

Miles Franklin Literary Award 2009
Longlist

The Pages
Murray Bail

Text Publishing Melbourne Australia

What are the pages?

On a family sheep station in western New South Wales, a brother and sister work the property while their reclusive brother, Wesley Antill, spends years toiling away in one of the sheds, writing his philosophy.

Now he has died. Erica, a philosopher, is sent from Sydney to appraise his life's work. Accompanying her is Sophie, who needs distracting from a string of failed relationships. Her field is psychoanalysis.

The pages Wesley wrote lie untouched in the shed, just as he left them. What will they reveal? Was he a genius? These turn out to be only a couple of the questions in the air. How will the visit change the lives of Erica and Sophie?

The Pages is a beguiling meditation on friendship and love, on men and women, on landscape and the difficulties of thought itself, by one of Australia's greatest novelists, the author of the much-loved *Eucalyptus*.

About Murray Bail

Murray Bail's *Eucalyptus* is the winner of the Commonwealth Writers Prize 1999, the 1999 Miles Franklin Literary Award and the ASAL Gold Medal for Literature 1999.

He was born in Adelaide in 1941. After spending several years in Bombay and five years in London he now lives in Sydney.

His short stories have been published widely both in Australia and the UK and have also appeared in the *New Yorker* magazine.

His first novel, *Homesickness*, won two major literary awards: the 1980 National Book Council Award for Australian literature and the 1980 Age Book of the Year Award. Other titles include *The Drover's Wife and Other Stories*, *The Faber Book of Contemporary Australian Short Stories*, and non-fiction title *Ian Fairweather*. *Holden's Performance* was the winner of the 1988 Vance Palmer Prize for Fiction. *Eucalyptus*, published in 1998 won the Commonwealth Writers Prize 1999, The Miles Franklin Literary Award 1999 and was shortlisted for 1999 Victorian Premier's Literary Awards (fiction). His latest book is *The Pages*.