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Writers
Festival**

**where
stories
live**

7–9 May 2021 | State Library of Queensland | Book now bwf.org.au

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BWF acknowledges the generous support of our donors, with special thanks to the Taylor Family.

We are a not-for-profit organisation and rely on the generosity of donors and partners to support our aim of bringing stories to life in Queensland communities.

Brisbane Writers Festival is supported by the Queensland Government through Arts Queensland.

Brisbane Writers Festival is assisted by the Australian Government through the Australian Council, its arts funding and advisory body.

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and Board



Join the conversation #BWF21



Minister's statement

Our stories are the most powerful thing about us, so it is with great anticipation that the Brisbane Writers Festival returns in 2021 for its 59th year. This is one of

Queensland's longest running festivals, which brings people together to explore ideas, tell our stories and generate employment opportunities for local talent.

This year's program is a celebration of Queensland storytellers featuring home-grown wordsmiths with international profiles such as Kate Morton, Trent Dalton, Christine Jackman, Ellen van Neerven and many more.

A program highlight includes the popular schools program Word Play, which will be presented as part of the festival's online offerings, alongside other events featured at the State Library of Queensland precinct.

The festival's dual digital and physical delivery offers an opportunity for more Queenslanders to be involved in the rich and diverse program of events.

The Palaszczuk Government's ongoing support for the Brisbane Writers Festival recognises the crucial role that the arts play in our lives and reinforces the social and economic value of the arts sector, which each year injects \$8.5 billion into the State's economy and supports more than 92,000 Queensland jobs.

I encourage everyone to participate in this year's Brisbane Writers Festival where you will be informed, enlightened and entertained by some of our best writers and thinkers.

The Honourable Leeanne Enoch MP

Minister for Communities and Housing
Minister for Digital Economy and Minister for the Arts

CEO statement

The Brisbane Writers Festival is back in. Back in after a challenging year in which we were unable to hold onsite, in person events. We are back in with a great program of authors, poets, artists and thinkers. We are back in with stories that speak to our past, present and future. We are back in with all that makes the Brisbane Writers Festival a brilliant celebration of the written and spoken word.

This year our program includes many of our local literary luminaries. Queensland has produced many extraordinary writers and inspired many wonderful Australian stories. Brisbane Writers Festival has an important role in supporting that cultural legacy.

In the lead up to our 60th anniversary in 2022, we have introduced a number of new initiatives, including the hybrid digital and in-person program you're reading now; our First Word/Last Word events, which invite an Indigenous artist of note to deliver the opening and closing words of the festival; and our Author/Editor Series which puts authors and their editors in conversation to discuss their professional relationship through the process of publishing from ideation to printing.

We are also proud to partner with Braille House, to bring our program to Australians who are blind or who have low vision. This partnership creates new accessibility options, including a screen-reader-friendly digital program, and a printed braille program. We invite you to help us support the work of Braille House by adding a \$2 donation with your ticket purchase.

And there is more to come. On closing night we will be announcing some exciting upcoming initiatives and programs that will be integrated into our 60th anniversary Festival in 2022. Join us.

Sarah Runcie

Chief Executive Officer





Guest Curator's statement

We've found ourselves in an era of survival.

A global pandemic has upended how we live. Ancient ecologies have been incinerated by bushfires so fierce, they've rewritten our understanding of disasters. Economies are in free-fall. Democracy is in crisis. White supremacy is on the rise. We're facing factual collapse.

And yet, we do have an antidote in all of this: knowledge.

First Nations knowledge spanning back over 65,000 years of how to survive on the most hostile continent. Knowledge of our migrant ancestors about how to adapt to new ways of living. Knowledge of scientists and thinkers about what's needed to turn the dial – structurally, and within ourselves. Knowledge from people on the frontlines of war and death, revealing insights into how we must live.

With so much at stake, despair is understandable, but simply isn't an option. I hope these five sessions equip you with the knowledge not only to survive, but to forge a better future alongside each other.

Benjamin Law

2021 Guest Curator

For our 2021 program, Benjamin Law has curated five events around the theme of 'survival'.

Changing How We Think to Survive – see page 15

As much as the world must change in order to survive, how can we change our interior worlds to build resilience?

Stories from the Frontline of Survival – see page 17

Journalist Sophie McNeill tells the human stories of devastation and hope behind the headlines - of children, families and refugees, of valiant doctors, steadfast dissidents and Saudi women seeking asylum.

Remixing the World to Save Ourselves – see page 18

More than ever, we are in desperate need for our economy, society, politics, culture and infrastructure to change – and fast. But is this possible?

What Our Migrant Families Survived – see page 20

Half of Australians are either first or second generation migrants. Every one of those stories is a tale of survival against the odds.

The World's Biggest Survival Story – see page 21

With Australia now in medical, ecological and economic crisis, what insights from First Nations survival illuminate how we all might survive the future?

Tickets

Main Festival

Single event (on-site)

\$23 full / **\$17** concession / **\$15** Festival Friends

Single event (online)

\$15 full / **\$12** concession / **\$10** Festival Friends

5 event pass

\$100 full / **\$85** concession / **\$75** Festival Friends

Online Events Season Pass (save 70%)

\$200 full / **\$170** concession / **\$150** Festival Friends

Golden ticket

\$400 full online program, opening and closing address, 5 on-site events

LoveYA

Free registrations essential, books available to purchase with free ticket booking to pick up at venue. The **Love YA** events will also be live streamed on the day.

Special Events

Individually priced in program

Terms and Conditions

Brisbane Writers Festival reserves the right to alter the program and artists, and to cancel sessions where necessary. No refunds or exchanges are possible once bookings are complete and payment received unless the Festival has cancelled the session. Program details are correct at the time of printing. Proof of concession may be required when booking your event and on entry to sessions.

The Marion Taylor Opening Night Gala, Workshops, 20 Pages in 20 Minutes, BWF Closing Address, and individually priced special events are excluded from Multi-Event Passes. Passes cannot be redeemed in whole or part for these events.

Full Terms and Conditions are available at bwf.org.au

Watching our online events

In 2021, Brisbane Writers Festival is, for the first time, a hybrid festival of both online and on-site events. We have worked very hard to make sure you can still get the full BWF experience, with new ticketing options and on-demand viewing of online content during and after the Festival.

Our online events can be watched through your BWF account on our website – this is the same account you use to purchase tickets and make donations to us. When you login to our website, you will see a tab in your account called “On Demand”. From this tab, you can see and watch all purchased content.

Our whole digital program will become available following our Marion Taylor Opening Night Gala on Friday, May 7, and will be available to watch for four weeks (until 11 pm, June 2).

For more information on how to watch, visit bwf.org.au/digital

Multi-Event Passes

This year we are offering Multi-Event Passes, which can be redeemed for both online and on-site events (excluding special events). We have created new ticketing options to give you the most flexibility in seeing as much of our program as you can.

