



Friday 27 October 2023

Celebrate Reading Conference

Stories with Spine.



Welcome to our 11th Celebrate Reading Conference. In the year of our 30th Anniversary we bring you a program that offers everything you have come to expect from us and more.

A celebration of stories created for young people, by some of Australia's most loved and recognised artists, with a closer lens on some of the major issues young people encounter in 2023. Immerse yourself in the pure joy of storytelling, alongside conversations that challenge your thinking and enrich your learning; across fantasy, memoir, narrative nonfiction, screenplays, crime fiction and graphic novels.

Elizabeth Spencer CEO

Welcome to Country and Conference Opening 9:00–9:20

Keynote: What Can Money Buy?

Bri Lee (including Q&A) 9:25–10:10

* In Bri's most recent book, *Who Gets to Be Smart*, she presents a devastating assessment of how Australia's education system is divided by class. Meanwhile, relationships and sexuality education are being debated by people who don't respect the valuable research we have about young people's development. There are some important things money can buy for a child at school, and some things it apparently can't. Bri will draw from both research and experience to respond to debates in desperate need of nuance.

Backwards Storytelling

Nova Weetman 10:15–10:50

* Drawing from her YA novel *Everything is Changed*, Nova Weetman will explore how the real world can inspire story. A novel about guilt, morality and class, Nova will unpack the unique structure of this work and why she decided to tell the story in reverse through the dual perspectives of two teenage boys.

Morning Tea 10:50–11:15

Aśka 11:15–11:45

* Graphic novels are booming, but it's not just because they're an 'easy read' or a reluctant reader gateway. The energetic comic-maker Aśka will attempt to deconstruct this complex medium, demonstrating its ability to tap into the human experience, touching upon the process of creating *"Stars In Their Eyes"* and changing the way you see visual texts in general.

Jess Walton 11:45–12:10

* *"Stars in Their Eyes"* is a graphic novel adaptation of a short story published in *"Meet Me At the Intersection"* from Fremantle Press, which explores the power of disability representation. Jess will talk about the process of transforming a short story into a graphic novel script, the importance of disability representation and seeing yourself on the page.

Stars in their Eyes Conversation

Jess Walton and Aśka 12:10–12:20

* Jess and Aśka will talk about the process they used to ensure accurate disability representation in *Stars in Their Eyes*, and make teen character Maisie look and move like Jess!

Mirror on the Page

Cath Moore 12:25–1:00

* Reflecting on her storytelling journey so far, author of *Metal Fish Falling Snow* Cath Moore will explore just how important the old adage 'write what you know' has been in crafting her identity as a screenwriter and author. She also explores how young writers can voice their own stories, on their own terms.

Lunch 1:00–1:30

Kyle Perry 1:35–2:10

* Kyle will explore the journey of using prose to creatively express experiences from his frontline counselling, rehab and youth work; his most important style and craft techniques and advice he's picked up from a lifetime of studying the science of writing; and how success has caused him to further wrestle with the philosophy and spirituality of where ideas come from. Kyle answers the question: do I write the story, or does the character write their own?

C.S. Pacat (including Q&A) 2:10–2:50

* How does an idea that began in the Louvre become *The Dark Rise* phenomenon? C.S. Pacat discusses how displaced remnants of forgotten lives became a trilogy.

Brief Pause: Reset

⇒ **Women of a Certain Rage** ^{//}

Meg McKinlay, Victoria Midwinter Pitt and Georgia Richter,
chaired by Julia Lawrinson

3:00–3:40

* Women's anger attracts widespread and often vicious condemnation when publicly expressed so what does this imply for young women, particularly on social media (think of Greta Thunberg and Grace Tame)? This is a generation where social media is promoted as a platform to express yourself. What impact does this have? How can we change the conversation about anger and girls?

⇒ **What I Wish Teenagers Knew Panel**

With all presenters, chaired by Meg Caddy

3:45–4:30

* Adolescence can be a difficult time. It is a time of angst, of growth and the continual search for a place to belong. Throughout this session our presenters will reflect on their writing and what they have learned along the way. What would they like teenagers to know?

