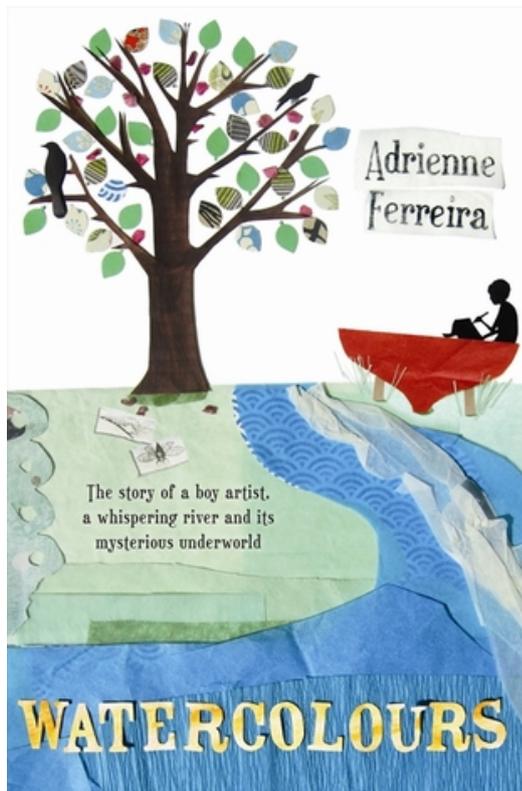


Watercolours

By Adrienne Ferreira



Eleven-year-old Novi just wants to blend in, but it isn't easy when you're named after a type of silkworm and have the most eccentric family in town. A descendant of the first Italian silk-growers in northern New South Wales, he is an obsessive artist with a habit of drawing the stories of the people around him and a secret conviction that the river murdered his grandfather.

Dom Best is new in town, new to teaching and alarmed to discover that one of his young students is gifted. Hindered by inexperience, he must overcome his lack of confidence to support Novi's talent, encouraging the boy to unleash the secrets of his unusual family history through his art. Little does he know the devastating consequences his involvement in Novi's life will have.

Drawing on the little-known history of silk growing in Australia, *Watercolours* explores how people are shaped by their links to the past and their relationship to the place in which they live. This surprising and poignant debut novel explores the struggle between art and

ensorship, personal faith and self-doubt, and celebrates the beautiful clarity and colour a child's eye-view can bring to the adult world.

Notes on the inspiration for *Watercolours*



'I was lazing around Sicily eating fresh figs when the idea for a novel struck me — about a boy who explores his small town and family history through drawings, and how the interpretations of this particularly sensitive and observant child seem spooky and then threatening to those in the community with something to hide.'

Searching for a physical characteristic for the landscape of my novel, I discovered the little-known story of the silk growers of Australia. My research into this nineteenth-century national experiment, and the community of New Italy, south of Lismore, led to my invention of the town of Morus, the proposed silk capital of Australia that turns to boutique mulberry wine production, a community with tightly wound secrets set to unravel.'

Book Review:

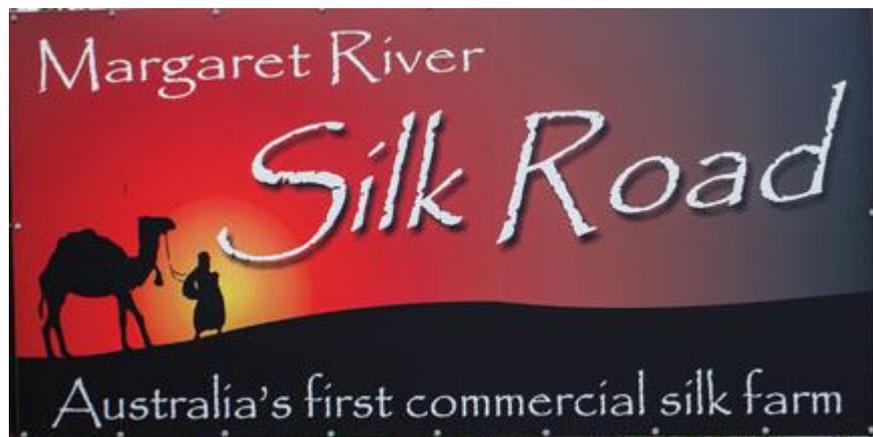
Readings

<https://bit.ly/37K6HiS>

Silk Farming in Australia

Australia's first and only commercial silk farm is in Western Australia's Margaret River,

<https://bit.ly/3AJHxxp>



Making Silk – an Australian history

Royal Agricultural Society of NSW

<https://bit.ly/3iNxYY4>

The Former Mount Alexander Silkworm Farm is the only documented site with substantial evidence of silkworm farming in Victoria, and one of only two in Australia.

<https://bit.ly/3yRdzak>