Please note that you **must still book a ticket for events by redeeming an event credit from your multi-event pass** – passes cannot be used for entry into an event at the door.

For information on how to redeem Multi-Event Passes for tickets, visit bwf.org.au/usingpasses



BWF & Braille House

Brisbane Writers Festival is committed to supporting access to the world of reading for all Australians. In 2021, BWF has partnered with Braille House, giving you the opportunity to support Queenslanders who are blind or have low vision. Braille House is based in Brisbane and provides braille books, offers tactual literacy tutoring for children and adults, works with

government and non-government organisations to create tactual maps of public spaces, and renders a range of other accessibility services.

Our 2021 program is available in both hardcopy braille and as an ereader-compatible epub file. For more information, visit bwf.org.au/accessibility

In 2021, you can add a \$2 donation to Braille House with every ticket purchase, which will help fund services for blind and vision-impaired Australians.

For more information about Braille House services, visit braillehouse.org.au

How to book

We strongly advise booking ahead of time via our website or by phone.

Online: bwf.org.au

Phone: 07 3216 0694, 10am-4pm Monday to Friday.

In person: The BWF Box Office opens one hour before the first event each day. The Box Office is located in the Knowledge Walk on level one at the State Library of Queensland.

Donate to BWF

Brisbane Writers Festival is made possible every year through the generous support of our donors.

If you are as passionate about celebrating books, writing, and ideas as we are, we'd love you to consider making a donation.

We want to make Brisbane Writers Festival accessible to as many people who love books and writing as we can and invite you to help us make this a reality. Your donation could help a child access our Word Play program, give an emerging Brisbane author the chance to present at the Festival, or provide a braille copy of the program to a blind or low-vision Queensland.

Whether you can give a little or a lot, any donation to Brisbane Writers Festival over \$2 is tax deductible. Every participant in

Brisbane Writers Festival thanks you for your support, and so do we.

Become a Festival Friend

Embrace everything Brisbane Writers Festival has to offer by becoming a Festival Friend! Find out more at bwf.org.au/friends

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Special Events



First Word

Friday, May 7, 4pm-5pm | Queensland Terrace

Starting this year, the **First Word** and **Last Word** of every Brisbane Writers Festival will be delivered by an Indigenous artist. These events reflect the vibrant legacy of Indigenous Australian storytelling, and recognise the importance of putting First Nations voices first.

Ellen van Neerven is a writer of fiction, poetry and non-fiction. They are of Mununjali (Yugambah language group) and Dutch heritage, and often write about Indigeneity and gender. They have won or been shortlisted for numerous awards, including receiving the inaugural Quentin Bryce Award.

This **free** event features a traditional smoking ceremony and Ellen's opening words.

For Last Word, see page 13



Marion Taylor Opening Night Gala

Friday, May 7, 7pm-8pm | Queensland Art Gallery

Join us in the spectacular Queensland Art Gallery for the **Marion Taylor Opening Address**, drinks, and a formal dinner.

Robert Dessaix opens the 2021 Brisbane Writers Festival in this very special event, exploring deep and complex questions – of life, of our inner selves, and of our place in the world in time – in his very own poignant, lyrical, inimitable style.

At a moment in time where we consider what comes next, in a multitude of ways, our opening address sets the stage for a truly special Festival program.

Robert's works have won and been shortlisted for a range of prestigious Australian prizes, with a constant theme of encouraging us to revel in our lives, to embrace opportunity, and dream of possibilities.

With thanks to the Taylor family.

\$150 full, **\$130** concession, **\$110** Festival Friends

Proudly supported by



Mother's Day High Tea with Kate Morton

Sunday, May 9, 10am-12pm | Customs House, 399 Queen Street

Celebrate Mother's Day with international bestselling author Kate Morton over an exquisite high tea at Customs House.

In this special event, Kate will be discussing her life as a writer, her love of storytelling, her inspirations, and her motivations. Kate has written six novels that capture the imaginations of readers and spirit them away into immersive story worlds.

The stunning, Heritage-listed Customs House welcomes you with a glass of champagne, and seats you in the beautiful Long Room for a high tea with a touch of French elegance. Ribbon sandwiches, canapés, and scones are all included.

Treat mum to a truly wonderful Mother's Day with the delightful Kate Morton in conversation with Michaela Kalowski.

\$120 full, **\$95** concession, **\$80** Festival Friends





All I Have Is A Voice Poetry Showcase

Saturday, May 8, 3pm-5pm | bean. café + bar, Laneway Basement, 181 George St

All I Have is a Voice is a captivating afternoon of performances from some outstanding established and emerging poets and spoken word performers. Each in their own way, our speakers explore how we got where we are, and critically, where we go from here.

Featuring Luke Best, Anna Jacobson, Rebecca Jessen, Ellen van Neerven, David Stavanger, Samuel Wagan Watson, and host, Shastra Deo.

Arrive early to get a coffee or a cocktail, and some food from the kitchen. Doors open at 3pm, for a 3:45pm start.

This is an all-ages event. Visit the event page at bwf.org.au for information on getting to the venue. Please note, this venue is not wheelchair accessible.

\$35 full, **\$30** concession, **\$25** Festival Friends



2040 Film Screening with Damon Gameau

Saturday, 8 May, 12pm | Palace Barracks Cinema, 61 Petrie Tce

What will the world look like in 2040? More importantly, what could the world look like if we embraced the best climate solutions available to us? This groundbreaking documentary looks to the future with an optimistic message about climate change.

Director and star Damon Gameau will hold a Q&A session after the screening.

Copies of Gameau's book 2040 are available to purchase with your ticket, at the event, or in the Festival Bookshop at State Library.

For more information, visit bwf.org.au

\$30 full, **\$28** concession, **\$25** Festival Friends



Darkness is Golden: Death Meditation

Saturday, May 8, 5pm-6pm | Auditorium 1

For those ready to make space in their life for what is truly important, to find light in the darkness, and to trust your inner voice. Mary Hoang is the head psychologist and founder of The Indigo Project, Australia's largest and most progressive psychology practice.

This session includes a 30-minute live, guided, immersive Death Meditation. This is a powerful, moving session exploring mortality, impermanence and the fragility of the human experience. Challenging, arresting, and unique, the Death Meditation guides participants through an experience of their own death, and the death of someone they love. This emotionally stirring journey through the darkness leaves people with a solemn appreciation of life and the ones that they love.

Death Meditation is an emotional experience that may not be suitable for people who are recently bereaved. Please consider if this event is right for you

\$40 full, **\$38** concession, **\$35** Festival Friends





Closing Address and Last Word

Sunday, May 9, 4pm-6pm | The Edge Auditorium

Christine Jackman has spent her career as an investigative journalist observing, examining, and writing about our world at a frantic pace. We must, however, make time to pause... to breathe... to introspect. With an enquiring and analytical mind, Christine seeks these moments of quiet in our busy world to ask, where to from here?

