



SYDNEY
WRITERS
FESTIVAL

Sydney Writers' Festival and
the NSW Education Standards Authority present



STUDENT SESSIONS 2020



STUDENT SESSIONS

Join the 2020 Festival's brightest minds for a thought-provoking program of talks, specially curated to complement the school curriculum in ways that inform, challenge and inspire.

With sessions led by world-renowned writers and respected social commentators across film, theatre, journalism, television, literature and more, our Student Sessions program is rich in opportunities for secondary school students. It builds on students' classroom learning, extends their capacity for critical thinking, and engages them in thoughtful discussion and meaningful debate.

Featuring some of the Festival's standout speakers, this year's line-up includes beloved songwriter

Paul Kelly; celebrated critic Daniel Mendelsohn; award-winning writer Bruce Pascoe; TV producer Callum Denness; one of Australia's best essayists, Rebecca Giggs; author of *Night Games*, Anna Krien; host of Schwartz Media's *7am* podcast, Osman Faruqi; investigative journalist Kate McClymont; writer and producer of *Top End Wedding*, Miranda Tapsell; and writer of the widely acclaimed play, *Single Asian Female*, Michelle Law.

They're joined by co-host of *The Bookshelf*, Kate Evans; presenter of *Away!*, ABC Radio National's Indigenous arts and culture program, Daniel Browning; NSW Premier's Literary Award recipient, Ashley Hay; *The Monthly's* Richard Cooke; writer, director and performer Maeve Marsden; and screenwriter, author and journalist Benjamin Law.

Student Sessions is presented in partnership with the NSW Education Standards Authority (NESA) at established theatres at Carriageworks.

Recommended for Years 9 to 12.

Wednesday 29 April

10am–2:15pm

Please arrive 30 minutes before your first session.

Carriageworks

245 Wilson Street, Eveleigh

BOOKING

**Tickets go on sale
Wednesday 5 February.
Bookings are essential.**

Each Student Session runs for 45 minutes. You can create your own schedule of sessions with options to select one, two or three sessions per student. Discounts are available when you purchase multiple sessions.

Ticket prices are:

- \$30 per student for three events
- \$24 per student for two events
- \$15 per student for one event.

There is one free teacher's ticket allocated per event for every 20 paying students. Additional teachers can purchase tickets at student prices.

Payment terms and conditions are included in the booking form.

You can find an online booking form at swf.org.au/studentessions.

Booking forms are processed in order of receipt.

For more information

If you have any questions, please contact the Sydney Writers' Festival box office team:

ticketing@swf.org.au | (02) 9256 4200.

Please note, books by featured authors will be available for purchase on the day.

Sydney Writers' Festival | Level 3, 10 Hickson Road, NSW 2000 | swf.org.au

Disclaimer: Details in this brochure are correct at the time of publication. Sydney Writers' Festival reserves the right to add, withdraw, or substitute artists, and to vary the program should the need arise. Please note that a waiting list is kept for booked out Student Sessions.

Core Funders



CITY OF SYDNEY



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THE PROGRAM

Each talk runs for 45 minutes and all sessions are stand-alone. Create your own schedule of sessions.

10am

Daniel Mendelsohn on the Classics

The master of popular criticism, **Daniel Mendelsohn**, uses the ancient past to reach into the very heart of modern culture. Described as “our most irresistible literary critic” (*The New York Times*), Daniel joins author and journalist **Benjamin Law** to discuss his latest collection of essays, covering how the automatons in Homer’s epics can help explain AI films *Ex Machina* and *Her*, how Virgil’s *Aeneid* foreshadows post-World War II history, why we are still obsessed with the Titanic, and the feminism of *Game of Thrones*.

Curriculum links: English, History

10am

Sharks, Whales and our Evolving Planet

What can the awe-inspiring lives of sharks and whales teach us about ourselves, our planet and our connections to other species? Journalist **Callum Denness** discusses Australia’s relationship with a creature that has long loomed large in our fears – the shark. And author **Rebecca Giggs** asks what observing whales can teach us about the complexity, splendour and fragility of life. Join this fascinating panel of marine experts in conversation with author **Ashley Hay** as they consider the challenges we face on an evolving planet.

Curriculum links: Earth and Environmental Science, Geography, Biology

10:45–11:15am Book signing

11:15am

Paul Kelly on Poetry

In a session that explores the transformative combination of poetry and music, hear acclaimed singer-songwriter **Paul Kelly** recite a selection of poems from his new anthology *Love Is Strong as Death* – a number of which he has set to music and will sing live. In conversation with ABC Radio National’s **Kate Evans**, Paul discusses a collection that spans the ancient and the modern and speaks to two of literature’s greatest themes: love and death – plus everything in between.

Curriculum links: English, Music

11:15am

Bias in the Media: Reading Between the Lines

The role that the media plays in influencing public opinion has become a topic of intense debate. How do journalists present a balanced version of events? What is the power of persuasive language? And do Australia’s defamation laws support or suppress free speech? *The Monthly’s* **Richard Cooke** explores these issues with award-winning *Night Games* and *Into the Woods* author **Anna Krien**, host of Schwartz Media’s *7am* podcast, **Osman Faruqi** and *The Sydney Morning Herald’s* **Kate McClymont**.

