



Embargoed until 6am, Wednesday 23 July

BEST DESIGNED BOOKS IN AOTEAROA REVEALED

Beautifully designed books are in the spotlight with the announcement today of the finalists for the 2025 PANZ Book Design Awards.

The Publishers Association of New Zealand Te Rau o Tākupu (PANZ) established the awards to promote excellence in, and provide recognition for, the best book design in Aotearoa New Zealand.

“The exceptional calibre of entries this year made some of the categories near-impossible to narrow down into a shortlist, and there was just one category that the judges could agree upon without lively debate,” says convenor Chloe Blades, an artist and manager at Unity Books Auckland.

“This is a testament to the brilliance of the people dedicating their time to bringing New Zealand’s finest books to life.”

Chloe was joined by Eva Charlton, graphic designer for design studio Extended Whānau and Jo Bailey, designer and educator and researcher at Toi Rauwhārangī College of Creative Arts, Massey University. Together they spent many hours selecting the shortlist from a pool of 112 entries.

The judges were particularly struck by the strength of submissions for the **Scholastic New Zealand Award for Best Children’s Book**, where they struggled to narrow down the submissions and settled on a larger shortlist of seven titles to reflect the depth and quality of the books entered.

A more sombre, muted colour palette emerged across the entries this year, with the judges noting the predominance of greens and neutrals, a contrast to last year which was dominated by bold, flashy neon.

“This was a nod perhaps to the trend-setting Pantone Colour of the Year for 2025, Mocha Mousse, and the calming, grounding presence of books, especially amidst a tumultuous political and economic climate,” says Chloe.

Chloe also noted that open spine binding was another reoccurring feature which she believes suggests a strong shift in the traditional format as a future looms where books could be regurgitated and thoughtlessly designed by AI.

“From my perspective, seeing what’s coming in to the bookshop, New Zealand is pushing the boundaries and challenging what a book is and can be and AI has nothing on our designers.”

The judges must now select the winners of the nine categories and choose the recipient of the main prize, the **Gerard Reid Award for Best Book sponsored by NielsenIQ BookData**. The winners will be announced at a special ceremony in Auckland on Thursday 18 September where attendees will also be able to vote for the **BookHub People’s Choice Award**.

The industry’s design talent will assemble the next day for the PANZ Book Design Workshop which provides the opportunity to dissect the awards, enjoy panel sessions led by leading book designers and network with peers.

The 2025 PANZ Book Design Awards finalists are:

Penguin Random House New Zealand Award for Best Illustrated Book

- *Eileen Mayo's Rare and Endangered Birds of Aotearoa New Zealand* by Christchurch Art Gallery Te Puna o Waiwhetū (Christchurch Art Gallery Te Puna o Waiwhetū). **Designed by Aaron Beehre**
- *Fenoga Tāoga Niue I Aotearoa: Niue Heritage Journey In Aotearoa* edited by Molima Molly Pihigia QSM, Toluma'anave Barbara Makuati-Afitu, Kolokesa Uafa Mahina-Tuai, Hikule'o Fe'aomoeako Melaia Mahina and Janson Chau (Mafola Press). **Designed by Janson Chau (Alt Group)**
- *Herbst: Architecture in context* by John Walsh (Massey University Press). **Designed by Alan Deare and Anna Wilkinson (Area Design)**
- *Sight Lines: Women and Art in Aotearoa* by Kirsty Baker (Auckland University Press). **Designed by Katie Kerr (Studio Katie Kerr)**
- *worm, root, wort... & bane* by Ann Shelton (Alice Austen House Press). **Designed by Duncan Munro (Lucky Stairs Studio)**

Upstart Press Award for Best Non-Illustrated Book

- *Becoming Tangata Tiriti: Working with Māori, Honouring the Treaty* by Avril Bell (Auckland University Press). **Designed by Gideon Keith (Seven)**
- *Grid: The life and times of First World War fighter ace Keith Caldwell* by Adam Claasen (Massey University Press). **Cover designed by Nathanael Claasen and Kate Barraclough, interior by Kate Barraclough (Kate Frances Design)**
- *In the Half Light of a Dying Day* by C. K. Stead (Auckland University Press). **Designed by Duncan Munro (Lucky Stairs Studio)**
- *Japan: An Autobiography* by Peter Shaw (Six Point Press). **Cover designed by Arch MacDonnell, interior by Arch MacDonnell & Jane MacDonnell (Inhouse)**
- *Slender Volumes* by Richard von Sturmer (Spoor Books). **Designed by Katie Kerr (Studio Katie Kerr)**

