



SYDNEY
WRITERS
FESTIVAL

Sydney Writers' Festival and
the NSW Education Standards Authority present

STUDENT SESSIONS 2021



STUDENT SESSIONS

Join some of Australia's brightest minds for a thought-provoking program of talks, specially curated to complement the school curriculum in ways that educate and enlighten.

Led by highly regarded writers and thinkers across film, poetry, theatre, literature and more, Student Sessions is rich in opportunities for secondary school students. The program builds on students' classroom learning, extending their capacity for creative and critical thinking and inspiring a deeper understanding of history, society, language and storytelling.

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

Recommended for Years 9 to 12.

DATES AND VENUES

Wednesday 28 April, 10am–2.15pm
Carriageworks, 245 Wilson Street,
Eveleigh

BOOKING

Tickets go on sale Tuesday 9 March. 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.

Booking forms are included in this mail pack. You can also find an online booking form at swf.org.au/student-sessions-2021.

Booking forms are processed in order of receipt.

Bookings affected by changes to NSW Health guidelines that prevent excursions from taking place will be fully refunded.

Visit swf.org.au/education-faqs for the latest COVID Safe information, Carriageworks' COVID Safety Plan, and our payment terms and conditions.

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.

Core Funders



CITY OF SYDNEY



Australia Council for the Arts

Principal Partner



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.

THE PROGRAM

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

10am

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 anthology *Love is Strong as Death* – a number of which he has set to music and will sing live. In conversation, 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

10am

Patricia Cornelius on the Monologue

One of Australia's most celebrated playwrights, **Patricia Cornelius**, joins theatre critic Cassie Tongue to discuss the power of a good monologue. Writing authentic dialogue relies on many different ingredients, but how do you write a speech that really brings a play home? How do character, scene and script intersect to deliver a monologue that makes your audience sit up and take note? The award-winning writer behind over 35 plays reveals how to connect actor and voice to the right words.

Curriculum links: English, Drama

10.45–11.45am Break

11.45am

Leah Purcell: After Henry

An Australian classic, Henry Lawson's 'The Drover's Wife', published in 1892, explores isolated settler life in the Australian outback. Over the last five years, Goa, Gunggari and Wakka Wakka Murri writer **Leah Purcell** has reimagined the work in multiple forms, breathing new life into the story as a stage play in 2016, a novel in 2019 and a film currently in production. Leah delivers a presentation on the lingering power of Lawson's work, and how writers can find new ways to tell old stories.

Curriculum links: English, Drama, History, Aboriginal Studies

11.45am

To the Point: Short Stories

Short stories conjure up entire worlds of fully formed characters in the space of just a few pages. Accomplished writers of the form, **Tony Birch** and **Adam Thompson** join Declan Fry to reflect on this singular power, and how it can be used to explore questions of identity, Country and belonging in contemporary Australia. Tony Birch is the celebrated author of four short-story collections: *Shadowboxing*, *Father's Day*, *The Promise* and *Common People*. Adam Thompson, an award-winning Aboriginal (Pakana) writer from Tasmania, had his debut short-story collection, *Born Into This*, published in February 2021.

Curriculum links: English, Society and Culture, Aboriginal Studies

12.30–1.30pm Lunch break

1.30pm

Let Me Persuade You

How can we wield the written and spoken word to convince, cajole and convert an audience? Or detect when we're being linguistically manoeuvred ourselves? Two masters of persuasion, former Prime Ministerial speech writer **Don Watson** and *Sydney Morning Herald* journalist **Jacqueline Maley**, provide students with a crash course on identifying and analysing the distinct language of persuasion and how it relates to our current media landscape.

Curriculum links: English, Society and Culture

1.30pm

An Imagined Past

Join two of Australia's finest historical fiction authors, Yuwaalaraay writer **Nardi Simpson** and winner of the inaugural ARA Historical Fiction Prize, **Mirandi Riwoe** for a masterclass in the research skills needed to craft compelling historical fiction. From finding and interpreting sources to engaging critically with historical bias, Nardi and Mirandi join Roanna Gonsalves to take students through Australia's rich and complex past and show how it can be harnessed to create powerful fiction.

