

# Announcing... The CBCA 2022 Shortlist Books



## Picture Book Category



### The Boy and the Elephant

Freya Blackwood

Published by HarperCollins Publishers | ISBN 9781460759998

This wordless book is a deeply emotional, tender, poignant and quietly affecting story which sings on so many levels. Rereading will reward the reader. There is the need to stop destruction of the natural environment alongside themes of friendship, loneliness and displacement in a world where people are too busy to see beauty in the world. The characters, settings and transitions in time are engaging, emotive and worthwhile. There are many elements in this book; young and wistful protagonist, peacock and orange colour palette used to represent home life, delicately drawn figures and sensitive use of lighting.



### Blue Flower

Gabriel Evans (illustrator), Sonya Hartnett (text)

Published by Penguin Random House Australia | ISBN 9781760894450

A beautiful book exploring important themes of disliking school, self-love and being proud to be different. The book is filled with genuine emotion and has a strong central character revealed through convincing inner dialogue. Perfect pace and positioning of page turns make this an excellent read aloud. The illustrations offer delicate and nuanced explorations of character and setting; the colour palette is restrained, and colours are used in a symbolic way. This character and situation will resonate with many young readers and the overall message is inspiring. A thought-provoking book which will generate lots of discussions with children.



### Stellarphant

James Foley

Published by Fremantle Press | ISBN 9781760990732

This story about an anthropomorphised, larger than life elephant can be read either as an ironic comment on privilege and diversity or the power of persistence. Readers will admire Stella's resilience and problem solving as she challenges the status quo of Space Command's space programme. Foley's use of humour and playfulness outweigh any dogma. Stella and her gang jump off the page with gumption and determination. The endpapers are fascinatingly informative. So much emotion is conveyed on Stella's face, through her eyes, tongue and forehead wrinkles. The fold-out page at the end is also a delightful addition. This book has the potential for lots of rich discussion around who become powerful, educated, and celebrated and who doesn't.





### The Inheritance

Armin Greder

Published by Allen & Unwin | ISBN 9781760526788

A challenging and unsettling picture book expressing the deep connection between capitalism and the state of our planet within the setting of an uber wealthy family. Bleak but beautiful compressed charcoal and pastel illustrations evoke a visceral response. In this picture book for older readers the reader is invited to sit with the metaphorical and literal darkness of this chilling tale. Many older readers will be engaged with and energised by the haunting nature of the wordless pages that don't give in to a 'happy ending' temptation. The bold use of negative space and ironic title will provoke much discussion.



### Just One Bee

Christopher Nielsen (illustrator), Margrete Lamond and Anthony Bertini (text)

Published by Dirt Lane Press | ISBN 9780648023890

The language here is poetic and balanced, and the illustrations use a limited palette and stark design to create an arid effect in this flower-less dystopia. There is a strong sense of place with the environment itself developed as a key character. On the surface, this is the story of three bees who question their own power and place in creating a more sustainable future. But these characters are rich representations of climate deniers and activists in the real world and the book helps readers to consider their own role in climate change and the importance of resilience and working together to make a positive impact. The shifts in tone, from bleak and barren to vibrant fields of flowers, are affective and create a sense of hope and optimism.



### Iceberg

Jess Racklyeft (illustrator), Claire Saxby (text)

Published by Allen & Unwin | ISBN 9781760526047

The writing is sophisticated; facts and technical vocabulary are lyrically combined with beautiful description. The sentences are perfectly balanced, and verbs are used precisely to describe the vivid life of this icy place. The choice of artistic medium offers a perfect complement to the text; the illustrations are subtle at times and commanding at others. The use of many shades of blue beautifully reflects this icy environment and immerses readers in the Antarctic. A sense of wonder is created through transparent layers of water allowing readers to spot life above and the mysteries below the surface.

