



Ben Mantle's *The Best Birthday Present Ever!* was named as the top book.

Ben's birthday book is voted the best

AWARD: Dundee primary pupils are impressed as they crown author their anniversary winner

CIARAN SNEDDON

The EU referendum wasn't the only important vote taking place in Dundee last week.

Primary school pupils from across the city also made the tricky decision as to who should be crowned the winner of this year's Dundee Picture Book Award.

Celebrating its 10th anniversary, the competition is judged entirely by P1 and P6 classes from schools right across Dundee.

Around 800 pupils read a shortlist of picture books before choosing a winner.

This year's prize went to Ben Mantle, pictured right, for his 2015 book *The Best Birthday Present Ever!*

Author and illustrator Ben said: "I was really pleased to win the award, particularly as it is encouraging children to read picture books."

"Some people might say being 11 is a bit old for picture books, but I think they're a great way of getting people to read. I still love picture books – you are never too old for them."

As part of the judging process, pupils in P6, aged 10-11, read the books to children in primary one, aged 4-5.

Elaine Hallyburton, senior library and information officer for the school library service, said: "Year in, year out, we are always amazed at how dedicated and professional the hosts are, and how engaged the audience is."

"The fact we are in our 10th year is testament to how valued this project is in our schools. We can't thank the P6 pupils enough for all their hard



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**AWARD WINNER
BEN MANTLE**

work, sharing the short-listed books with the P1s, organising the votes and putting up displays in their local community libraries.

"The feedback is always extremely positive from the schools, authors and illustrators. They are usually in awe of the children and ultimately know the winner is selected by the children themselves with no influence from adults. This is what has made the award so special in Dundee."

All of the P6 classes contribute to the creation of an exhibition, promoting the titles, which is displayed in their local library.

The award is a partnership initiative between the council's Children & Families Service and Leisure & Culture.

The winner receives £1,000, with a prize of £250 for each of the runners-up.

The awards ceremony, which took place in the Whitehall Theatre last Wednesday, was hosted by P6 pupils from Craigiebarns Primary School.

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LOCAL BULLETIN

ART

DCA loads up packed exhibition programme for summer

Dundee Contemporary Arts has announced a packed programme of events to accompany its summer exhibitions *Small Wars* and *CD-ROMS*.

The exhibitions explore the cultural impact of computer games, with playable artwork and installations by artists Eddo Stern and Theresa Duncan. These have been programmed and curated in partnership with Dr William Huber, head of the centre for excellence in computer games at Abertay University.

The programme begins with an Exhibition Introduction on Friday July 15 when there will be the opportunity to hear about the work on show from exhibiting artist Eddo Stern.

Other events include DCA's popular Family Art Lab, which will provide young visitors with the chance to join local games designers to explore the works

in the gallery and create their own handmade games settings using paint and collages.

During the final weekend of the exhibition, DCA will hold the latest in its series of drop in gaming events.

Visitors will be able to try a range of new games before they're widely available, speak to local games designers and let them know what they think after trying out their work.

To coincide with the exhibitions, the DCA Cinema will screen the 1980s sci-fi cold war thriller *War Games* after a drop-in session.

The movie stars Matthew Broderick as a young computer whizz-kid who accidentally connects to a top-secret super-computer, then inadvertently starts the countdown to *World War Three*.

Small Wars and *CD-ROMS* run from Saturday July 16 to Sunday September 4.

MONIKIE

Animator bringing dragons to life



College graduate Justin Dolan at work in *Monikie*.

A D&A College animation graduate is taking his work back to nature this summer.

Justin Dolan, who just completed his HND in animation at the college this year, is working with Edinburgh theatre company *Vision Mechanics* on augmented reality show *Dragon Matrix*, the follow-up to last year's *DragonQuest* at *Monikie* Country Park.

COMEBACK

Dundee's Marble Boy Clothing is coming back into fashion

A Dundee-based clothing company that was forced to shut up shop has announced it is returning with a new line.

Marble Boy Clothing was launched two years ago and enjoyed success, including being picked up by TK Maxx.

However, the fashion line had to cease trading, citing the reason as a lack of funding and support for the scheme.

But chief executive Jamie Shankland is now developing a fresh line of streetwear.

He said: "The stock for the new line has just arrived. We're going to get it all photographed over the next week and it will be available online."

"There are big things coming on the new website."