



SISTERS IN CRIME 25th SCARLET STILETTO AWARDS CEREMONY
Thornbury Theatre, Velvet Room, 859 High Street, Thornbury
6 for 6.30pm Saturday 24 November 2018

6.45pm: JANE CLIFTON (at lectern)

Sisters in Crime/Brothers-in-Law,

My name is **JANE CLIFTON** and welcome to Sisters in Crime's 25th Scarlet Stiletto Award ceremony for best crime and mystery short stories by Australian women. This is a huge milestone in the annals of Australian crime writing. Let's give the awards – and ourselves – a big clap.

[Pause for applause.]

Indigenous welcome: On behalf of Sisters in Crime Australia, I acknowledge the Wurundjeri people of the Kulin Nation on whose traditional land we are meeting tonight and pay my respects to their elders, past, present and emerging.

It's wonderful to see so many crime fans gathered here tonight to celebrate 25 years of top crime and mystery short stories by Australian women, and to be back here at Thornbury Theatre.

The name, Scarlet Stiletto Award, is in the grand tradition of crime writing awards, such as the Golden Dagger in the UK.

Of course, we've always loved the way the name combines the femininity of the stiletto shoe with the deadly speed of the stiletto knife and the sauciness of scarlet women.

As it happens, I also performed in a band called *Stiletto* in the late '70s. Being here tonight was obviously meant to be.

Over the past 25 years, 3271 short stories have been entered with 25 Scarlet Stiletto Award winners and other category winners going on to have books published. Not a bad record.

Three of those authors are here tonight please stand up Annie Hauxwell; Cate Kennedy; and Sandi Wallace. Angela Savage, now Director of Writers' Victoria, sends her apologies.

This year **201** short stories are competing for **13** awards and **\$9,760** in prize money and benefits. We are also proud to announce that **Swinburne University of Technology** has for the first time offered sponsorship of the \$1500 first prize. The first-prize winner also takes home a spectacular scarlet stiletto trophy.

[Unveil and lift up trophy and then re-veil.]

At around 8pm, after the main course I'll be interrogating **KATE ATKINSON**, star of *Wentworth*.

Meanwhile, please put your hands together to welcome **CATE KENNEDY**, doyenne of Australian short story writing, to give a short talk – ‘These heels are made for walkin’ – about how the Scarlet Stiletto Awards transformed her life.

Cate won the first Scarlet Stiletto in 1994 and then the second the next year, whereupon the Sisters had to introduce a rule. Two shoes and then you’re invited to be a judge. When Cate went on to win *The Age* short story competition two years in a row – in 2000 and 2001 – *The Age* had to introduce a rule outlawing winners from entering for five years.

Cate then went on to win pretty much every other short story competition in the land and even got published in the *New Yorker*.

Since discovering her mojo in her matching pair of scarlet stilettos, Cate has written *The World Beneath* (Scribe, 2009), which won the NSW Premier’s Prize for Literature People’s Choice Award, and has been published in the UK, North America, France and China. She has also written three collections of poetry; a memoir about volunteering; and two short story collections: *Dark Roots* (Scribe, 2006) and *Like a House on Fire* (Scribe, 2012).

Cate will also present framed certificates to authors of highly commended stories. Later tonight, she will launch *Scarlet Stiletto: The Tenth Cut* (Clan Destine Press), an e-book of this year’s winning stories. Major awards will be presented after the main course.

A big hand for Cate every one.

6.50pm: [CATE KENNEDY speaks] (Lectern)

JANE CLIFTON:

7.00pm: Thank Cate [Cate stays on stage]

Please now welcome **PHYLLIS KING** who will present the Judges’ Report

PHYLLIS KING:

It is my privilege to present the Judge’s Report for the 25th Scarlet Stiletto competition.

As mentioned earlier, this year we had over 200 entries from across Australia. Congratulations to those who made the shortlist from this amazing array of talent. That is a terrific achievement.

Some of you will be aware that in past years, the judges have been surprised by a theme which has run through a number of stories e.g. one year involved cats in various guises and, another year, mothers strapped in their babies and headed out to investigate. We have seen disposal of unwanted husbands in a multitude of imaginative – and often painful – ways.