Following their **First Word** address, Ellen van Neerven delivers the **Last Word** of the Brisbane Writers Festival, looking ahead to our 60th anniversary in 2022. Ellen closes our program with a First Nations perspective on prominent themes and ideas from our Festival conversations.

\$45 full, **\$42** concession, **\$38** Festival Friends

For First Word, see page 8

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UQP



Saturday

FESTIVAL HIGHLIGHT



The Climate Cure

10am-11am, The Edge Auditorium

In the wake of megafires and COVID19, humanity must now choose between catastrophe and survival. Scientist, author and 2007 Australian of the Year Tim Flannery offers an action plan for our future as he speaks to this time of reckoning.

Tim Flannery in conversation with Hilary Bambrick

The Three Burials of Lotty Kneen

10am-11am, Auditorium 2

After her grandmother Lottie's death, author Krissy Kneen set out to answer the questions Lottie refused to answer. Beginning with Lottie's girlhood in Slovenia and Egypt, Krissy's exploration revealed the extraordinary stories of more than one remarkable woman and an understanding of her grandmother's restless spirit.

Krissy Kneen in conversation with Kristina Olsson

Author/Editor Showcase

10:15am-11:15am, QAG Theatre

Join our accomplished panel as they discuss the unique, complex (and sometimes fraught) relationship between author and editor, including the issues and challenges that arise and how solutions are found.

Panel: Grace Lucas-Pennington, Catherine Milne, Anne-Marie Te Whiu
Chair: Ashley Hay

The Believer

11am-12pm, Auditorium 1

Sarah Krasnostein examines how we hold our beliefs against the hardest of odds and shows us encounters with love.

Sarah Krasnostein in conversation with Susan Forde

Bila Yarrudhanggalangdhuray

11am-12pm, kuril dhagun

Based on a true story, *Bila Yarrudhanggalangdhuray (River of Dreams)* is an epic story of love, loss and belonging. It's the latest work from Dr Anita Heiss, whose writing career has encompassed non-fiction, commercial women's fiction, historical fiction and works for children. A proud member of the Wiradjuri Nation of New South Wales, and a self-described 'creative disruptor', Anita's career as a writer is as unique as it is fascinating.

Dr Anita Heiss in conversation with Fiona Stager

Literary Lion Tamers

11:30am-12:30pm, QAG Theatre

With his unique and entertaining blend of memoir, biography, and literary detective work, Craig Munro recreates the lives and careers of a group of renowned Australian editors and their authors in a narrative spanning from the 1890s to the 1990s.

**Craig Munro in conversation
with Adam Suckling**

Griffith Review: States of Mind

12pm-1pm, Auditorium 2

How do the stories we tell influence the lives we lead and the lives we create through fiction, poetry and song? How do we bring the internal lives of characters to life – and how do the internal lives of those we know, and those we imagine, inspire and feed creative work? Loki Liddle, Kathryn Heyman and David Stavanger – all contributors to *Griffith Review 72: States of Mind* – join GR editor Ashley Hay to explore these ideas and more.

**Panel: Loki Liddle, Kathryn Heyman,
David Stavanger**
Chair: Ashley Hay

Changing How We Think to Survive

12pm-1pm, The Edge Auditorium

As much as the world must change in order to survive, how can we change our interior worlds to build resilience? In a world full of noise, what does personal transformation look like? And what sustains us when the world goes dark, in this one wild and precious life?

**Panel: Christine Jackman, Mary Hoang,
Sarah Wilson**
Chair: Sophie Cunningham

Biting the Clouds

1pm-2pm, kuril dhagun

Dr Fiona Foley addresses the inherent silences, errors and injustices from the perspective of her people, the Badtjala of K'gari (Fraser Island). *Biting the Clouds* is a confronting and provocative examination of the little-known colonial-era practice of paying Indigenous workers in opium, with the aim of making Aboriginals a compliant source of labour - and the 'solution' of displacing them to K'gari.

**Dr Fiona Foley in conversation
with Cheryl Leavy**

FESTIVAL HIGHLIGHT



We Need to Talk About Mum & Dad

10am-11am, Queensland Terrace

Jean Kitson has a conversation that so many find difficult in her warm and practical guide to supporting parents as they age. From how to navigate government bureaucracy while staying sane, to supporting their health and well-being, Jean shares heartfelt stories and offers clear facts to help make an often-difficult time as positive as possible.

Jean Kittson in conversation with Kelly Higgins-Devine



Parenting Your Parents

2pm-3pm, The Edge Auditorium

It can be hard to prepare for the moment when we start parenting our parents. The changing dynamic can be difficult for both parent and child. For most, this comes later in life, but for some, this can come much earlier than expected. Jean Kittson and Matt Okine explore these changes in their own poignant and delightfully funny ways.

Panel: Jean Kittson, Matt Okine

Chair: Kat Feeney

The Truth Hurts

1pm-2pm, Auditorium 1

In more than three decades practicing law, now as a barrister, Andrew Boe has represented Aboriginal deaths in custody on Palm Island and in Yuendumu, self-defence cases for women suffering years of domestic violence, to killers, murderers, and the occasional politician. These are the cases he cannot leave behind.

**Andrew Boe in conversation
with Susan Forde**

Love, Sweet Love!

2pm-3pm, Auditorium 2

The love we give to others often comes at the expense of the love we have for ourselves. Our panel will leave you delighted, empowered, uplifted, and inspired to make room for you - even if it doesn't always go to plan.

**Panel: Claire Christian, Frances Whiting
Chair: Edwina Shaw**



All Our Shimmering Skies

4pm-5pm, The Edge Auditorium

Trent Dalton's new novel is receiving rave reviews around the world. Join him as he chats with his friend and fellow writer Frances Whiting about his story of how young Molly Hook searches for light and magic against the harsh backdrop of wartime Darwin.

Trent Dalton in conversation with Frances Whiting

Stories from the Frontline of Survival

3pm-4pm, Auditorium 1

In *We Can't Say We Didn't Know*, acclaimed journalist Sophie McNeill tells the human stories of devastation and hope behind the headlines - of children, families and refugees, of valiant doctors, steadfast dissidents and Saudi women seeking asylum. Why is it more important than ever to bear witness and not look away? And what lessons can be gained from the frontline of survival?

Sophie McNeill in conversation with Benjamin Law

#knowledgekeepers Elders Panel

3pm-4pm, kuril dhagun

Inala has long been known as a significant place for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people, community and culture. Pride in our '4077' community manifests in many ways, including our postcode, memories, stories of the struggles, the success of 'Inala' people and the language and culture that we proudly proclaim as our own.

Join some of our #knowledgekeepers as they tell the stories that shaped the suburb of Inala and the stories of those who have championed, supported and celebrated the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community.

Chair: Dr Chelsea Bond

FESTIVAL HIGHLIGHT



Darkness is Golden

5pm-6pm, Auditorium 1

Mary Hoang is head psychologist and founder of The Indigo Project, Australia's largest and most progressive psychology practice. In this immersive session, Mary leads a 'death meditation' in which participants are guided through their own death and that of a loved one. It's an extraordinary experience for those ready to find light amid darkness and trust in their own voice.

