

# The Dame Annabelle Rankin Award

2018 Recipient: *James Moloney*

The Dame Annabelle Rankin Award for Distinguished Services to Children's Literature in 2018 is awarded to James Moloney who has made the most significant contribution to children's literature in Queensland. James has spent over four decades promoting reading, literacy and the love of story, initially as a teacher and teacher-librarian, and then as a full-time writer with over forty-five published books. James' books have explored universal themes such as family, love, belonging, body image, rites of passage, friendship, identity, disability and race. Ten of these books were shortlisted for the CBCA Book of the Year Awards, and five have become either Winners or Honour Books. James has also received other children's literature awards including the Australian Human Rights Award, the Family Award, the Victorian Premiers Award, the UNESCO Prize for Children's Literature in the Service of Tolerance and Peace and the Children's Peace Literature Award.

James' concern for declining literacy standards in boys resulted in *Boys and Books: Building a Culture of Reading Around our Boys*, a 2001 book that explored this issue and offered advice on encouraging boys to read. James is very approachable and generously shares his time and expertise to promote literacy at literature festivals, conferences, school workshops, as well as public library programs, residencies and writing retreats. Concern for fellow authors and encouraging Australian writing led to his advocacy for establishing the Public Lending Right and Educational Lending Right, now a life-blood to Australian authors. For service to literature and society, James was awarded the Centenary Medal by the Department of Prime Minister and Cabinet.

James' contribution to children's literature is fundamental to framing an Australian identity. His work has been ground-breaking in reflecting race and masculinity. His sense of place and depiction of Queensland as character has allowed young readers to identify with this truly unique Australian landscape.



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