While this year we didn’t have a theme as such – other than, sadly, the ever-present one of domestic violence – authors did take particular pleasure in exacting a Most Satisfying Retribution. As usual, the ingenuity used to find Bodies in the Library was impressive and stories gleefully crossed genres into various times and space.

Although we say this every year, it is nonetheless true. The judges are always excited by the talent which exists amongst women and girls across our country, and the creativity and imagination brought to solving mysteries, bringing criminals to justice and exacting interesting, satisfactory and richly-deserved revenge. Congratulations to you all. Whether or not you win a prize tonight, please do keep up your writing. We look forward to reading more wonderful stories next year.

JANE CLIFTON: [Thank Phyllis.]

We won't keep you in suspense much longer in terms of the highly commended stories. I just need to outline the judging process:

- All 201 stories were judged blind.
- There were 11 judges – convenors, present and past, and two-time shoe winners. Each judge had a co-judge in arriving at a first short list. Every story in this final shortlist was read by 10 judges over a weekend at McCrae. Stories came from right across Australia
- Authors of all 29 shortlisted stories will receive a framed certificate.

I will announce the author, the name of the short story and give a very short synopsis provided by the author. When your name is announced, please make your way up here – quickly please.

As you are doing so, **CATE** will tell us a little about you and then present the award.

We will announce every winner but bios and story synopses will only be read for those who are actually here tonight. Our beautiful assistant, **TARA MITCHELL**, a new Sisters in Crime convenor, will hand us the framed certificate.

At the end of tonight's ceremony, we'll also call all short-listed authors up here for a group photo with **CATE** and **KATE**. 19 of the 23 shortlisted authors are here tonight – give them a big hand!

Now for the Highly Commended stories, in no particular order.

Apologies from: Ellen Vickerman, "The Chatterbox Criminal History Weekday Walking Tour" (Carindale, Qld). Ellen won last year's Youth Award and two previous awards, including an adult award.

- **Paulene Turner, "The Infiltrator" (Greenwich, NSW)**
- **Dawn Farnham, "The Widow's Library" (Perth, WA)**
- **Susan Bennett, "Denial" (Warragul, Vic)**

JANE CLIFTON: Sandi Wallace (Mt Dandenong, Vic), however, is here tonight and is highly commended for "Duplicity".

The love of Darcy's life is dying fourteen years after they lost their young daughter, and to avoid the past and what's ahead, she searches through their home for happy memories only to find secreted notes that trigger her grief and fear and doubt, straining at the fragile threads binding her together. Maybe her suspicions are groundless... maybe she's right, but can't deal with the truth... and maybe death will beat her to it.

CATE KENNEDY: From a very young age, Sandi Wallace dreamed of being a crime writer; a row of books with her name on the spine. Now with three contemporary rural crime thrillers and a published collection of her short crime stories, plus several prizes for her short and long fiction, she is living that childhood dream... and can't imagine ever not writing. She is currently at work on the next instalment in her rural crime series, along with a standalone psychological thriller.

[Present certificate. Pose for photographs.]

JANE CLIFTON: Dorothy Shorne is also from Victoria – from Melbourne city in fact – and is highly commended for "Welcome to the Neighbourhood":

It's a quiet neighbourhood. People look out for each other, but don't intrude. Or do they? There is one person who has her finger on the pulse and ensures life continues with minimal unpleasantness—to her at least.

CATE KENNEDY: Dorothy Shorne has had a varied career. She built modular houses in Central Australia, opened various businesses, and was involved in the development of Sydney Airport.

A solo mother by choice before Hollywood decided it made a good story line, earlier time and resources were focused on bringing up her son. Now she can turn thoughts to other interests, writing being the foremost.

She is a published romance writer, and loves the short story format in a range of genres. Her poetry and stories have been published in various anthologies.

[Present certificate. Pose for photographs.]