Mary Hoang in conversation with Zenobia Frost

FESTIVAL HIGHLIGHT



Golden Age

7pm-8pm, Auditorium 1

Two of Australia's most respected writers reflect on growing older, the realities and philosophies of dying, and explore the possibilities of old age. These works are funny, poignant, and timeless.

Panel: Robert Dessaix, Charlotte Wood

Chair: Kat Feeney

Magic and Myth

4pm-5pm, Auditorium 2

An enlightening discussion of how myth, magic and a good fairy-tale help us live in the real world by pointing out the fundamental truths of the human experience.

Panel: Melissa Ashley, Tabitha Bird, Kathleen Jennings

Chair: Krissy Kneen

Remixing the World to Save Ourselves

6pm-7pm, The Edge Auditorium

More than ever, we are in desperate need for our economic, social, political, cultural and infrastructure to change – and fast. But is this possible? And if so, what does this look like? And what is the roadmap to getting there?

Panel: Tim Flannery, Thomas Mayor, Jess Scully

Chair: Damon Gameau

EH

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Evans and Hartshorn
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graphic design services to
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in 2021.



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Sunday

FESTIVAL HIGHLIGHT



The Golden Maze

10am-11am, Queensland Terrace

The bestselling author of *Saga Land* and *Ghost Empire* is back with an intriguing history of Prague. This is the story of the fairytale city at the heart of Europe from every conceivable angle.

Richard Fidler in conversation with Steve Austin

Never Say Die

10am-11am, Auditorium 2

Australian women's football rides high on the sporting landscape now, but that success has been one hundred years in the making. Women footballers have tackled prejudice and hostility, but their story is also one of community, endurance and success. This panel discusses and celebrates women's football and The Matildas.

Panel: Fiona Crawford, Rae Dower

Chair: Dr Lee McGowan

Flock

10am-11am, kuril dhagun

This wide-ranging and captivating anthology showcases both the power of First Nations writing and the satisfaction of a good short story. Curated by award-winning author Ellen van Neerven, *Flock* roams the landscape of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander storytelling,

bringing together voices from across the generations.

Panel: Melissa Lucashenko, Jasmin McGaughey

Chair: Ellen Van Neerven

Griffith Review: Remaking the Balance

11am-12pm, Auditorium 1

Griffith Review 71: Remaking the Balance contributors Chris Flynn, Sophie Cunningham and Nardi Simpson join GR editor Ashley Hay to talk rupture and resources: animal, vegetable, mineral, and more. What happens when a penguin's speech transcends anthropomorphism; when our capacities for hope are exercised like muscles; when trade is transformed into a generous exchange? How might these ideas—and more—change what we do with what we have?

Panel: Sophie Cunningham, Chris Flynn, Nardi Simpson

Chair: Ashley Hay



Fire Country

12pm-1pm, Queensland Terrace

Indigenous land management expert Victor Steffensen is working towards the revival of Indigenous fire practices, improving people's connection to country, and undertaking 'cool burns' to ameliorate the disastrous impacts of Australian bushfires on our landscape and environment.

Victor Steffensen in conversation with Rhianna Patrick

What Our Migrant Families Survived

11am-12pm, The Edge Auditorium

Half of Australians are either first or second generation migrants. Every one of those stories is a tale of survival against the odds. Four Australian novelists discuss the migrant families they've imagined into life, what real life stories they represent, and honour stories from their own family tree.

Panel: Yumna Kassab, Favel Parrett, Mirandi Riwoe

Chair: Krissy Kneen

Sweetness and Light

11:30am-12:30pm, Auditorium 2

What happens when two troubled souls meet on a train... one a conman with a dangerous past and the other a vulnerable seeker of spiritual guidance? In this conversation, award-winning author Liam Pieper discusses his latest novel and its themes of blurred boundaries between darkness and light, appearance and reality and virtue and corruption.

Liam Pieper in conversation with Benjamin Law

#knowledgekeepers Poetry Circle

12pm-1pm, Talking Circle

Join acclaimed Muninjali Yugambeh poet Ellen van Neervan, Elders and #knowledgekeepers from Inala as they tell their stories through poetry. Filled with healing and humour and told with heart, these poems will illustrate what life was like, 'back in the day' and honour the contribution made by Elders and #knowledgekeepers to the history of Inala and the wider Brisbane region.

Chair: Ellen van Neerven

Mary's Last Dance

1pm-2pm, Auditorium 1

When international ballet star Mary Li put aside her own ambition for the love of her child, it was part of a story as extraordinary and inspiring as it is beautiful. Join Mary as she reflects on ballet, fame, family and sacrifice and writing the memoir everyone is talking about.

Mary Li in conversation with Phil Brown

The Art of Short Story Writing

1pm-2pm, Auditorium 2

Short stories open a window into a fictional world for only a moment, so how can authors give life-changing experiences like grief and death the space they deserve in so few words? Accomplished short story writers Amanda O'Callaghan and Meg Vann discuss the craft of short-form fiction and how to make the most out of a limited word count.

Meg Vann and Amanda O'Callaghan, in conversation

Out of the Wreckage

2pm-3pm, Queensland Terrace

Our city was shaped, literally and metaphorically, around the Brisbane River. Join our panel as they discuss floods, loss, recovery and the unique spirit which keeps our city together through it all.

Panel: Margaret Cook, Jamie Simmonds
Chair: Kelly Higgins-Devine

Song of the Crocodile

2pm-3pm, kuril dhagun

Winner of the 2018 black&write Fellowship, Nardi Simpson's 'lightning' debut novel is a sweeping Australian saga of hardship and hope. Nardi discusses her story's themes of choice, change and our need to listen to

the land that sustains us all.

Nardi Simpson in conversation with Grace Lucas-Pennington

Mammoth

2:30pm-3:30pm, Auditorium 2

With our planet on the brink of calamitous climate change, Chris Flynn's extraordinary book *Mammoth* scrutinises humanity's role in the destruction of the natural world while also offering a message of hope. Discover why Chris chose a long-extinct animal to narrate this ambitious (mostly true) story about how a collection of prehistoric creatures came to be offered for sale in 2017.

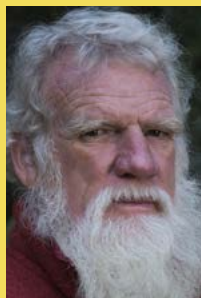
Chris Flynn in conversation with Tegan Taylor

Sorrow and Bliss

3pm-4pm, Auditorium 1

Set in London and Oxford, Meg Mason's latest novel is one woman's search for what's wrong with her even though the people who love her say she should just keep going. Described as a 'searing talent', Meg discusses how she used sharp wit, dark humour and sadness to create a deeply moving story.

