,000 in 2013 format

SPOT UV gloss and embossing, on matt laminate cover

FSC paper

320pp

Rights held: World

Actively offering film rights acquisition

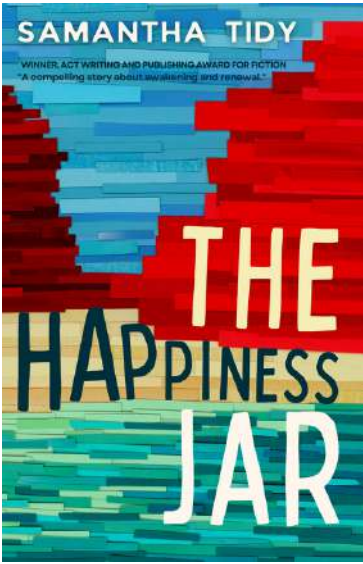
- Winner, ACT Writing and Publishing Award for Fiction 2014
- Runner Up, FAW Christina Stead Award 2013
- Runner Up, FAW Jim Hamilton Award, 2010
- Shortlist, Penguin Varuna Scholarship, 2011
- Shortlist, HarperCollins Varuna Award, 2011

Samantha Tidy is an award-winning author of adult, young adult and children's fiction, including 2 novels and 4 children's books.

In 2008, she was a research fellow at the Bibliotheque nationale de France (BnF), where she lived in a 400-year-old convent for 3 months, spent time looking at her favourite French maps of Australia, enjoyed long lunches and ate way too much cheese.

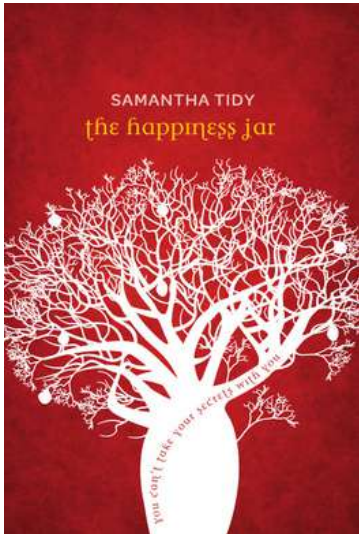


Samantha has four picture books due out in 2023 with other publishers: *Cloudspotting* illustrated by Susannah Crispe (Windy Hollow Books, March 2023); *The Friendship Flight* (NLA Publishing, May 2023); *Wollemi: Saving a Dinosaur Tree* illustrated by Rachel Gyan (CSIRO Publishing, June 2023) and *When Grandma Burnt Her Bra*, illustrated by Aška (EK Books, September 2023). *The Day We Built the Opera House* will be released by MidnightSun Publishing in 2024.



2023 Reformat

Author has 4 children's books due for release in 2023/24



Nature has the power to restore us, but can it wash away our darkest truths?

Set amid the red dust of the Australian Kimberley wet season and the smoky backdrop of the holy river Ganges in India, this is a novel about rebirth and remembrance.

Brian, a Vietnam veteran, has been missing for twenty years. Matt dreams of one day finding his own path like his heroic father, as Beth's religious fervour propagates a childhood of parental disappointment.

Losing her battle with Cystic Fibrosis, Rachel Hudson asks her family for one last request: a journey to the exotic and the unknown. Ever the free spirit, she administers a dose of her notorious wanderlust.

The Happiness Jar reveals the power of letting go of the memories that we think sustain us. It's a story about tightly held beliefs, the fragility of family and how quickly faith can fold when we release the burdens we place on ourselves and each other.

This year's winner (The Happiness Jar) is a compelling story about awakening and renewal. Written in a beautiful and direct style, its journey of transformation takes us from the Australian city, to remote country, to the crowded streets of India. Its characters are wonderfully and vividly drawn: raw and never sentimental. Through their experiences, Samantha Tidy prompts us to reexamine our understandings of grief, legacy, honesty and family. The Happiness Jar is a powerfully constructed and at times surprising work: a thread that runs back and forth in time between different cultures, places and points-of-view. Above all, it is a satisfying, original and engaging novel with a unique perspective, and a worthy winner in 2014.

– Judges Comments, ACT Writing and Publishing Award for Fiction 2014

