



Dromkeen National Centre for Picture Book Art



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Shaun Tan

Dromkeen Medal Citation 2010

Shaun Tan is an illustrator, author, and film maker who has had his work adapted for the theatre, cinema and for orchestral and other musical performances. He is represented in many galleries and has earned wide international recognition and respect from critics, academics, Sci Fi aficionados, and of course readers of all ages.

Shaun Tan's awards span a decade and include recognition for illustration, best art work, artist, Fantasy Artist, Comic Book, Picture Book of the Year, and N.S.W. Premier's Award.

In 2011 these awards include a nomination for the 83rd Academy Awards the Oscars. His film *The Lost Thing*, a collaboration between Shaun and Passion Pictures Australia is nominated for Best Short Film (animated).

Shaun's earliest work was recorded when he was eleven years old and he was published at the age of sixteen, before completing High School. His stories of early prowess in illustration, success at High School, achievement at University, and his subsequent visual exploration of ideas across a wide range of media, have captivated the attention of students, artists, teachers, librarians and the media.

Shaun's capacity to articulate and elaborate his work process, and reflection on his craft and that which lies behind it, makes him a powerful interpreter of the world in which we live. It is this interpretation which makes his work so innovative; he writes: "I don't think that I've ever painted an image as a reproduction of what I am seeing, even when I'm working in front of it. I'm always trying to create some kind of a parallel equivalent." Shaun seems motivated by an almost platonic desire both to explore the multi layers within the illustration and to provoke multi layers of individual imaginative response.

Shaun is more than an illustrator or author, he is "a translator of ideas". His books demand much of the reader / viewer but there are rich rewards for careful, thoughtful engagement. He has pushed the boundaries for books, film theatrical experience and musical presentations in works that explore themes as diverse and challenging as isolation, life in suburbia, depression, and the immigrant experience.

Shaun has contributed much to Australia and indeed the world in his range of artistic endeavours. He has also been very generous with his time, both in a willingness to participate in public fora, discussions and debates, and as a support and mentor for young illustrators.

Shaun Tan is indeed a worthy recipient of the Dromkeen Medal for 2010.