Meg Mason in conversation with Holly Ringland



The World's Biggest Survival Story

1pm-2pm, The Edge Auditorium

First Nations people have survived – and thrived – on this continent for at least 65,000 years. According to the common law, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people have been here from 'time immemorial'. With Australia now in medical, ecological and economic crisis, what insights from First Nations survival illuminate how we all might survive the future?

Panel: Lisa Fuller, Thomas Mayor, Bruce Pascoe
Chair: Melissa Lucashenko

SATURDAY	Auditorium 1	Auditorium 2	The Edge Auditorium
9am–10am			
10am–11am		The Three Burials of Lotty Kneen p.14	The Climate Cure p.14
11am–12pm	The Believer p.14		
12pm–1pm		Griffith Review: States of Mind p.15	Changing How We Think To Survive p.15
1pm–2pm	The Truth Hurts p.16		
2pm–3pm		Love, Sweet Love! p.16	Parenting Your Parents p.16
3pm–4pm	Stories From The Frontline Of Survival p.17		
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7pm–8pm	Golden Age p.18		
SUNDAY	Auditorium 1	Auditorium 2	The Edge Auditorium
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1pm–2pm	Mary's Last Dance p.20	The Art of Short Story Writing p.21	The World's Biggest Survival Story p.21
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			...To The Bitter End p.34
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Mother's Day High Tea with Kate Morton — see page 10

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Online Events

Our online events are available for viewing at **bwf.org.au** through your ticketing account. All events will be available on demand after the Marion Taylor Opening Address on Friday, May 7 and will be available for four weeks.

Environment & Nature

Climate: A new story

Online event | bwf.org.au



It's time to take a fresh look at an old narrative. Join our panel as they consider how we can communicate urgency to a jaded world and use innovative solutions and the power of story to effect real change.

Panel: Damon

Gameau, Margaret Simons, Andrew Wear
Chair: *Antony Loewenstein*

Climate Anxiety

Online event | bwf.org.au

As the earth faces a critical moment in a climate emergency, our panel examines ideas around repurposing our anger, despair and grief into hope and courage. It's about re-arranging the messiness of

our climate anxiety into determination to act. This session will leave participants with a roadmap created by psychologists and climate scientists to build the emotional fortitude needed for the challenging journey ahead.

Panel: *Mary Hoang, Jonica Newby*
Chair: *Bec Mac*

Fire Flood Plague

Online event | bwf.org.au

2020 started with fires, followed by floods, and then a global pandemic which will have impacts felt for generations. This anthology, edited by Sophie Cunningham, is a collection of essays from a diverse Australian voices detailing what 2020 meant for them.

Panel: *James Bradley, Nyadol Nyuon, Kirsten Tranter*
Chair: *Sophie Cunningham*

Fifteen Million Years in Antarctica

Online event | bwf.org.au

Writing against the backdrop of Trump's America, extreme weather events, and scientists' projections for Earth's climate, Rebecca Priestley grapples with the truths we need to tell ourselves as we stand on a tightrope between hope for the planet, and catastrophic change.

Dr Rebecca Priestley in conversation with Hilary Bambrick

Land and Sea as Muse

Online event | bwf.org.au

Experience the telling of exquisite personal stories of connection with the natural world and our fundamental need for place in our lives. This session will celebrate slow, meticulous observation and deep appreciation for the earth.

Panel: Vicki Hastrich, Felicity Plunkett, Angela Rockel
Chair: Zenobia Frost

Loss of Species

Online event | bwf.org.au

The grief many people feel at the loss of so many species at such an alarming rate is real. Join our panel as they talk about our connection to the natural world, and how we can renew it as we work to shape future decisions.

Panel: Andrew Darby, Charlotte McConaghy, Sarah Pye
Chair: Dr Delia Falconer

The Politics of Climate

Online event | bwf.org.au

Decades of climate inaction are steering our world toward irreversible environmental, social, and economic change. Our panel examines the deep divide between science and politics, and explores a roadmap for a low-carbon future.

Panel: Ross Garnaut, Marian Wilkinson
Chair: Derryn Heilbuth

Feminism

High-flyers and Groundbreakers

Online event | bwf.org.au

Meet the inspiring women writing about female high-flyers, groundbreakers and trailblazers. Hear the stories of discovery and adventure of these incredible women.

Panel: Laura Elvery, Kathy Mexted
Chair: Holly Zwalf

Our Bodies, Their Battlefield

Online event | bwf.org.au



Christina Lamb has reported on wars for over thirty years. This harrowing account of sexual war crimes and the suffering of women gives voice to the heroic stories of women seeking justice. Bearing witness does not

guarantee it won't happen again, but it can take away any excuse that the world simply didn't know.

Christina Lamb in conversation with Lisa Millar

Reclaiming the Narrative

Online event | bwf.org.au

Bold stories of fierce women reclaiming, redefining, and rewriting the stories of who they are, and who they are going to be.

Panel: Claire Christian, Dr Anita Heiss, Maria Lewis
Chair: Aimée Lindorff

When Women Tell the Truth

Online event | bwf.org.au

Our panel issues a critical call for change. As more women speak up about gendered violence, sexual harassment, the law, the workplace, and inequality, our speakers ask the question: how can we as a society get better?

Panel: Jane Gilmore, Virginia Trioli, Stephanie Wood
Chair: Amie Kaufman

Women, Men & the Whole Damn Thing

Online event | bwf.org.au

David Leser explores the roots of misogyny, examines the historical injustices leading to #MeToo, and performs relentless self-reflection as a 'straight, white, middle-class male who has breathed the untroubled air of privilege' all his life.

David Leser in conversation with Jane Gilmore

First Nations

The Journey of the Uluru Statement from the Heart

Online event | bwf.org.au



Professor Megan Davis has been the leading constitutional lawyer working on Indigenous constitutional reform since 2011. She led the Referendum Council's work designing the deliberative constitutional dialogue process which led to her, along with other First Nations leaders, delivering the Uluru Statement of the Heart to the Australian people on 26 May 2017. Torres Strait Islander writer Thomas Mayor travelled the nation for a year to garner support for the Uluru Statement from the Heart. Mayor and Professor Davis are in conversation, discussing black activism, dissent, and mobilising community.

Thomas Mayor and Megan Davis, in conversation

Fire Front

Online event | bwf.org.au

Fire Front is a groundbreaking anthology of poetry and essays from leading Aboriginal writers and poets. Join some of the rising stars in Indigenous storytelling as they challenge and subvert the English Language and the poetic forms and traditions of the West.

Panel: Meleika Gesa-Fatafehi, Elizabeth Walker, Maggie Walsh, Evelyn Araluen
Chair: Alison Whittaker

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Society & Culture

Food Sovereignty

Online event | bwf.org.au

Our panel discusses the importance of food sovereignty, food (in)security, and the importance of ecologically and ethically-sourced ingredients.