Scholastic New Zealand Award for Best Children’s Book

- *A Lot of Silly* by Joy Cowley & David Barrow (Gecko Press). **Designed by Vida Kelly**
- *The Beach Activity Book: 99 Ideas for Activities by the Water around Aotearoa New Zealand* by Rachel Haydon & Pippa Keel Situ (Te Papa Press). **Designed by Kate Barraclough (Kate Frances Design) with illustrations by Pippa Keel Situ**
- *The Dream Factory / Te Wheketere Moemoeā* by Steph Matuku & Zak Ātea (Huia Publishers). **Designed by Te Kani Price & Sophie Hooper (Huia Publishers)**
- *Five Wee Pūteketeke* by Nicola Toki & Jo Pearson (Allen & Unwin Aotearoa New Zealand). **Designed by Kate Barraclough (Kate Frances Design)**

- *Nanny Rina's Amazing Nets/Ngā Kupenga a Nanny Rina* by Qiane Matata-Sipu & Isobel Joy Te Aho-White (Penguin Random House New Zealand). **Designed by Cat Taylor (Cat Taylor Design)**
- *Piki te Ora: Your Wellbeing Journal* by Hira Nathan and Jessie Eyre with illustrations by Huriana Kopeke-Te Aho (Allen & Unwin Aotearoa New Zealand). **Designed by Megan van Staden**
- *The Witch of Maketu and the Bleating Lambs* by Anika Moa & Rebecca ter Borg (Penguin Random House New Zealand). **Designed by Cat Taylor (Cat Taylor Design)**

PANZ Award for Best Education Book or Series — Primary

- *Kiwi Bees Have Tiny Knees: Native Bees of Aotearoa New Zealand* by Rachel Weston (Weston Books). **Designed by Sarah Elworthy**
- *My Matariki Colouring and Activity Book* by Rangi Matamua, Miriama Kamo & Isobel Joy Te Aho-White (Scholastic New Zealand). **Cover designed by Vida Kelly, interior by Isobel Joy Te Aho-White and Vida Kelly,**

1010 Printing Award for Best Cookbook

- *The Food Fountain of Youth* by Lonneke Botello Hernandez (Bateman Books). **Designed by Floor van Lierop, (thisisthem.com)**
- *Kai Feast: Food Stories & Recipes from the Maunga to the Moana* by Christall Lowe (Bateman Books). **Designed by Christall Lowe and Katrina Duncan**
- *Oikos — An Ode to Food, Family & Friends* by Theo Papouis (Oikos). **Designed by Seachange**
- *That Green Olive* by Olivia Moore (Penguin Random House New Zealand). **Designed by Cat Taylor (Cat Taylor Design)**

Allen & Unwin Award for Best Commercial Book for Adults

- *101 Ways to Find Calm: How to Use Your Body to Soothe Your Mind* by Rebekah Ballagh (Allen & Unwin Aotearoa New Zealand). **Designed by Kate Barraclough (Kate Frances Design), with illustrations by Rebekah Ballagh**
- *All That We Know* by Shilo Kino (Moa Press). **Cover designed by Rachel Clark, interior by Simon Paterson Bookhouse**
- *Amma* by Saraid de Silva (Moa Press). **Cover designed by Megan van Staden, interior by Simon Paterson Bookhouse**
- *At The Grand Glacier Hotel* by Laurence Fearnley (Penguin Random House New Zealand). **Designed by Cat Taylor (Cat Taylor Design)**
- *Feijoa* by Kate Evans (Moa Press). **Designed by Megan van Staden with interior line illustrations by Ruby Watson**
- *Wild Walks Aotearoa: A Guide to Tramping in New Zealand* by Hannah-Rose Watt (Penguin Random House New Zealand). **Designed by Carla Sy**

HarperCollins Publishers Award for Best Cover

- *Bad Archive* by Flora Feltham (Te Herenga Waka University Press). **Designed by Todd Atticus**
- *Dummies & Doppelgängers* by Felicity Milburn (Christchurch Art Gallery Te Puna o Waiwhetū). **Designed by Peter Bray**
- *Oikos — An Ode to Food, Family & Friends* by Theo Papouis (Oikos). **Designed by Seachange**
- *Old Black Cloud: A cultural history of mental depression in Aotearoa New Zealand* by Jacqueline Leckie (Massey University Press). **Designed by Sarah Elworthy**
- *Sight Lines: Women and Art in Aotearoa* by Kirsty Baker (Auckland University Press). **Designed by Katie Kerr (Studio Katie Kerr)**
- *worm, root, wort... & bane* by Ann Shelton (Alice Austen House Press). **Designed by Duncan Munro (Lucky Stairs Studio)**

