

Media Release

Entries open for \$40,000 award to recognise female scriptwriters

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The State Library of NSW has opened nominations for the \$40,000 Mona Brand Award for Women Stage and Screen Writers 2018, the only award of its kind in Australia.

The Mona Brand Award recognises outstanding women writers for the stage and screen, with the major prize of \$30,000, and an additional \$10,000 for a writer in the early stages of her career, to be presented at the State Library on 23 October 2018.

The biennial Mona Brand Award has been made possible by the generous bequest of the late Mona Alexis Fox née Brand (1915–2007) and the State Library of NSW Foundation.

According to Kim Williams AM, Senior Judge and Chairman of the State Library of NSW Foundation, “Mona Brand was a remarkable, indefatigable creator – poet, writer, playwright and commentator who held strong social and political convictions at a time when they were not necessarily well received or even welcome.

“Through this award we celebrate Mona Brand’s legacy and generosity of spirit as witnessed in her bequest to the State Library of NSW.

“The major award is focused on outstanding Australian women writers for theatre and screen, celebrating talent and achievement – and in the award for young writers, their promise. The award marks something which was sadly lacking in Mona Brand’s own life and demonstrates how far our creative community has come over the last 75 years,” Mr Williams said.

2016 winner Joanna Murray-Smith said, “I was thrilled to be the first recipient of this prestigious and generous award, which was a much-appreciated acknowledgement of the profound struggles in becoming a successful woman writer and a reminder of the joyful surprises of a creative life that make it worth the pain!

“This award is a gift from the Gods (and Mona Brand) for established women writers and a wonderful, valuable addition to Australia’s cultural awards,” she said.

State Librarian Dr John Vallance added: “Awards are not everything – the atmosphere around them must be right as well. The Mona Brand Award goes a long way towards creating a truly supportive public platform for emerging female stage and screen writers. The Library is proud to be part of it.”

The Mona Brand Award for Women Stage and Screen Writers

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The conditions of entry and nomination form are available on the State Library's website: www.sl.nsw.gov.au/awards. Entries close at 5pm on 20 July 2018.

The winners will be announced at the State Library of NSW on 23 October 2018.

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