End of Day One

* **Acknowledgment of Country**

The Literature Centre acknowledges the traditional owners and storytellers of Country throughout this land. We pay our respects to Elders past and present. It is a privilege to live and work in Walyalup on Whadjuk Noongar Boodjar.



Saturday 28 October 2023

Celebrate Reading Conference

Stories with Spine.



Reflections with Natalya Hawrylak 8:50-8:55

Keynote: Girinyalanha bu winhangarra: *
talk together and listen

Dr Anita Heiss 8:55-9:40

* Anita Heiss explores the concept of learning language, rowing down the Murrumbidgee river paying respects to Yarri and Jacky Jacky. She recounts how locals did not listen to traditional owners about potential flooding – our knowledge, our voices were ignored back then, and a third of the town died. This session examines the protocols and methodologies around writing about First Nations peoples, the Western right to write vs First Nations responsibility.

Eliza Hull 9:45-10:20

* Eliza Hull is a disability advocate and disabled person. Growing up disabled meant any teacher at school had the power to make her day or ruin it. Eliza looks back at the ways her teachers included her, and excluded her, and what she feels makes an inclusive and accessible school environment. She will explain the various models of disability, ableism and how writing has given her the power to challenge misconceptions and stereotypes for disabled people in Australia.

Publishing Journey

Lynette Noni 10:20-10:55

* Lynette Noni shares her author journey throughout the years, from being an avid reader who loathed English class in school and laughed at the idea of ever writing a book, to becoming Australia’s #1 bestselling young adult author with novels published in 20+ countries. Lynette covers how she stumbled into the world of writing and the challenges she faced along the way, including how a chance visit to Fremantle Prison inspired the creation of her globally renowned YA fantasy series, The Prison Healer.

Morning Tea 11:00-11:20

Narrating Diverse Voices

Alice Pung 11:25-12:00

* Alice believes anyone can absolutely write in whatever voice they choose—that’s the beauty and vastness of art. Whether one does it well is a different matter, and the stakes are higher if you choose to write about a traditionally under-represented group. Alice talks about her experience creating characters for her own books as well as mentoring writers to find their own voices.

Shake the Tree

Michael Speechley 12:05-12:40

* As Michael Speechley got older cracks appeared in the world around him. When he went back to study art, he decided to shake the tree. This is where his cheeky book The All New Must Have Orange 430 was born. Mike will detail some of the ‘naughty’ art projects completed, how the Orange 430 book began and explain how challenging the way people think and see the world has become a theme in his work.

Lunch 12:40-1:15

The Truth within the Lie

Sue Whiting 1:15-1:50

* Sue Whiting looks at truth and lies, and how this relates to writing The Book of Chance and to story generally. She explores the power of truth within the lie we call story.

Building Fantasy

Lynette Noni, C.S. Pacat, Meg Caddy, 1:55-2:35
chaired by Natalya Hawrylak

* Is fantasy the hardest genre to write? Authors and readers are working twice as hard to comprehend the world created and believe the story. Authors not only have to build the Lego creation, but they also must make the blocks themselves. What are the fantasy ingredients for a compelling fantasy? Plus, the all-important question: Does a world become much more real once there is a map?

Brief Pause: Reset

Black Inc Books Panel

Anita Heiss, Alice Pung, Holden Sheppard, Eliza Hull, Jessica Walton and Cath Moore, chaired by Deb Fitzpatrick 2:40-3:20

* Growing Up is a series by Black Inc Books that captures the diversity of our nation. Each of these books is unique, each of these panellists have contributed in different ways. This panel will unpack their involvement and discuss how story series like these can make a difference for YA, adults, and the broad spectrum of society. In the end, what can story do?

Refreshments & Reset

3:25–3:35

≧ **Literary Limnings Panel** ≦

With all presenters, chaired by Natalya Hawrylak **3:40–4:20**

* What every bibliophile wants to know: what are the books currently by our bedside? Which books do we recommend, which electrified and inspired this panel of presenters and which books leave us richer in person?

Conference Close with CEO, Elizabeth Spencer **4:25–4:30**



End of Conference

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