Panel: Bronwyn Fredericks,
Dr John Newton, Clare Scrine
Chair: *Chrisanthi Demos*

Future Learners

Online event | bwf.org.au

How do we foster creativity and different models of learning for our coming generations? What are the most pressing policy issues for the education sector? And what do we consider as the 'purpose' of education? Presented with The Conversation.

Panel: Dr Paul Browning, Dr Bem Le Hunte,
Dr Alan Reid, Brett Wood
Chair: *Sasha Petrova, The Conversation*

Growing Up Disabled in Australia

Online event | bwf.org.au



Join Carly Findlay and three authors who contributed to this anthology as they discuss their individual and shared experiences of disability, ableism and invisibility.

Panel: Emma di
Bernardo, Anna Whateley, Todd Winther
Chair: *Carly Findlay*

It's a Numbers Game

Online event | bwf.org.au

The future of our world is often discussed on moral, emotional or philosophical terms. But our society is saturated in numbers, from demographic statistics to accounting figures. The ways we think of numbers have driven business thinking and social change for centuries. Our panel analyses the role numbers have in determining the future of our world.

Panel: Dr Liz Allen, Jane Gleeson-White
Chair: *Misha Ketchell, The Conversation*

Moonlite

Online event | bwf.org.au

The true and epic story of Captain Moonlite —preacher, soldier, bank robber, escapee, and, in all probability, Australia's first gay bushranger.

**Garry Linnell in conversation with
Rochelle Jackson**

Net Privacy

Online event | bwf.org.au

Every moment of our lives is tracked and monitored, while our most private selves are collected, collated, and sold. How much do we understand of the political, social and philosophical implications of the algorithm? What can be done to avoid a dystopian future?

**Sacha Molitorisz in conversation
with Dr Nic Carah**

One Day I'll Remember This

Online event | bwf.org.au

Fans of Helen Garner will love this session. In her published diaries, Helen is unfiltered, unexpurgated, and unconstrained. These volumes reveal the ideas of one of Australia's finest writers bubbling to the surface.

Helen Garner in conversation with Ashley Hay

Phosphorescence

Online event | bwf.org.au



How do we hold on to happiness in our darkest days? How do we create meaning in the world around us? Join Julia Baird as she explores joy, awe, and wonder.

Dr Julia Baird in conversation with Juliet Rieden

Silent Battles

Online event | bwf.org.au

Mental health is a critical public health issue. Our panel discusses the impact of Australia's mental health crisis and the importance of accepting vulnerability, building trust, and achieving resilience.

Panel: Dr Paul Browning, Mary Hoang, Shannon Molloy

Chair: Christine Jackman

The Altar Boys

Online event | bwf.org.au

Suzanne Smith is a six-time Walkley Award-winning investigative reporter who exposes the widespread and organised clerical abuse of children in Newcastle, NSW.

This is the story of the people who fought for justice in the face of institutionalised complicity and societal denial.

Suzanne Smith in conversation with Susan Forde

The Anxiety of Parenthood

Online event | bwf.org.au

Why does your teenage daughter 'hate' you? How do you raise a boy to be compassionate and decent in a culture of toxic masculinity? How do you manage contradictory advice and expectations around parenting? Justin Coulson and Rob Sturrock explore our anxieties as parents, and the dreams we have for our children, with Janeen Baxter from the Life Course Centre.

Panel: Dr Justin Coulson, Rob Sturrock
Chair: Dr Janeen Baxter

The Big End of Town

Online event | bwf.org.au

Corporations and big business have an increasingly and disproportionately powerful influence in Australian politics and policy-making. Our panel examines the erosion of the public good and the avenues available to the 'rest' to take back control from the big end of town.

Panel: Dr Lindy Edwards, Allan Fels, Jane R Goodall
Chair: David Fagan

The Politics of the Common Good

Online event | bwf.org.au

Jane R Goodall argues that as the ravages of neo-liberalism tear ever more deeply into our social fabric, the principle of common good should be restored to the heart of our political discourse. How can we achieve

deeper community connection? How can we create new ways of governance? How can we build better government?

Jane R Goodall in conversation with Christine Jackman

The Rare Metals War

Online event | bwf.org.au

Powering our digital lives and green technologies relies on some of the Earth's most precious metals. China dominates much of the rare earth minerals industry. Many consumers are unaware of the conditions under which rare earth minerals are mined and traded, and the environmental, economic, geopolitical, and human costs of this new reliance. Presented in collaboration with ABC Radio National's Big Ideas.

Guillaume Pitron in conversation with Paul Barclay

The Superpanopticon

Online event | bwf.org.au

Jon Fasman journeys across the globe to examine how governments use surveillance technology, and Sacha Molitorisz examines privacy as the critical issue of our era. This session is an urgent and vital conversation on public safety vs civil liberty, state vs corporate surveillance, and our regulatory frameworks being outpaced by technological evolution. Presented in collaboration with ABC Radio National's Big Ideas.

**Panel: Jon Fasman, Sacha Molitorisz
Chair: Paul Barclay**

You're Not Listening

Online event | bwf.org.au

Kate Murphy explores the social, psychological, and neuroscientific impacts of losing the ability to listen. Drawing

on interviews from some of the best listeners: priests, interrogators, focus group moderators, bartenders, and baristas, Kate Murphy explores what it is to really listen.

Dr Kate Murphy in conversation with Michaela Kalowski

Fiction & Literature

Adults!

Online event | bwf.org.au

Join Emma Jane Unsworth as she discusses her book *Adults*. This is a book best summed up as a misadventure in maturity, a satire on our age of self-promotion, a tender look at womanhood, and a love story. Funny, clever, and insightful, this is contemporary fiction at its best.

Emma Jane Unsworth in conversation with The Book Show, ABC Radio National

Burnt Sugar

Online event | bwf.org.au



Shortlisted for the Booker Prize, *Burnt Sugar* is an extraordinary exploration of the relationship between mother and daughter. It is a tale of a daughter faced with the task of caring for a mother who never cared for her. Avni Doshi

discusses the fading memories, deep wounds and small joys of family ties.

Avni Doshi in conversation with Michaela Kalowski

Chased By Your Past

Online event | bwf.org.au

Australian country towns often carry tense, unspoken histories spanning generations. When crime happens, events of the past quickly catch up with the present, in a standoff between justice and the 'greater good'. Our authors discuss Australian crime fiction set in small towns that are at once alike and completely unique.

Panel: Garry Disher, Christian White

Chair: Kimberley Starr

Dystopian Adventures

Online event | bwf.org.au

Join three distinguished writers as they discuss the clash between human artifice and the natural world. Connection, loss, love, and integrity are all themes explored in their most recent books. How will we face the end of times?

Panel: James Bradley, Charlotte McConaghy, Laura Jean McKay

Chair: Liam Pieper

Happenstance

Online event | bwf.org.au

Our panel explores the profound impacts that moments of chance and circumstance in our past can have on our present and our future. The panel discusses our relationship to place and how to rise from the ashes of trauma and grief.