JANE CLIFTON: Lisa Jordan (Canadian Bay, Vic) is highly commended for “Missing”:

"Missing" is about a teenage girl who disappeared from a small country town without a trace 3 years prior. Some of the town's children conduct their own investigation.

CATE KENNEDY: Lisa Jordan has long been obsessed with crime reading and writing. Her formative teenage years were spent reading nonstop crime fiction, watching *The Silence of the Lambs* for the first time at the cinema for her fifteenth birthday (obsessed!) and reading nonfiction serial killer encyclopedia's well into the wee hours on school nights.

Now a mature age university student, wife and mother of 5, she still loves all of those things, but has way less time to indulge in them.

The first part of her story “Missing” was crafted during an introduction to creative writing class at uni.

Lisa has previously entered the Scarlet Stiletto Awards (quite a few years ago), and her story “Hate Mail” received a special commendation.

[Present certificate. Pose for photographs.]

JANE CLIFTON: From across Bass Strait is Kate Jenkins (North Hobart, Tas). Here's the synopsis for her highly commended story, “Vengeance Bay”:

Big time financial scammer Bart Thickett has no idea what is waiting for him when he charts a luxury yacht cruise to remote south western Tasmania. Much too late he starts to realise that he's part of an elaborate hoax, and that everyone on the yacht in Vengeance Bay has a good reason to want him dead.

CATE KENNEDY: Kate Jenkins is currently based in Hobart, after spending over 20 years working out of Australia. Her experiences are reflected in her two published novels, *Twice No One Dies* and *A Certain Kind of Justice*, crime fiction set in Lomé, Togo where one of the few African sleuths, ex-intelligence officer Marius, pits himself against malevolent forces with the help of some close friends. Kate is currently working on a biographical fiction of the early life of Tasmanian FM Alexander, world renowned for his development of the Alexander Technique.

[Present certificate. Pose for photographs.]

JANE CLIFTON: Kerry James is a serial offender in these awards and hails from Wendouree, Victoria. This time she was highly commended for “Homing Pigeon”.

A widow, harassed by developers who want her suburban property, retreats to a house where she meets other displaced women. One unexpectedly returns a favour and, through her Aboriginal heritage, ruins the developers aims.

CATE KENNEDY: After injury time out, Kerry, a retired academic, who has now completed two novel-length Mss, featuring her Tongan detective, Kulī Finau, and Australian anthropologist, Dr Pip Carey (definitely, not her) and had at one time had success in the Scarlet Stiletto Awards competition, is thrilled to be back and once again have the honour to be shortlisted among her Sisters.

[Present certificate. Pose for photographs.]

JANE CLIFTON: Annie Hauxwell (Castlemaine, Vic) is highly commended for “AFP”. Annie has the distinction of coming second to Cate Kennedy in the very first Scarlet Stiletto Awards back in 1994. Here’s the blurb:

Trigger-happy Agent Chrissy Miles, denied a weapon and exiled to FNQ, is forced to deploy fatal charm and crocodile tears when dispatching a crooked AFP colleague. Another fucking problem.

CATE KENNEDY: Since she stumbled out of a legal career and into a job as an investigator, Annie has pursued fraudsters, scammers, bullies and cheats in the UK and Australia. Her heroine on heroin, Catherine Berlin, has made four appearances in a series described variously as “dark”, “gripping” and “depressed and hopeless”, descriptions she feels at home with. Annie writes crime fiction because she finds goodness restful, but ultimately boring.

[Present certificate. Pose for photographs]

JANE CLIFTON: Christine Goonrey (Bega, NSW) is another serial offender. This year, she has been highly commended for “An Invisible Presence”:

What could happen if the servants turn against you? If Miranda can hold her nerve, she can use murder to free her family and the servants from the predations of a violent bully.

CATE KENNEDY: Christine has been an English teacher, a senior policy adviser in the Federal government and as an environmental activist. As a member of a writing group for many years, she finished several crime fiction novels but didn’t pursue publication.

