

opens his eyes and heart to a wider world. Eddy's friendship does not solve all Daniel's problems, but he does, however, develop the perception and courage to look beyond himself and begins to negotiate new relationships within his family and with his peer group.

Bellan and its surrounding district has a widely varied, acutely observed and well-developed cast of wonderful characters – town dignitaries, rural workers, a group of elderly European migrants, and rough and tumble school kids who pick, bully and behave in a normally Neanderthal fashion – hiding their insecurities and afraid to show their softer sides. The rural setting is lovingly and intimately evoked – the landscape (and its inhabitants) as Daniel learns, can be peaceful, nurturing and beautiful or, at times, threatening and deadly dangerous. Atmosphere and mood are developed with great skill, reflecting Daniel's powerful emotions as he rides out his journey. Highly recommended for 12yrs upward. There are extensive teaching notes, written by the author on <http://www.panmacmillan.com.au/resources/SG-BurningEddyNotes.pdf> JS

**GREEN, Julia** *Blue Moon Puffin*, 2003 233pp \$14.95 pbk ISBN 0141315350 SCIS 1137404

Mia tells the story of her life in snapshots of memory balanced with events in the present. When she was six years old, the youngest of three girls, her mother left and her Dad has been working and caring for the girls. Mia is fifteen and the story unfolds via a series of dates, which helps keep the action and pace of the events in a context. Mia is pregnant and as the weeks pass, we are kept in touch with the progress of her pregnancy via descriptions of the growth and development of the baby from an old pregnancy book that Mia reads. The story closely follows Mia's confusion and fear as well as the sickness she experiences. She is unsure how to tell Will that their relationship has resulted in this pregnancy. Her best friend, Becky is her confidante and her refuge as she tries to make sense of her situation. The moon is a constant symbol throughout the story, and there is a series of dream like events which involve a little girl called Laine. The ending is hopeful and the themes of teenage pregnancy, boy/girl relationships and family interaction are explored sensitively. Suitable for older teenagers. JL

**GREIVE, Bradley Trevor** (illus.) *Poems by Young Australian 2003* Random House, 2003 95pp pbk \$12.95 ISBN 1740519116 SCIS 1150779

core of the soul and psyche that this collection of poems by young writers resonates so with the reader. The anthology is the result of the 1<sup>st</sup> Taronga Foundation Poetry

Prize established and promoted by Greive, who has been an Australian Book of the Year awardee. The poems come from all over Australia and have been selected from over 2000 entries in the competition. The results are such that the work burrows deep into all of us exploring what it means to be human on this planet. Written by 10 to 18 year olds they range from the funny to the sad, the personal to the universal but are never cliché ridden or flippant. The poems are enriched by the photography of Greive and it is only a pity that the quality of book presentation could not have been lifted with colour and fine paper. Age 10+ years. As the competition is ongoing we can expect more literary beauty in the years to come. For further information contact Jane Alexander at Random House on 0289239834 or the website, [www.tarongafoundation.com](http://www.tarongafoundation.com) JC

**HEARN, Lian** *Grass for his Pillow* Hodder (Tales of the Otori), 2003 353pp \$29.95 ISBN 0733615635 SCIS 1145707

This novel, like its predecessor, is elegant and emotionally moving in style with a beauty and brutality that is rare in young adult writing. *Tales of the Otori* is to be a trilogy set in a mythical Japan somewhere in a time of war between great warrior clans. Takeo, the young adopted aristocrat, struggles to find his rightful place in his world as he is torn between the values of The Tribe, with their criminal code, the inherited value of the Hidden God and his sense of honour and class as a member of the Otari clan. Hearn has been able to capture, in English, the flavour of classical Japanese literary and cultural manner rich in characters and wide in landscape that must enrich all who read the book. Adventure, intrigue, murder and love combine to offer an unforgettable reading experience. Age 14+ years. JC

**HELIDONIOTIS, Kathy** *Totally Horse Mad* Banana Books (Banana Benders), 2003 246pp \$14.95 pbk ISBN 1876928948 SCIS 1151233

The front cover almost says it all – an eleven-year-old girl and her brown horse, their heads so close together, so obviously loving each other. Ashleigh is in a dream on page one, dreaming about winning the Olympic horse event on her horse Princess. Her riding instructor tells her to wake up from la-la land and get back to reality – ie waiting for the start of the Under-twelve team barrel race. From there on the whole book is filled with Ashleigh's passion to own her own horse, not a dream horse like Princess, and to ride in shows – and win. I imagine an endless number of eleven-year-old girls have the same dreams – so they will love this story of fairly large, easy-to-read typography that will keep them entranced to the very last page. It certainly took me back, vividly, to my own horse-obsessed growing-up years. Ashleigh and Honey, the horse she finally gets as her very own, go through endless episodes of excitement and disaster, winning and losing,

amongst friends and enemies, as they work together towards Ashleigh's winning ambitions. A wonderful title – that is exactly what it is! – *Totally Horse Mad*. PG

**HIAASEN, Carl** *Hoot* Macmillan, 2002 276pp \$14.95 pbk ISBN 0330415298 SCIS 1107278

Roy Eberhardt has just moved from Montana to Florida. He knows it's difficult to make new friends, but he's working on it. While Roy is being mashed by a bully on the school bus, he spots the running boy from the window. He jumps off and tries to follow him but is warned off by Beatrice, the boy's step-sister. Beatrice becomes an unlikely ally as Roy insists on finding out what the running boy is up to – an environmental crusade to save the little burrowing owls from a pancake house building erection.

This book combines humour, mystery and conservation in an intriguing tale. It doesn't shy away from domestic un-bliss, homelessness and bullying, treating these subjects with respect. Its story of big company versus rare species is convincing and its denouement shows what can happen if individual voices are heard together. Recommended for 10–14 years. PH

**HILL, Anthony** (text) **Andrew McLean** (illus.) *The Shadow Dog* Viking, 2003 86pp \$19.95 ISBN 0670041130 SCIS 1154492



The grief we feel when a much loved dog dies is the price we pay for the unconditional love and happiness that he or she has given us. This is a poignant biography of a beloved short-haired German pointer named Sebastian. Or Bas for short.

He gave back affection abundantly to the family who took in, albeit reluctantly, the miserably shivering pup who had been dumped near the animal pound. His only 'crime' was his colour. 'Black is not permitted' in pure-bred short-haired German pointers. It is required to be liver coloured or liver and white. Bas also wheedled his way into the good graces of old Sandy the golden retriever who was another refugee from the