



SYDNEY
WRITERS
FESTIVAL

SECONDARY
SCHOOL
DAYS

19–24 May 2022



WELCOME TO SECONDARY SCHOOL DAYS

Hear from Australia's most exciting literary talents

Over four 45-minute sessions, students will be inspired and challenged through thoughtful discussion of literature and ideas. Authors will share insights into the writing process, invite students to consider new perspectives, and encourage them in their own creative pursuits.

The Secondary School Days program is programmed with students in Years 7 to 10 in mind but is suitable for all high-school students.

Sydney Writers' Festival acknowledges the 29 clans of the Eora Nation, the Traditional Owners of the land on which the Festival takes place. We extend this acknowledgement to all Traditional Owners of the land on which these events take place. We pay our respects to Elders past, present and emerging.

DATES AND VENUES

**Thursday
19 May**

**NEW VENUE:
Sydney Town Hall**

**Monday
23 May**

**The Concourse,
Chatswood**

**Tuesday
24 May**

**NEW VENUE:
Joan Sutherland
Performing Arts
Centre, Penrith**

Tickets

\$25 per student (there is one free teacher ticket per 20 paying students)

\$25 per additional teacher

Tickets to Sydney Town Hall are free for secondary schools with an ICSEA value of under 1000.

Booking

You can book online at swf.org.au

**If you have any questions,
please contact:**

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

Core Funders



CITY OF SYDNEY



Australia
Council
for the Arts

Principal Partner



THE PROGRAM

Sarah Ayoub: Empathy Starts With Me

A love letter to Western Sydney and Lebanon, **Sarah Ayoub's** brilliant new novel, *The Cult of Romance*, explores how it feels to live between cultures as a young person, navigating friendships, families and conflicting intergenerational ideals. With insights gained from her PhD, Sarah invites students to investigate the link between literature and empathy, and the role stories play in transforming a group of individuals into a community. By the end of the session, students will be emboldened to create narratives that are grounded in the struggles, joys and landscapes of their own lives.

Amie Kaufman: Seeing Story

New York Times, *USA Today* and internationally bestselling author **Amie Kaufman** gives a mind-expanding masterclass on building worlds in unfamiliar times and places. Drawing on her extensive experience writing award-winning science fiction and fantasy, including titles such as *Illuminae*, *The Other Side Of The Sky* and *Aurora Rising*, Amie demonstrates how by keeping a writerly eye on the world around you, the smallest observed details can bloom into the most extraordinary tales. Students will leave with a new way of looking at the world around them – ready to spot all its magical potential.

Kay Kerr: Reading the Signs

Kay Kerr quickly made her mark on the Australian YA world with *Please Don't Hug Me*, her funny and heart-warming debut novel exploring friendship and grief through the eyes of Erin, a young autistic woman. In her latest novel, *Social Queue*, Kay turns her attention to missed connections and missed signals with autistic protagonist Zoe, who must navigate a path to love while forging her dream writing career. Join Kay for a fascinating discussion with **Tobias Madden** on the importance of writing disability into YA, the power of 'bright side' stories and how a little optimism can go a long way.

Jared Thomas: The Heart of the Matter

Whether he's writing about the joys of basketball or the complexities of life in a regional community, **Jared Thomas** is passionate about exploring the stories and aspirations of young Aboriginal people. An award-winning author and Nukunu person of the Southern Flinders Ranges, Jared's YA novels *Calypso Summer*, *Songs That Sound Like Blood* and the upcoming *My Spare Heart* speak to the many young people finding strength and courage in the face of discrimination and oppression. In this session, Jared shares how stories like his can offer a roadmap to figuring your way through life and reaching your potential.

TIMETABLE

9.30am Arrive at venue

10am Morning sessions

11.30am Lunch break

12.30pm Afternoon sessions

2pm Finish

All sessions run for 45 minutes. We recommend students bring their own lunch. Please note, signed books will be available for purchase on the day.

MEET THE AUTHORS



Dr Sarah Ayoub

Sarah Ayoub is a journalist, author and academic based in Sydney. She teaches journalism and writing at the University of Sydney and University of Notre Dame, and her work has appeared in *The Sydney Morning Herald*, *The Guardian*, *The Australian*, *ELLE*, *Marie Claire* and more. Sarah completed a PhD examining interventionist intersectional narratives in Australian YA, which inspired her forthcoming novel, *The Cult of Romance*, set in Western Sydney and Lebanon. Her debut picture book, *The Love That Grew*, is out in 2022.



Amie Kaufman

Amie Kaufman is a *New York Times*, *USA Today* and internationally bestselling author of science fiction and fantasy. Her award-winning work has been translated into nearly 30 languages and several of her series are in development for film and TV. Amie has degrees in history, literature, law and conflict resolution, and is undertaking a PhD in Creative Writing. She is the host of the podcast *Amie Kaufman on Writing*. Amie lives by the sea in Melbourne with her family and an extremely large personal library.



Kay Kerr

From the Sunshine Coast, Kay Kerr is a former journalist and community newspaper editor, and is now a freelance writer. Kay was writing her first novel, *Please Don't Hug Me*, when she received her autism diagnosis. *Please Don't Hug Me* was shortlisted for the Australian Book Industry Awards' Book of the Year for Older Children and was a 2021 CBCA Notable Book for Older Readers. *Social Queue* is her second YA novel.



Tobias Madden

Originally from Ballarat, Tobias worked for 10 years as a dancer, performing in musicals such as *Mary Poppins*, *CATS*, *Singin' in the Rain* and *Guys and Dolls*. In 2019, Tobias edited and published *Underdog: #LoveOzYA Short Stories*, which featured his first published work, 'Variation'. Tobias is a passionate member of the #LoveOzYA and LGBTQ+ communities, and currently works full time for a major independent publishing company. He now lives in Sydney with his husband, Daniel, and their cavoodle, Ollie.



Dr Jared Thomas

Dr Jared Thomas is a Nukunu person of the Southern Flinders Ranges, and the South Australian Museum and University of South Australia Research Fellow, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Material Culture and Art. His novel *Calypso Summer* joined the 2015 International Youth Library White Raven list. His recent releases include *Songs That Sound Like Blood*, and the Game Day series, which was written with NBA player and Olympian Patty Mills. His new novel, *The Shape of My Heart*, will be released in April, 2022.

