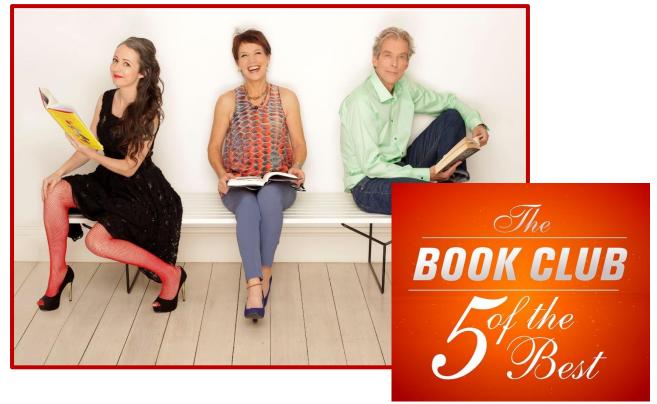
THE BOOK CLUB CHRISTMAS SPECIAL: FIVE OF THE BEST



ABC and iview -Tuesday December 19 at 8.30PM

Host Jennifer Byrne and regular guests Marieke Hardy and Jason Steger are joined by author and screenwriter Benjamin Law, and Wheeler Centre director Michael Williams, in the Book Club's one-hour end-of-year special, **FIVE OF THE BEST 2017**, to celebrate and discuss standout 2017 reads.

As the series comes to an end, it's time to celebrate a year of great reads... and to look be back through the archive at 11 years of Book Club guests, disputes, funny moments and in-depth reviews.

Jennifer's choice is the long-awaited *The Book of Dust* by Philip Pullman; Jason has chosen *The Restorer* by Australian author Michael Sala, and set at the time of the 1989 Newcastle earthquake; Marieke looks to her unofficial "life coach", Robert Dessaix, for *The Pleasures of Leisure*. Benjamin brings *Why I'm No Longer Talking to White People About Race* by Reni Eddo-Lodge; and rounding out the list Michael recommends is the Man Booker Prize-nominated *Home Fire*, by Kamila Shamsie.

We'll also discover what other enthusiastic readers – children and booksellers – picked as their top books of 2017; and the big reveal -The Book Club's Audience Poll winners – *your* FIVE OF THE BEST.

Plus, Jimmy Barnes will perform live in the studio his emotive classic, Flame Trees.

Michael Williams is the Director of the Wheeler Centre for Books, Writing and Ideas in Melbourne. Previous host of ABC Radio National's *Blueprint for Living*, he now hosts *Talkfest* and is a regular guest on other ABC Radio and TV programs. He has written extensively for *The Guardian*, *The Age, Sydney Morning Herald, The Australian*.

Benjamin Law is a journalist, TV screenwriter, columnist and the author of two books: *The Family Law* (2010) and *Gaysia: Adventures in the Queer East* (2012), both of which were nominated for Australian Book Industry Awards. *The Family Law* is now an award-winning series on SBS. He was also an associate producer and researcher on the SBS feature documentary *Deep Water: The Real Story*, is the author on the current Quarterly Essay on Safe Schools and has a PhD in writing from QUT.

An ABC production; Executive Producer Jo Chichester; Producer Marie Davies. For interviews, please contact Peri Wilson on 02 8333 2263 or 0409 888 866 or Wilson.peri@abc.net.au