Following a tree-change in 2016 she re-focused her energy on professional writing, particularly short stories and a novel, *Drawing Her Home*. In 2017 she won an Emerging Older Writers Residency at Canberra Noted Writers Festival and was shortlisted in the 2017 Scarlet Stiletto Awards. In 2018 she was a finalist in NYC Midnight Short Story competition (out of 4,600 international entries); completed a Short Story course with Tegan Bennet-Daylight and a Masterclass with Antoni Jach.

[Present certificate. Pose for photographs.]

JANE CLIFTON: Alison Ferguson (Eleebana, NSW) is highly commended for “Fragments of Meaning”:

Baby Leila has been abducted but interviewing the suspect is proving impossible due to her disordered communication. In her first case since opening her private practice as a forensic speech-language pathologist, Samantha Shore must diagnose the problem if the police are going to be able to find the infant alive.

CATE KENNEDY: Alison is obsessed by talking, writing and reading. Her fascination with talking led into her work as a speech-language pathologist in health care and, following completion of a PhD in Linguistics, into lecturing in university settings. She also completed a degree in writing which turbo-powered her academic publications and which continues to drive her aspirations in writing fiction. And then, of course, there's always time for reading. Alison is a genre omnivore, relishing wherever any story takes her.

[Present certificate. Pose for photographs.]

JANE CLIFTON: Jan Bull (Toora, Vic) was highly commended for “Missing”:

Three women go missing and the police are notified each time by the kidnapper before any of the women are missed by friends and colleagues. All three women are widows, without family and live alone. A fourth woman goes missing but this time someone is aware of her absence immediately and after a futile search speaks to the police and sets off a manhunt.

CATE KENNEDY: Over the past 40 plus years Jan has written for corporate businesses; reports, training manuals and product material. For training courses, she developed character profiles for use in counselling and negotiation workshops. She has also written articles for newsletters, magazines and newspapers and currently writes copy for radio announcements.

After 10 years as a bookshop owner, she closed the bookshop in 2016. This has given her the time and opportunity to learn how to write fiction so the characters and plots that have been living in her head for years she can now bring to life.

[Present certificate. Pose for photographs.]

JANE CLIFTON: All the way from Queensland is Robyn Boston (Caloundra) who was highly commended for “Rose and Frank”:

“Rose and Frank” is a gentle story of love and despair. Is protecting loved ones from the truth a strong enough motive for a crime? Where is the blurred line between right and wrong?

CATE KENNEDY: Robyn is a 50 something year old mother of teenage girls, wife and medico. That is in order of difficulty not necessarily importance.

This is her first short story since high school [last century] and first attempt at a crime story. She rarely writes in sentences or at length. Robyn lives in a quiet beach-side suburb of the quiet southern end of the Sunshine Coast in Queensland where her story is set. She would like to write more, read more and do many other creative things but life gets in the way.

[Present certificate. Pose for photographs.]

JANE CLIFTON: And all the way from Adelaide is Bridgitte Cummings who is highly commended for “The Wither Tide”:

The ‘Wither Tide’ is coming and widow Hettie must persuade the villagers not to cross the causeway. But is it the sweeping tide she fears – or what lurks at the bottom of the island’s seal-pit?

CATE KENNEDY: Bridgitte Cummings was born and raised in England but is now living in South Australia. She has had short stories published in the UK and Australia, including the Bath Short Story Anthology and the Big Issue Fiction Edition. She has written in a wide range of genres but always manages to find her way back to crime and horror. She is currently working on a psychological horror set in a remote Australian school.

[Present certificate. Pose for photographs.]

JANE CLIFTON: Now for our last highly commended certificate. It goes to Beth Amos (Palmerston, ACT) for “Katherine”:

The Doric [Dor-itch] siblings have been terrorising Sydney for six years. Now two of them are dead and the investigating detective must decide what to protect: her career or the traumatised teenage girl who wants the remaining brother dead.

CATE KENNEDY: Beth Amos has worked in South Africa and Australia as a writer, illustrator, graphic designer and communications professional. She resides in Canberra. Her awards include an Australian Society of Authors Emerging Writers' and Illustrators' mentorship and a scholarship to the Fiona McIntosh Commercial Fiction Masterclass.

