

Miles Franklin Literary Award 2005
Shortlist

The Submerged Cathedral
Charlotte Wood
(Vintage, Random House)

'Set me as a seal on your heart, for love is stronger than death.'

Spanning many years, moving across Australia's vast landscapes and through some of Europe's great cities, *The Submerged Cathedral* is a beguiling, heartbreaking story of paradise and the fall, of sacrifice and atonement, and of sisterly love and rivalry.

Most of all, however, it is about an enduring and sacred love - a love stronger than death - and the journeys undertaken in its name.

Written in spare, haunting prose, this novel is a work of the highest literary merit, as well as a timeless love story that will enthrall readers.

The release of Charlotte Wood's acclaimed first novel, *Pieces Of A Girl*, marked her as a young writer of great promise; *The Submerged Cathedral* thrillingly confirms that promise with astonishing assurance and lyricism.

Charlotte Wood

Charlotte was born in Cooma, NSW, in 1965. She trained as a journalist with a cadetship on the local newspaper and then at Charles Sturt University, Bathurst, where she graduated with a Bachelor of Arts (Communication). She has worked as a freelance and part-time journalist and editor for many years, often in the health and medical press.

She started writing at university, and – with Vicki Hastrich (*Swimming with the Jellyfish*), Rebecca Hazel and Eileen Naseby – has been a member of a small weekly writing group for almost nine years. Her first novel *Pieces Of A Girl* was published in 1999.

For this work, Charlotte Wood was named one of the Sydney Morning Herald's Best Young Novelists in 2000. *Pieces Of A Girl*, was also shortlisted for the 2000 Dobbie Award and commended in the Victorian Premier's Literary Awards in the same year. *Pieces Of A Girl* also won the Jim Hamilton Award for an unpublished manuscript.

Charlotte has been closely supported over the years by Varuna – The Writers' House in the Blue Mountains of NSW; she now works occasionally with Varuna on various projects. In 2001 she was awarded an Australia Council for the Arts grant, which allowed her to travel overseas to research her novel *The Submerged Cathedral*. In 2002 she spent a month as a fellow at Arthur Boyd's Bundanon Artists Centre on the Shoalhaven River in NSW, where she continued work on the novel.

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Over the years she has taught many students in her popular one-day writing classes for beginner writers at the University of Sydney's Centre for Continuing Education, and also works occasionally as a one-to-one mentor with new fiction writers.

This year Charlotte enrolled in a Doctor of Arts degree at the University of Sydney. She lives in Sydney with her husband Sean.