Curriculum links: English, Society and Culture, PDHPE

12–1pm Book signing and lunch break

1pm

Centre Stage

Whether for film, television or the stage, a new generation of Australian scriptwriters are making their mark. Logie winner, actor and screenwriter of the AACTA-nominated *Top End Wedding*, **Miranda Tapsell**, and **Michelle Law**, whose work includes the hit play *Single Asian Female* and the award-winning SBS series *Homecoming Queens*, will be in conversation with writer and theatre-maker **Maeve Marsden**, discussing their craft, voice and artistic practice, as well as the importance of diversity on stage and screen.

Curriculum links: Drama, English

1pm

Bruce Pascoe: Writing Australia

One of the country’s most beloved storytellers, Indigenous writer **Bruce Pascoe**, talks about his groundbreaking contributions to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander storytelling in contemporary Australia. Bruce joins ABC’s **Daniel Browning** in conversation, reflecting on his enduring fascination with Australia’s landscape, culture and history; his widely popular *Dark Emu*, soon to be adapted as a television series; and his latest collection *Salt*.

Curriculum links: History, Aboriginal Studies, Society and Culture, English

1:45–2:15pm Book signing and finish

MEET THE WRITERS

Daniel Mendelsohn

is the editor-at-large of *The New York Review of Books* and an award-winning critic, essayist, translator and bestselling memoirist. A longtime contributor to *The New Yorker*, he has also been a columnist on books, film, TV and culture for BBC Culture, *New York*, *Harper's* and *The New York Times Book Review*. He has written two memoirs, and three collections of essays, most recently *The Bad Boy of Athens: Classics from the Greeks to Game of Thrones*.



Anna Krien

is the author of the award-winning *Night Games* and *Into the Woods*, and two Quarterly Essays, *Us and Them* and *The Long Goodbye*. Her latest novel, *Act of Grace*, was shortlisted for the 2019 Victorian Premier's Literary Awards. Her writing has been published in *The Monthly*, *The Age*, *The Best Australian Essays*, *The Best Australian Stories* and *The Big Issue*. In 2018, Anna received a Sidney Myer Creative Fellowship.



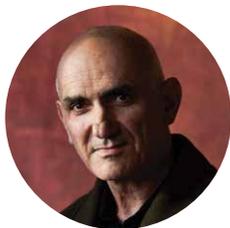
Bruce Pascoe

is an award-winning writer and a Yuin, Bunurong and Tasmanian man. Author of the acclaimed *Dark Emu*, Bruce is also a board member of First Languages Australia and professor of Indigenous knowledge at the University of Technology Sydney. In 2018, he was named Dreamtime Person of the Year. *Salt* is a collection of his most celebrated stories and essays, which explore his enduring fascination with Australia's landscape, culture and history.



Paul Kelly

wrote his first song in 1976, and has gone on to make more than 30 records to wide acclaim, collaborate with many other songwriters, and write music for film and theatre. In 2010, he published a "mongrel memoir", *How to Make Gravy*, and in 2019, an anthology of poetry titled *Love Is Strong as Death*. His most recent album is *Thirteen Ways to Look at Birds*.



Osman Faruqi

hosts Schwartz Media's *7am* podcast and was formerly deputy editor of ABC Life. He regularly presents on the ABC News culture and arts program, *The Mix*, and has worked on the ABC's award-winning investigative journalism program *Background Briefing*. Osman has written on politics and culture for *The Guardian*, *GQ* and *The Australian*, was formerly Junkee Media's news editor, and has twice judged the NSW Premier's Literary Awards.



Miranda Tapsell

is a proud Larrakia Tiwi woman from Darwin who grew up in Kakadu National Park. Recently, Miranda co-wrote, co-produced and starred in the film *Top End Wedding*, which premiered at the 2019 Sundance Film Festival and received stellar reviews and box office success. Miranda is renowned for her performance in the film *The Sapphires* and the television series *Love Child*, for which she won two Logie Awards. She will next be seen in the feature film *The Dry*.



Rebecca Giggs

has had her work appear in *Granta*, *The Atlantic*, *The New York Times Magazine*, *The Best Australian Essays* and *Best Australian Science Writing*, among other publications. Her first book is *Fathoms: the world in the whale*, a meditation on the lives of whales.



Kate McClymont

is an investigative journalist with *The Sydney Morning Herald*. She is a seven-time winner of journalism's most prestigious award, the Walkley – including the Gold Walkley. Kate was named NSW Journalist of the Year in 2012, and in 2017, she was inducted into the Media Hall of Fame for her contribution to the industry. In January 2020, Kate was appointed a Member of Australia for her service to print and investigative journalism. Her latest book, *Dead Man Walking*, tells the complete story of the lives and shoddy business deals of Michael McGurk and Ron Medich.



Michelle Law

writes for screen, theatre and print. Her work includes the hit play *Single Asian Female* and the award-winning SBS series *Homecoming Queens*. Michelle's writing has appeared in *The Sydney Morning Herald*, *Griffith Review*, *Frankie* magazine and numerous anthologies. Her screen work has received various awards including the Australian Writers' Guild AWGIE Award and an Equity Ensemble Award. Michelle's play *Miss Peony* will be staged at Belvoir Street Theatre this year.



Callum Denness

is a journalist and TV producer. He began his career working in the parliamentary press gallery for Fairfax Media, going on to produce television for *The Project* and ABC's *7.30*. *Sharks: A History of Fear in Australia* is his first foray into non-fiction.