Beth was shortlisted for the 2018 Kill Your Darlings (KYD) Unpublished Manuscript Award, with an extract published as New Fiction by KYD.

[Present certificate. Pose for photographs.]

JANE CLIFTON:

That's it for the highly commended certificates. Enjoy the main course. I'll be back at around 8pm to talk to KATE ATKINSON about her life in crime.

Meanwhile, you might want to buy a raffle ticket. On offer are 3 bags of books plus a Phryne scarf (4/50), or a Phryne brooch No, 12 or some Miss Fisher and the Crypt of Tears hand cream, kindly donated by Every Cloud Productions. \$5 each; or 3 for \$10.

[JANE and CATE pose for photographs]

[MAIN COURSE. PLAY SHOWREEL]

[7.57pm: PLAY KATE ATKINSON showreel!]

8pm: JANE CLIFTON:

It is now my pleasure to introduce **KATE ATKINSON**.

Kate has a long criminal record – as an actor, that is. This year she received a Logie Award nomination for Most Outstanding Actress in a Leading Role for her portrayal of Governor Vera Bennett in the Fremantle production of *Wentworth*.

Kate has acted in many of Australia's favourite series. Her most recent ongoing role was in *Jack Irish*; other series include *Rush*, *The Dr Blake Mysteries*, *Miss Fisher's Murder Mysteries*, *Blue Heelers*, *State Coroner* and the much-loved *SeaChange*, giving a memorable portrayal of Constable Karen Miller. And, after a break of nearly 20 years *SeaChange* is about to be revived next year – by Nine!

[In conversation for 35-40 minutes.]

8.40pm: JANE CLIFTON: [Thank KATE.]

Enjoy your tea and coffee. There should also be some chocolates on your table.

And do buy some raffle tickets: You stand to win one of 3 bags of books plus a Phryne scarf (4/50), or a Phryne brooch No, 12 or some Miss Fisher and the Crypt of Tears hand cream, kindly donated by Every Cloud Productions. \$5 each; or 3 for \$10.

[JANE and KATE pose for photographs]

[BREAK. TEA, COFFEE & CHOCOLATES]

[PLAY SHOWREEL]

9.10PM: PRIZE PRESENTATION

JANE CLIFTON:

Now for the prize presentation. As before, winners please make your way quickly to the stage as your name is called out. I will then read a synopsis of the story and **KATE ATKINSON** will give your backstory. Our beautiful assistant, **TARA MITCHELL**, will hand us the framed certificate and cheque.

Before we start, the judges want you to know that they decided not to award the Liz Navratil Award for Best Story with a Disabled Protagonist (\$400), sponsored for a 5th year by the Queensland Chapter of Sisters in Crime in honour of the late Liz Navratil, a member with disabilities.

Now for the Fleurier Consult Young Writers' Award for writers 18 or younger. It's worth \$500 and goes to Olivia De Lesantis who lives just down the road here in Thornbury.

JANE CLIFTON:

"Wayward" by Olivia De Lesantis takes place in the slums of Collingwood during the epicentre of the Great Depression and follows unsung teenage heroine Bonnie Wilmot as she uncovers the truth of what really happened to her sister. What happens in Collingwood stays in Collingwood... or does it?

KATE ATKINSON: Olivia De Lesantis lives locally with her family and is an aspiring crime writer and ardent feminist. She spends most of her time reading beside her two cats, whilst undertaking her high school studies. Olivia loves everything vintage and firmly believes she was born in the wrong generation.

She is currently 15 years of age.

[Present certificate & cheque. Pose for photographs]

JANE CLIFTON: The Scriptworks Great Film Idea Award (\$200) has been won by Helen Richardson (Faulconbridge, NSW) for "The Stand-In."

In the "The Stand-In", a woman is serving a lengthy sentence for manslaughter when the widow of the man she was convicted of killing agrees to 'swap' with her and serve out the remaining time. On the outside, and in an assumed identity, the woman slowly, and chillingly, finds out why.

