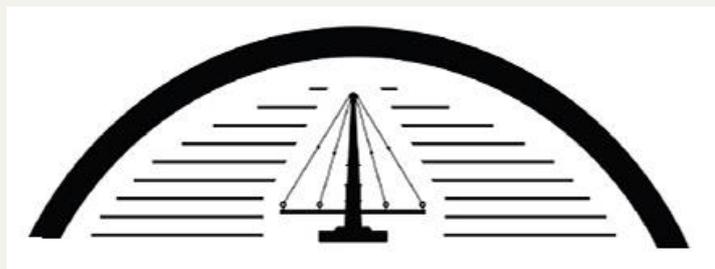


A Haunted Land

First published by Macmillan, 1957.

A Haunted Land was the first novel written by Randolph Stow. It was authored while he was an undergraduate at the University of New South Wales and was published by the time he was twenty-one. Set in a remote location in Western Australia it is about abnormal family relationships. Andrew, the patriarch of Malin Station, has lost his wife to tuberculosis. His disintegrating relationship with his children, and their relationship to one another, leads to insanity and eventually murder. The course of destruction of the family is encompassed by the land and the life it supports, by the sparse social occasions and by the tainted shadow of uncontrolled evil.



A Haunted Land

A Haunted Land was Randolph Stow's first novel. This novel began his exploration of the territory he would make his own: a fascinated unease with the landscape of his native Western Australia; the failure to sustain love; and the alienation of the self from a psychic other that it fears but cannot escape. This novel evokes his native landscape with a spare and resonant clarity that few other Australian Writers have matched.

From the article: *Vanishing Wunderking: the great oeuvre of the enigmatic Stow* by Anthony Hassall.

A Haunted Land is an ambitious first novel in which Stow combines naturalistic observation of the Western Australian scene with a dreamlike story that is violent, passionate, and surreal. The combination made a good many critics, used to more stereotyped novels, uneasy, and they puzzled over its missing of modes, its lack of consistent "realism" and its affinity to "dramatic poetry" and "romance". What they encountered was a spare, primary narrative which built to a bizarre yet inevitable climax.

From the book: *Strange Country: A Study of Randolph Stow* by Anthony Hassall.

It is not a major, work, and of Stow's five novels it is the slightest, but at the same time it has merit. Stow tells a good story; he creates a fictional world as self-contained and as compelling in its own way as a Faulkner or a Bronte world. And he tells his story in a highly imagistic prose that provides in itself a reward for the reading.

From the book: *Randolph Stow* by Ray Willbanks