Panel: Alice Bishop, Melissa Lucashenko, Josephine Rowe, Nardi Simpson

Chair: Meredith Lake

Kokomo

Online event | bwf.org.au

Kokomo has been described as "a coming of age novel for the Peter Pan generation;" it

explores the disappointments and unfulfilled promises of so-called adult life—sex, marriage, ambition.

Victoria Hannan in conversation with Kate Evans, ABC Radio National's The Book Shelf

Latitudes of Longing

Online event | bwf.org.au

Beginning in the feverish tropics of the Andaman Islands, this sweeping epic novel spans the Indian subcontinent from the dancing bars of Kathmandu to the prisons of Myanmar. Shubhangi Swarup's debut is an original masterpiece touched with humour and profound humanity.

Shubhangi Swarup in conversation with Dr Bem Le Hunte

Stranger Things

Online event | bwf.org.au

This panel of four amazing authors have written tales of the uncanny and unexpected. They set their sights on exploring the strange in-between spaces where myths merge with reality.

Panel: Robbie Arnott, Chris Flynn, Amie Kaufman, Jamie Marina Lau.

Chair: Emily Philip

The Dictionary of Lost Words

Online event | bwf.org.au

In 1901, a young girl takes up a secret fight to give women's words their rightful place in the English language. Esme saves words discarded by the male lexicographers creating the first Oxford English Dictionary to start her own: The Dictionary of Lost Words. Presented in collaboration with ABC Radio National's, The Bookshelf.

Pip Williams in conversation with Kate Evans

The Drover's Wife

Online event | bwf.org.au

In a powerful First Nations reimagining of Henry Lawson's short story, Leah Purcell's multi-award winning work confronts contemporary issues of race, violence, gender, and the ties that bind us to our colonial past. *The Drover's Wife* began life as a stage play, was adapted to a full-length novel, and is now a feature film.

Leah Purcell in conversation

The Mercies

Online event | bwf.org.au

Christmas Eve, 1617. A storm hits a Norwegian island, wiping out all the menfolk. Eighteen months later, a religious man arrives from Scotland to restore righteousness and order to the women. Inspired by the true events of the 1621 Vardo witch trials.

Kiran Millwood Hargrave in conversation with Michaela Kalowski

The Ties that Bind Us

Online event | bwf.org.au

How far are we prepared to go to protect our families and ourselves? What are these family ties that bind us so tightly to one course of action over another? What are the consequences? Join our panel as they discuss their novels on the ties that bind.

Panel: Kirsten Alexander, Kate Mildenhall, Kimberley Starr

Chair: Dr Sarah Klenbort

There is Always Love

Online event | bwf.org.au

This panel discusses their stories of family, connection, and love that span across generations. They explore the strong

women who bind families together, the unsung heroes of our communities, and the love that cuts across modernity and tradition.

Panel: Hilde Hinton, Dr Bem Le Hunte, Favel Parrett

Chair: Emily Philip

Who Am I, Really?

Online event | bwf.org.au

Our panel's Australian coming-of-age novels explore the dramas of teenage life and the confronting realities of early adulthood. These are compassionate and audacious tales of (re)defining what your life is to become.

Panel: Bernard Gallate, Georgina Young

Chair: Claire Christian



Brisbane Writers Festival

Word Play

Join us for our Word Play Schools literature program, including videos, activities and games for children of all ages.

Featuring Remy Lai, Matt Okine, Garth Nix, Jessica Townsend, and more...

bwf.org.au/wordplay

Events for writers

Writing YA

Saturday, May 8, 9am-12pm |
Heritage Collections Learning Room



Learn the art of crafting rich, compelling stories and characters for young adult audiences with **Lisa Fuller**. Lisa's multi-award-winning storytelling explores the young adult experience through fantastical dreams

and reality-bending mystery.

Dark Fiction

Saturday, May 8, 1pm-4pm |
Heritage Collections Learning Room



Join multi-award winning author and journalist **Liam Pieper** in this three hour workshop on taking fiction to unsettling, uneasy, and uncomfortable places. Liam explores crafting complex and flawed characters, and

balancing the darkness with the light.

Crafting Stories for Children

Sunday, May 9, 9am-12pm |
Heritage Collections Learning Room



Writing for children is a unique challenge, with no audience more discerning and demanding than young readers. Children's author **Zanni Louise** has been twice listed in the CBCA Notables, has published and

sold books globally, and has a book in the highly prestigious *The White Ravens*. Learn the principles of children's books, developing compelling characters and plots, working with illustrators, and getting published.

Queer Memoir

Sunday, May 9, 1pm-4pm |
Heritage Collections Learning Room



Queer memoirs are critical pieces of literature. They document first-hand accounts of the queer experience, make visible the diversity of the queer community, and remind us that no-one is alone in their journey. Join

Eddie Ayres, highly acclaimed author of *Danger Music*, in finding your voice and turning your own life experience into a captivating work.

20 Pages in 20 Minutes

This is a rare opportunity to have your manuscript read by a literary agent, publisher, or editor. Submit 20 pages and receive feedback in a face-to-face consultation with a publishing industry professional. Places are strictly limited and available by competitive application only. Visit bwf.org.au/20pages for more information and to apply.

Workshop Tickets

\$110 full, **\$100** concession, **\$95** Festival Friends

20 Pages in 20 Minutes

\$150

Discover your next story at the Library Shop

Find books, gifts and more at the official bookseller of Brisbane Writers Festival

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Or shop online | shop.slq.qld.gov.au

THE HOME OF BRISBANE WRITERS FESTIVAL



Love YA

Saturday, May 8 | Brisbane Square Library

Presented in partnership with Brisbane City Council Libraries, Love YA is a full day of free programming especially for fans of young adult fiction.

Join a stellar lineup of YA stars as they explore identity and community, magic and responsibility, the universality of love, writing difficult topics into YA literature, and much more. Love YA is an unmissable day to celebrate the characters and stories that make young adult fiction so addictive.

In 2021, available tickets are limited for on-site attendance at our Love YA events. **We will be live streaming these events on the day** for those who are not able to be with us at the venue, so you will be able to take part from wherever you happen to be!

Registration is essential for in-person attendance at these free events and tickets are very limited. For ticket registrations and live stream information, visit bwf.org.au/LoveYA

...To The Bitter End

9am-10am

Our panel discusses writing difficult and sensitive topics in YA literature in these powerful, intense, thought-provoking Australian works.

Panel: David Burton, Richard Yaxley
Chair: Taryn Bashford

Being Black 'n Chicken, & Chips

11am-12pm

Matt Okine's *Being Black 'n Chicken, & Chips* explores loss, grief, growing up, and fitting in, written in his own hilariously inimitable style. Now re-released in a new YA edition, this is sure to be a sell-out event!

Matt Okine in conversation
with Rhianna Patrick

Love is Love is Love

1pm-2pm

Join our panel for stories of coming of age, coming out, and finding your people. Our panel examines the power of chance and circumstance in (re)shaping your identity.