KATE ATKINSON: Helen is a part-time editor and freelancer. She is a serial submitter for the Stiletto, nutting out how the crime form works along the way. This is the first time she's been shortlisted. Her stories have been published in *Sleepers' Almanac*, *The Great Unknown* (ed. Angela Meyer), *The Big Issue Fiction Edition* and *Pigface and Other Stories* (ed. Ryan O'Neill), amongst others. She is currently working on a YA novel.

Congratulations Helen! You've finally done it!

[Present certificate & cheque. Pose for photographs]

JANE CLIFTON: Could Lindy Cameron now join us on the stage to co-present her Clan Destine Press Award for Cross Genre (\$500)? Lindy is also Sisters in Crime's President.

LINDY CAMERON: And the award goes to Fin J Ross (Paynesville, Vic) for "Victory of Kyrnos":

All is awry on Planet Kyrnos. Its tiny human population is being manipulated by Morphos and beset by Bokans who threaten plans to mine a rare mineral which can create water back on alien-occupied Earth. But Nike Varatassi will save the day – she just doesn't know it yet.

KATE ATKINSON: Journalist, Fin J Ross, is co-author of two true-crime anthologies, *Killer in the Family* and *Murder in the Family*. Fin has two novels, *Billings Better Bookstore and Brasserie* and *Wildwood Hall* looking for a publishing home and is currently writing her first crime novel.

Fin has won several awards in short story competitions, including, three category prizes and a third prize in previous Scarlet Stiletto Awards.

She teaches creative writing in Paynesville in regional Victoria – to maintain her sanity – but derives her income from running a boarding cattery in Eagle Point and breeding Bengal and British Shorthair cats.

LINDY CAMERON: {Two sentences.}

[LINDY and KATE present certificate and cheque. Pose for photographs]

JANE CLIFTON: The Harper Collins Romantic Suspense Award (\$500) goes to Sandi Wallace (Mt Dandenong, Vic) for "Fire on the Hill". Sandi is a serial, serial offender and was highly commended earlier tonight.

Four deliberately lit fires in the nearby bush, coming increasingly close to town, and only the tenth day of summer – Charlie's first fire season as sergeant-in-charge at Howie and third working here is already her worst. They must act quickly and a fresh perspective might help – but can Charlie trust the hot Welsh fire whose arrival in town coincided with the spate of arson attacks, and when the offender aims his next strike at her heart, can she stop him before he destroys everything that matters... before someone she loves dies?

KATE ATKINSON: You found out a bit about Sandi earlier but what you may not know is that she was highly commended for 2 stories last year, won the Romantic Suspense Award in 2016, was highly commended for one story in 2014 and won the Scriptworks Award for another, and in 2013 took out the Best Investigative Award.

[Present certificate and cheque. Pose for photographs.]

JANE CLIFTON: Now for a brand-new award, Writers' Victoria Crime and Punishment Award for the story with the most satisfying retribution. The winner gets to sit in a cell for 3 months. It's a residency at Old Melbourne Gaol.

And the lucky winner is Lisa Loudon (Larrakeyah, NT) for "Starfish under Falling Water".

KATE ATKINSONS:

When a grieving woman discovers her neighbour dead in bushland, she believes the killer is the victim's husband. When he continues his violence against women, she must find the courage to plan and survive her ultimate revenge.

KATE ATKINSON: Lisa Loudon is a writer and author. A former television and radio news producer, journalist and editor, she's also worked in corporate communications and volunteered as MD of an animal foundation. Her authored books include *The Pipey Fairy*, shortlisted for Book of the Year 2018 (birth to 3 years) in the Speech Pathology Australia awards, and *100 Years at the Cutting Edge*, launched at the State Library of

Victoria in 2017. She's currently writing her first novel and has just completed a Curtis Brown Creative course. Lisa has lived abroad and across Australia and in 2017, moved from Melbourne to Darwin with her husband, son and two dogs.

ADRIANE HOWELL: [two sentences]

[ADRIANE and KATE Present certificate and cheque. Pose for photographs]

JANE CLIFTON: Fiona Eagger from Every Cloud Productions, the producers of *Miss Fisher's Murder Mysteries*, has hoped to be here tonight to present their 3rd Mystery with History Award (\$750) but she is otherwise engaged at the wrap party for *Miss Fisher and the Crypt of Tears*, the Phryne movie.

