

Prize-winners Announced

2003 inaugural Monash Student Theatre and Monash Student Association National Open Playwrights' Competition

The competition, calling for new, unproduced, full-length plays was inspired from the desire to acknowledge and encourage Australian writers, including those in the student community and to bring great new works to Monash.

After an enormous response to the competition, with over 120 entries received from all over Australia, award winners have been chosen.

Judges were excited to discover the winners reflect the wide geography of entries with awards distributed to writers from country Victoria, Melbourne, Perth, Tasmania, Queensland and NSW. The reading panel, comprised of Theatre Directors Christian Leavesley and Julie Waddington; Yvonne Virsik, Artistic Director of Monash Student Theatre; Phil Norton, Manager of Arts, Recreation and Media, Monash Student Association and Monash Student and writer Andrew Dunstan; were very excited by the overall standard of entries submitted, and found it difficult to narrow the field to the final award winners. The submissions presented a wide range of writing styles, content and an exciting level of experimentation.

The winning plays are diverse in character and the playwrights diverse in experience.

First prize-winner Christine Evans, an accomplished playwright, is currently in the U.S. completing her masters in playwrighting and writing works as a guest of various universities.

Her play, *Slow Falling Bird*, deeply impressed the reading panel with its powerful lyricism and imagery, its bold and far-reaching themes, yet attention to intimate detail and well-crafted dialogue. The play is set in the (now closed) Woomera detention facility for Asylum seekers, at once creating a realistic and imaginatively charged world.

Slow Falling Bird
will be staged at Monash Student Theatre from May 6th to May 15th 2004
For information and bookings please call 9905 8173

Inmates by David McCartney is a dark comedy in the vein of theatre of cruelty, which pokes fun at our convict past. *The Unknown Martyr* by Allan Hough explores issues of personal belief, morality and human connection through Australian soldier's surreal experiences in the Middle East.

Belinda Bradley, a well-known Australian playwright, skilfully weaves together the personal stories of 3 consecutive generations of women in *Inheritance (WT)*.

BOG by Declan Greene, a Melbourne University student, spews forth a richly woven, black imagistic world of flawed and repulsive characters. A reeling indictment of modern attitudes.

Special Monash Prize Winner, Amelia Roper, is a performing arts student who has developed quite a reputation as an excellent lighting and technical support in Melbourne Theatre.

Her play *Flywire*, in which two students return home to the country for a holiday and confront aspects of their identity, was noted for its beautifully judged dialogue and humour and insightful detail.

Prize Winners of the 2003 Monash Student Theatre / Monash Student Association Nationwide Open Playwrights' Competition

1 st Prize	\$2000	Slow Falling Bird	by Christine Evans
2 nd Prize	\$1500 shared	The Unknown Martyr Inmates	by Allan Hough by David McCartney
Honourable Mentions	\$250	BOG Inheritance (working title)	by Declan Greene by Belinda Bradley

The Monash Prize \$1000 was awarded to **Flywire** by Amelia Roper

Due to its overwhelming success Monash Student Theatre hopes to be able to sponsor a new competition in 2005. So keep a look out!