Curriculum links: English, History, Aboriginal Studies

MEET THE WRITERS



Tony Birch

Tony Birch is the author of the bestselling *The White Girl*, winner of the 2020 NSW

Premier's Award for Indigenous Writing and shortlisted for the 2020 Miles Franklin literary prize; *Ghost River*, winner of the 2016 Victorian Premier's Literary Award for Indigenous Writing; and *Blood*, shortlisted for the 2012 Miles Franklin Award. He has also written four short-story collections: *Shadowboxing*, *Father's Day*, *The Promise* and *Common People*. In 2017, he received the Patrick White Literary Award for his contribution to Australian literature.



Patricia Cornelius

Patricia Cornelius is a founding member of Melbourne Workers Theatre and a

playwright, novelist and film writer. She's a recipient of numerous awards, including a 2019 Windham Campbell Prize, and her plays have earned her 11 Australian Writers' Guild awards. She is a champion of independent theatre and was awarded the Green Room Lifetime Achievement Award. She's written over 35 plays including *In the Club*, *Savages*, *Do not go gentle...*, *Love* and *The Call*.



Leah Purcell

Leah Purcell is an award-winning and self-made author, playwright, actor, director, filmmaker,

producer, screenwriter and showrunner. At the heart of her work are female and First Nations themes, characters and issues. Her play *The Drover's Wife* received the NSW Premier's Literary Award for Playwriting and Book of the Year, among other awards. Leah's novel *The Drover's Wife* was published in late 2019 and is being adapted into a feature film. She is a proud Goan, Gungari, Wakka Wakka Murri woman from Queensland.



Adam Thompson

Adam Thompson is a Pakana writer from Launceston. He was one of 10 recipients

of the Wheeler Centre's inaugural The Next Chapter initiative. Adam has written for performance art and television. His writing has appeared in the *Australian Dictionary of Biography*, *Kill Your Darlings* and *The Griffith Review*. Adam's debut short-story collection, *Born Into This*, was published by University Queensland Press in February 2021.



Paul Kelly

Paul Kelly was born in Adelaide in 1955. He wrote his first song in 1976 and has gone on to make more

than 30 records to wide acclaim. Paul has collaborated with many other songwriters and written music for film and theatre. In 2010, he published a 'mongrel memoir', *How to Make Gravy*, and in 2019, he published an anthology of poetry, *Love is Strong as Death*. His most recent album is *Thirteen Ways to Look at Birds*.



Mirandi Riwoe

Mirandi Riwoe is the author of *Stone Sky Gold Mountain*, which won the Queensland

Literary Award for Fiction and the inaugural ARA Historical Novel Prize. Her novella, *The Fish Girl*, won Seizure's Viva la Novella award and was shortlisted for the Stella Prize. Her work has appeared in *Best Australian Stories*, *Meanjin*, *Review of Australian Fiction*, *Griffith Review* and *Best Summer Stories*. Mirandi has a PhD in Creative Writing and Literary Studies (Queensland University of Technology).



Don Watson

Over the past 40 years, Don Watson's essays and reviews on politics, history and culture have appeared

in most major Australian journals and newspapers. He is the author of acclaimed bestsellers *Recollections of a Bleeding Heart* (2002) and *The Bush* (2014), and *Enemy Within* (Quarterly Essay) on the 2016 US Presidential Election. He has twice won the Age Book of the Year and has also received a Walkley Award, the NSW Premier's Award and the Philip Hodgins Medal for Australian Literature. His latest book, *Watsonia*, was published in 2020.



Jacqueline Maley

Jacqueline Maley is an award-winning journalist and columnist with *The*

Sydney Morning Herald and *The Age*. In 2020, she won – with her colleague Kate McClymont – the prestigious Walkley Award for Excellence in Journalism, as well as an Award for Excellence in Civil Liberties Journalism from the New South Wales Council for Civil Liberties. In 2017, Jacqueline won the Peter Ruehl Award for Outstanding Columnist at the NRMA Kennedy Awards. *The Truth About Her* is her first novel.



Nardi Simpson

Nardi Simpson is a Yuwaalaraay storyteller from the NSW north-west

freshwater plains. A musician, composer and playwright, Nardi is the author of *Song of the Crocodile*, published by Hachette Australia in October 2020. *Song of the Crocodile* was the winner of the 2018 black&write Fellowship and was shortlisted for the Victorian Premier's Literary Awards for Indigenous Writing. Nardi is currently undertaking a PhD in composition at the Australian National University, researching the traditions of song and story in her beloved Yuwaalaraay homelands.