And the winner is Jenny Castles (East Brunswick, Vic) for "The Poe":

Can you tell when something truly evil is about to happen? Rowena Haywood thinks so.

She grew up in an era when her hometown was gaining its reputation as the killer capital of Australia. Baffling abductions and serial slaughter deeply affected the children of Adelaide in the 1960s and 70s, but for young Rowena it was horrifyingly personal.

Decades later memories are bubbling to the surface and Rowena realises that under the cover of a notorious local crime someone has quietly gotten away with murder. Then she disappears.

KATE ATKINSON: Jenny Castles was born and raised in deepest, darkest Adelaide suburbia. She worked for years as an actor, lived overseas for a while, and is now based in Melbourne where she is an editor for children's books and a ghostwriter for adults. She is the author of four picture books and co-authored a book about the final days of Ned Kelly with her late father.

[Present certificate and cheque. Pose for photographs]

JANE CLIFTON: And now for the popular Kerry Greenwood Malice Domestic Award (\$750). And the award goes to Kat Clay (Footscray, Vic) for "Lady Loveday Investigates":

Lady Loveday is not impressed: Mr Brighton is dead at a glittering New Year's party and her daughter insists on prodding the body. Together mother and daughter must solve the murder to prevent an unfortunate alliance, save their social reputation and the cream cheese tarts.

KATE ATKINSON: Kat Clay is the author of *Double Exposure*. In 2017, she was longlisted for the CWA Debut Dagger award for her unpublished novel, *Victorian noir*. Her fiction crosses noir, horror and the weird, exploring topics such as sinister cities, psychogeographies and the representation of women (although from time to time, she loves a dash of satire). She has been shortlisted for the Aurealis, Ditmar and Australian Horror Writers Association Shadows Awards and her short fiction and criticism has been published in *SQ Mag*, *Crimson Streets* and *Weird Fiction Review*. She is represented by Paul Stevens at Donald Maass Literary Agency.

[Present certificate and cheque. Pose for photographs]

JANE CLIFTON: Please stay on the stage Kat. [Quietly]

We now come to the Melbourne Athenaeum Library Body in the Library Award which is also always popular.

The Melbourne Athenaeum has once again generously sponsored two “Body in the Library” Awards and we are delighted that **SUE WESTWOOD**, the manager, is here tonight to co-present them. Please come forward Sue.

SUE WESTWOOD: The \$500 runner-up prize is awarded Kat Clay for “Lady Loveday Investigates”. You’ve just heard the details so it’s now my pleasure to present the award.

[SUE WESTWOOD and KATE present certificate and cheque. Pose for photographs]

SUE WESTWOOD: The Body in the Library First Prize of \$1000 goes to Fin J Ross (Paynesville, Vic) for “Deadly Ernestine”.

Retired linguistics professor, Ernestine Grey, is found dead from a gunshot wound in the Melbourne Athenaeum Library (*ooh, that’s cheeky*); an apparent suicide. But her friend and former student, Alison Jordan, unravels the many linguistic and grammatical clues in Ernestine’s suicide note to convince police to find her murderer.

KATE ATKINSON: Another serial offender. Please put your hands together for Fin!!!

[SUE WESTWOOD and KATE present certificate and cheque. Pose for photographs]

JANE CLIFTON: Please stay on the stage Fin. [**Quietly**]

Could Dr Georgina Heydon please come to the stage? Georgina is President of the International Association of Forensic Linguists which has kindly donated the brand-new award, Best Forensic Linguistics Story, worth \$1000.

GEORGINA HEYDON: [Two sentences about the award.]

And, the winner, as you may have guessed is Fin J Ross! Please put your hands together again!!!

[GEORGINA HEYDON and KATE present certificate and cheque. Pose for photographs]

JANE CLIFTON:

Third Prize (\$500) is sponsored by long-time supporter, Sun Bookshop, and goes to Kat Clay “Lady Loveday Investigates”. It’s the 3rd prize this story has taken out!!!