Te Papa Press Award for Best Typography

- *Fenoga Tāoga Niue I Aotearoa: Niue Heritage Journey In Aotearoa* edited by Molima Molly Pihigia QSM, Toluma'anave Barbara Makuati-Afitu, Kolokesa Uafa Mahina-Tuai, Hikule'o Fe'aomoeako Melaia Mahina and Janson Chau (Mafola Press). **Designed by Janson Chau (Alt Group)**
- *Japan: An Autobiography* by Peter Shaw (Six Point Press). **Cover designed by Arch MacDonnell, interior by Arch MacDonnell & Jane MacDonnell (Inhouse)**
- *Oikos — An Ode to Food, Family & Friends* by Theo Papouis (Oikos). **Designed by Seachange**
- *Rēwena and Rabbit Stew: The Rural Kitchen in Aotearoa, 1800–1940* by Katie Cooper (Auckland University Press). **Designed by Kalee Jackson**
- *Sight Lines: Women and Art in Aotearoa* by Kirsty Baker (Auckland University Press). **Designed by Katie Kerr (Studio Katie Kerr)**
- *worm, root, wort... & bane* by Ann Shelton (Alice Austen House Press). **Designed by Duncan Munro (Lucky Stairs Studio)**

Hachette Aotearoa New Zealand Emerging Designer Award

Sarah-Louise Crawford

- *Charlie Tangaroa and the God of War* by T K Roxborough (Huia Publishers)
- *Te Huarahi Māori: A Māori-Medium Initial Teacher Education Programme* edited by Peter J. Keegan, Tania Cliffe-Tautari, Ruth Lemon and Tauwehe Tamati (Huia Publishers)

Tahlia Conrad-Hinga

- *The Eldest Girl* by Olivia Aroha Giles (Huia Publishers)
- *Migration* by Steph Matuku (Huia Publishers)
- *Te Takarangi series: Weeping Waters, Mana Tangata, Terror in our Midst, Huia Histories of Māori, The Parihaka Album, Māori and Parliament, Resistance* by various (Huia Publishers)

Note: This year the decision was made not to proceed with the Best Educational Book or Series - Secondary / Tertiary due to insufficient entries.

ENDS

For more info and book images please visit: www.bookdesignawards.co.nz

High-res images and spreads are available [here](#)

FOR INTERVIEWS OR FURTHER INFORMATION, PLEASE CONTACT:

Gemma Finlay on behalf of PANZ, gemma@notablepr.co.nz

THE JUDGING PANEL:

Chloe Blades (Convenor) is a manager at Unity Books in Auckland, where she's been bookselling since 2017, and is also a Director on the Board of Booksellers New Zealand. Last year Chloe was on the PANZ Book Design Awards judging panel and recently organised and chaired a panel at Unity on AI and the future of creativity and design, alongside a BBC journalist, Data Analyst, and the Founder of Crane Brothers. She's an artist based in West Auckland, too, featuring in August's *Your Home and Garden* magazine with exhibitions coming up at Art in the Park and Titirangi's Upstairs Gallery.

Eva Charlton is a graphic designer based in Tāmaki Makaurau Auckland who specialises in design for the arts and culture sector. She currently works as Graphic Designer for design studio Extended Whānau and on independent projects, collaborating with artists, curators, and writers. Recent projects include the publications *Rewi: Ata Haere*, *Kia Tere* and *Ana Iti: What is that Salty Voice?* and the rebrand of Te Whare o Rehua Sarjeant Gallery in Whanganui. Eva previously worked as Graphic Designer for The Dowse Art Museum in Te Awakairangi Lower Hutt and holds a Bachelor of Design from Auckland University of Technology.

Dr Jo Bailey is a designer based in Te Whanganui-a-Tara Wellington. Her roots before emigrating to Aotearoa are in the UK. As a designer she is interested in 'good design' in all ways: functional, beautiful, equitable and inclusive. Her practice focuses on making complex information more accessible and engaging. That's frequently through graphic and book design (she has designed titles for many publishers in Aotearoa and beyond), and also science communication, which was the focus of her PhD research. She is an educator and researcher at Toi Rauwhāangi College of Creative Arts, Massey University, where she co-leads the Visual Communication Design programme. This is Jo's second time judging the PANZ Book Design Awards

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