

Conference Sessions

29 October - 30 October

Insights into Quality Australian Literature for Young Adults

Day 1 - Friday 29 October

Gates Open 8.00AM

Sessions from 8.50AM to 5.30PM

This Is Who I Am, What I Do, What I Believe In

with all presenters

Hear from all nine presenters as they give you a sense of who they are, insights into what motivates them to write for Young Adults and the book of which they are the proudest.

Scary Monsters: Reading For Resilience And How Ya Crime Thrillers Might Just Give Teenagers The Coping Strategies They Need

with Ellie Marney
Ellie has been writing about dastardly crime for more than a decade – and she may know how to commit the perfect murder! In this session, Ellie talks about her fascination with the human battle between good and evil, her crime writing career, her latest release *None Shall Sleep*, and how YA thrillers can teach teenagers resilience in scary times.

Pushing The Boundaries

with Holden Sheppard
Holden will discuss why he seeks to push the boundaries of what teenagers are allowed to read. He will reference his life trajectory as an artist and same-sex attracted man, including his personal impetus for writing his acclaimed coming-of-age novel, *Invisible Boys*; and the way schools, libraries and readers have responded to it. In Australia, where same-sex marriage is allowed but individual turmoil continues, what are the gaps when it comes to visibility and representation of gay people, both characters in texts and students in classrooms? Which stereotypes, even benign ones, persist, even among allies? And how can storytelling work to confront these remaining taboos?

Creating Just One Book

with Karen Foxlee, Meg Caddy and Michael Pryor

Each book has its own unique journey inspired by a character, a setting, a plot line or a tiny thought. Some are planned for years before drafting begins; others emerge rapidly and then are shaped slowly. Karen, Meg and Michael will treat you to the inside story on how they have created just one of their books.

We Can't Say We Didn't Know

with Sophie McNeill
Sophie's *We Can't Say We Didn't Know*, asks us to bear witness to the impact wars and brutal regimes have on the lives of civilians. She then challenges us to consider what is wrong in both our own country and overseas, and advocate for change.

Writing Fiction From Lived Experience

with Alice Pung, Holden Sheppard and Michael Gerard Bauer
Alice, Holden and Michael reflect on their experiences growing up Asian in Melbourne, growing up gay in Geraldton and years teaching English in Brisbane. How do they find the balance between their lived experience and the fiction they create? What challenges have they had to overcome?

Two Wolves, The Fall And Detention: Books To Grip Your Students

with Tristan Bancks
Tristan shares the transmedia tools he used to develop the world and characters of these three novels and how technology can be utilised to assist in the development of authentic, detailed and thrilling stories. His approach is an active, visual, aural, tech-infused writing adventure. It's about seeing, hearing and feeling a piece of writing, making it personal and enjoying the process. Tristan will also provide a sneak peak of his 2022 release, *Cop and Robber*.

Magic Moments

with Michael Pryor
Michael believes that in some ways, writing itself is an act of magic, but he also writes about magic, stories that explore the outlandish, the unearthly and the extraordinary. How does magic work? What are the pitfalls and challenges of writing about magic? What is the allure in this increasingly practical world? Let him use his *Laws of Magic* series and his *Ghost Town* series to show you behind the curtain while still preserving the sense of wonder that is one of the great joys of reading.

Page To Screen: How My Life As An Alphabet Became The Acclaimed Film, H Is For Happiness

with Barry Jonsberg

How the YA novel, *My Life As An Alphabet*, came into being, created a stir, caught the attention of a transmedia producer, lost it again, became a script that placed fourth in an American screenwriting competition, was picked up by the producer of *Red Dog* and became the award-winning film, *H is for Happiness*, where Barry played a two-second, blink and you've missed it, role alongside Miriam Margolyes (Professor Sprout in Harry Potter) ... and maybe some other stuff.

Publishing Secrets

with all presenters
Our nine presenters take us behind the scenes into the world of publishing: rejections, editing, blurbs, covers, promotion and reviews. What happens from the time a manuscript is sent out into the world? What are the highs and lows of this process?

Day 1 Sundowner ends at 6.00PM

Conference Sessions

29 October - 30 October

Insights into Quality Australian Literature for Young Adults

Day 2 - Saturday 30 October

Gates Open 8.00AM

Sessions from 9.00AM to 5.00PM

Giving Our Young Adults Diversity, Tough Stuff And Honesty with all presenters

All nine presenters have written 'tough' books which are uncompromising and never patronising. Join them as they discuss why they write these books, why diversity is essential and why 'issues' should be embedded within strong characterisation and story, not an end in themselves.

Switching Genres: Is It Bad For Your Brand?

with Meg Caddy

Meg takes us from the fantasy land of Oster to the seas of the Caribbean. Switching genres: is it 'bad for your brand'? Is it difficult? How do you know if it's right for your writing? Learn how to find common threads and themes in your writing, how to dive into a new genre, and how to stay true to your writing voice. Meg will discuss her fantasy novel *Waer*, and how she moved into the world of historical fiction for her pirate adventure novel, *Devil's Ballast*.

Father Of The Lost Boys with Yuot A Alaak

Join Yuot as he explains what finally motivated him to write his memoir *Father of the Lost Boys*; his process; and his own experience walking with his father as he led 20,000 South Sudanese boys on a four-year trek to the safety of a Kenyan refugee camp.

Crime And Mystery

with Ellie Marney, Barry Jonsberg and Tristan Bancks

Some people think YA is *only* about urgent social issues, teenage angst and coming-of-age journeys. But adults don't have a monopoly on loving stories involving crimes and mysteries. Join Ellie, Barry and Tristan as they discuss the intersection of crime, mystery and the puzzle of writing itself.

Writing For Diversity with Alice Pung

Alice will discuss creating characters who are living, breathing human beings, who just happen to be of different backgrounds, and not just an assemblage of cultural quirks. She will discuss her award-winning novel *Laurinda*, and her new book *One Hundred Days*, and the importance of the Own Voices movement.

The Things That Will Not Stand

with Michael Gerard Bauer

In *The Things That Will Not Stand*, high school friends, Sebastian and Tolly attend a University Open day where they meet the enigmatic Frida and end up spending an eventful and unexpected day together. But is one day enough for personal truths and secrets to be revealed and is it enough for readers to get to know, believe in, and care about these characters? Michael will discuss the challenges and advantages of setting a story over such a short period of time in what he feels might be his last contemporary YA novel.

Growing Stories with Karen Foxlee

Like weird and wonderful plants in a hothouse, Karen discusses how she grows characters and plots from tiny idea seeds. She'll give tips on overcoming an evil inner critic, cultivating creativity, embracing mistakes and never giving up on the search for the heart of a story. She will reference her most recent works, the acclaimed *Lenny's Book of Everything* and *Dragon Skin*.

2022 Conference Announcement

Living And Writing On The Road

with all presenters

Since the Centre opened in 1993, we have heard so many stories from our finest creators that have literally made us groan, weep or laugh hysterically. Our nine presenters will confide in you, retelling hilarious, shocking, negative, touching or wonderful experiences they have had on the road.

Prize Draw, Conference Close and Sundowner

* Conference Program and order of sessions may be subject to change.

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