Please put your hands together again!!!

[Present certificate and cheque. Pose for photographs.]

JANE CLIFTON: The Simon & Schuster Second Prize (\$1000) goes to Fin J Ross for “Deadly Ernestine”, which has also taken out 3 awards tonight!

Please put your hands together again!!!

[Present certificate and cheque. Pose for photographs.]

JANE CLIFTON: I’d now like to ask Dr Carolyn Beasley from Swinburne University of Technology co-present the 1ST Prize of \$1500, The 2018 Scarlet Stiletto Award and the shoe goes to... [drum roll please]

CAROLYN BEASLEY: And the winner is Dr Philomena Horsley (Northcote, Vic) for “Darkness in the Port”:

Young and homeless, Jazz roams the streets of St Kilda, surviving on the goodwill of local characters and the

KATE ATKINSON: Philomena is a long-time member of Sisters in Crime and an avid reader. You may as well say it, she's addicted to books. When she is forced to stop reading and work for a living she is a medical anthropologist who provides consultancy in the fields of health research and ethics.

While a lot of her work has focussed on the intersections of gender, sexuality and health, her preferred research topic is autopsies – their history, how people regard them, and their contemporary uses. She splits her time between the busyness of inner Melbourne and the stillness of her shack in the Otways.

[CAROLYN & KATE: Present certificate, cheque and trophy.]

PHILOMENA HORSLEY: [short speech]
[Pose for photographs]

JANE CLIFTON: We're almost there. Could CATE KENNEDY please come to the stage? CATE is going to do us the honour of launching *Scarlet Stiletto: The Tenth Cut*, which has been edited by Phyllis King.

CATE KENNEDY: All the winning stories from tonight are available in *Scarlet Stiletto: The Tenth Cut* for \$4.99 from iTunes or \$4 from Clan Destine Press as an e-book. You may have seen the promotional postcard - if not grab one on your way out.

All shortlisted authors and sponsors will be emailed about their preferred format and sent the promo code tomorrow.

[A few sentences about the book.]

JANE CLIFTON: [Thank Cate and ask her to stay on stage.]

Let's now acknowledge the generous support of our sponsors of the prizes:

- Swinburne University
- Simon & Schuster
- The Sun Bookshop
- The Melbourne Athenaeum Library
- The International Association of Forensic Linguists
- Kerry Greenwood
- Every Cloud Productions
- Harper Collins Australia
- Writers Victoria
- Clan Destine Press
- The Qld Chapter of Sisters in crime
- Scriptworks

Please join me in thanking them.

Finally I'd like to ask **CATE KENNEDY** and **KATE ATKINSON** to draw the raffle.

Draw raffle 3rd, 3rd, 1st (bags of books + Phryne prizes). Pose for photographs

JANE CLIFTON: I would again like to thank **CATE KENNEDY** and **KATE ATKINSON** for their contribution to this special evening and present them with some gifts, including *Scarlet Stiletto: The Second Cut*, t-shirt, stiletto cards and the stiletto champagne stopper.

[Present CATE and KATE with gifts – pose for photos]

Big thanks also to **CHELE COOPER** for her administration of the awards and recording a podcast of tonight's chat; to **MICHAELA LOBB**, who undertook author liaison and bookings, plus **CARMEL SHUTE, LINDY CAMERON, CAZ BROWN, TARA MITCHELL** and **MARYANN WEBB** for their work in getting this ceremony together.

Thanks to other convenors who worked tonight: **MORAIG KISLER, ROBYN WALTON,** and **PAULINE MEANEY.**

Don't forget to start writing now if you want to get your stories in for the 26th Scarlet Stiletto Awards by 31 August, 2019.

There are several author launches before Christmas and don't forget the big event with Jane Harper, Upstairs at the Athenaeum, 6pm Wednesday 5 December. Grab a notice on your way out.

Thank you all for coming.

Please leave your name tags in the box as you go out.

See you again next year!

Could all the short-listed authors now join us on the stage for some group photos with CATE, KATE and me?

Thank you everybody!

ENDS