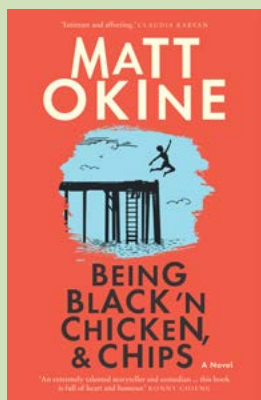
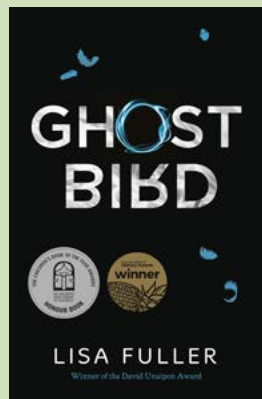
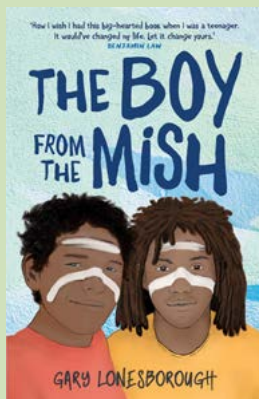
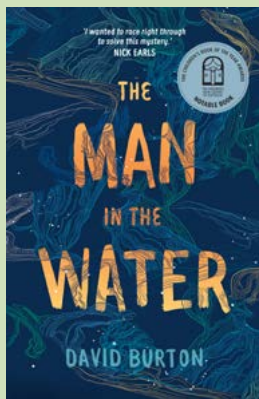
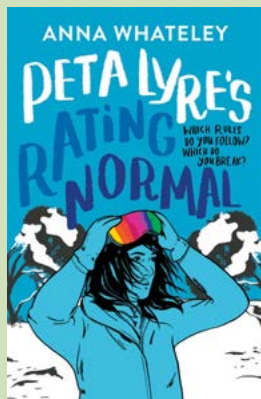
Panel: Frances Chapman, Gary Lonesborough, Sophie Gonzales, Anna Whateley
Chair: Rhiannon Wilde

The Space Between

3pm-4pm

Three writers explore the spaces between — between the real and the imagined, fact and inscrutability, fate and inevitability.

Panel: Lisa Fuller, JA Henderson, Trent Jamieson
Chair: Jeann Wong



Getting to the Festival

Our events take place in and around the Cultural Precinct at State Library of Queensland and Queensland Art Gallery. The Cultural Precinct is located on Stanley Place, South Brisbane.

Public Transport

Bus

The Cultural Centre busway station is a five-minute walk away from State Library of Queensland. There is also a bus stop located on Stanley Place at the Queensland Gallery of Modern Art.

Train

South Brisbane train station is located on the corner of Melbourne and Grey Street, a five-minute walk away.

City Cat

The nearest City Cat terminal is South Bank 1, a ten-minute walk from State Library of Queensland.

Visit translink.com.au or call 13 12 30 for more information.

Parking

Paid parking is available throughout the Cultural Centre precinct.

Parking conditions around the State Library of Queensland have recently changed due to the closure of the Victoria Bridge to cars. Please see bwf.org.au/attending for more information and to plan your visit.

Walking

The Cultural Precinct is a short walk from Brisbane's CBD via Victoria Bridge, Kurilpa Bridge or the William Jolly Bridge

Assistance On Site

Accessibility

For patrons who require special seating, wheelchair access or assistance or an AUSLAN interpreter, please contact BWF in advance on 07 3216 0694 or info@bwf.org.au.

The 2021 BWF program is available in braille hard copy from Braille House or by contacting BWF, and as a WCAG-compliant epub file from our website at bwf.org.au/accessibility

BWF Festival precinct and all Council Libraries are wheelchair accessible. Volunteer wayfinding assistance is available.

Volunteers

Have a question? Looking for an event? Our volunteers are waiting to help. Look out for volunteers wearing the bright yellow BWF lanyards.

An inspiring quote I heard during the festival:

Books I want to get:

Artists I want to follow on social media:

Contact details of people I met at the festival:

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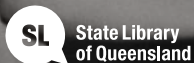
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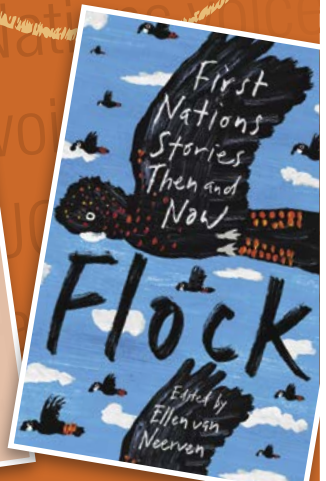
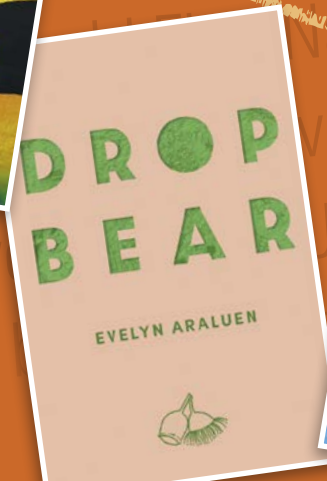
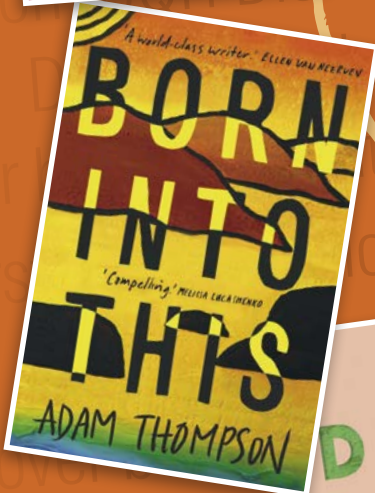
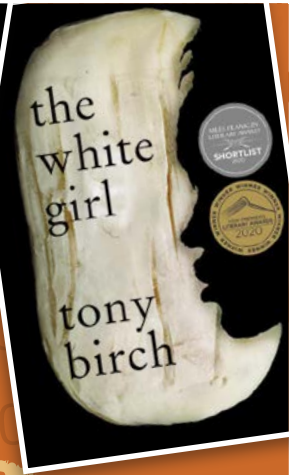
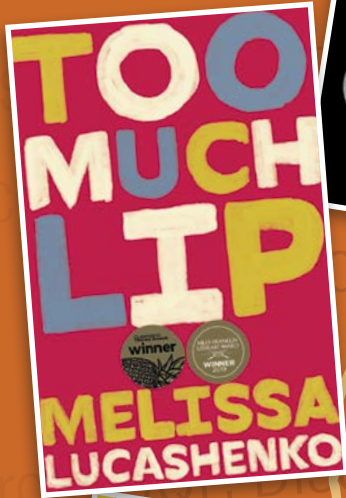
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