

MAXINE BENEBA CLARKE is the author of the acclaimed memoir 'The Hate Race', the award-winning short fiction collection 'Foreign Soil', and the poetry collections 'Carrying The World' and 'How Decent Folk Behave'. Her books for children include the Boston Globe/Horn Prize winning picture book 'When We Say Black Lives Matter', Patchwork Bike, and the critically acclaimed illustrated poem



KERRY O'BRIEN is one of Australia's most distinguished and respected journalists with six Walkley Awards for excellence in journalism including the Gold Walkley, and the Walkley for Outstanding Leadership. He has interviewed many world leaders including Barack Obama, Nelson Mandela, Mikhail Gorbachev, Margaret Thatcher and Tony Blair, as well as many influential figures in the arts, science and business.



PIP WILLIAMS' first novel, 'The Dictionary of Lost Words', became an international bestseller and has been adapted for the stage, premiering at the Sydney Theatre Company later in the year. 'The Bookbinder of Jericho' is her second novel, and again combines her talent for historical research and beautiful storytelling.



WIL ANDERSON is the author of 'I am Not fine, Thanks'. He is also a Helpmann Award-winning stand-up comedian who has also received the People's Choice Award at the Melbourne International Comedy Festival (MIF) a record six times, selling more tickets than any other act in the history of the festival.



HEATHER ROSE is the author of eight novels and the memoir 'Nothing Bad Ever Happens Here'. Her most recent novel 'Bruny' won the ABIA 2020 General Fiction Book of the Year and is currently in production as a six-part television series. 'The Museum of Modern Love' has been translated into more than a dozen languages.



EUGEN BACON is an African Australian author of several novels and fiction collections. She's a 2022 World Fantasy Award finalist whose creative work has appeared in literary and speculative fiction publications worldwide, including Award Winning Australian Writing, Fantasy Magazine, Fantasy & Science Fiction, and Year's Best African Speculative Fiction.



THOMAS MAYO is a Kaurareg Aboriginal and Kalkajal, Erubamie Torres Strait Islander man who joins us via livestream. He is an advocate in the campaign for a constitutionally enshrined Voice - the key proposal in the Uluru Statement, and advises the Diversity Council of Australia and the From the Heart campaign. His most recent release is The Voice to Parliament Handbook.



HOLLY THROSBY is a musician and novelist. She has released five solo albums, a collection of original children's songs, two albums as part of the band Seeker Lover Keeper, and has been nominated for five ARIAs. Holly's novels, Goodwood and Cedar Valley were both critically acclaimed bestsellers. Her third novel, 'Clarke', is out now.



ROBERT DESSAIX is best-known as a writer of literary non-fiction, but has also published two novels, several short stories and one play. His latest books include the memoir 'What Days Are For', 'The Pleasures of Leisure', 'The Time of Our Lives', published to great acclaim in 2020, and most recently, 'Abracadabra', a collection of Robert's talks and addresses.



GAIL JONES is one of Australia's most celebrated writers whose work has been translated into several languages. She has received numerous literary awards, including the Prime Minister's Literary Award, the Miles Franklin Literary Award, the International Dublin Literary Award and the Prix Femina Etranger.



With over 40 writers attending, featured guests include:

PAUL BARRY is a journalist and author who has written about some of Australia's most powerful figures, including Alan Bond, Kerry Packer and Rupert Murdoch. He has presented the ABC's Media Watch for the last 10 years. He suspects it's high time he retired, while he still has some friends.



FIRST DOG ON THE MOON is Australia's favourite marsupial based cartoonist. A playwright, author, terrible musician, amateur bird enthusiast and Walkley award winning resident of Tasmania, he used to think that wildly left wing cartoons might change the world and look how that has worked out. Oh well.



PETER FITZSIMONS is Australia's bestselling non-fiction writer, and for the past 35 years has also been a journalist and columnist with the SMH and the Sun-Herald. He is the author of a number of highly successful books, including Breaker Morant, Burke and Willis, Monash's Masterpiece, Kokoda, Ned Kelly and Gallipoli. His most recent release is The Battle of Long Tan.



ISOBELLE CARMODY is writer of science fiction, fantasy, children's and juvenile literature. She began work on the highly acclaimed Obernewtyn Chronicles when she was just fourteen years old. Her recognitions include the CBC Children's Book of the Year, the Children's Literature Peace Prize, the Gold Aurealis Award, a NSW Premier's Literary Award and many more.



ANTON ENUS is an award winning broadcast journalist with more than 20 years of experience. His career spans television, radio and print coverage of international news and current affairs in both South Africa and Australia. He is currently the co-host for SBS World News.



SPECIAL EVENTS

POETRY SLAM

Sponsored by Kombu Wholefoods
BOOK WAREHOUSE MARQUEE,
7.15pm - 10.15pm Friday

FREE EVENTS

LOCAL AUTHOR MARQUEE
Sponsored by Waterfall Way Associates
Festival Grounds

Saturday 11:30am - 4:30pm
Sunday 10am to 4:30pm

Daily program of local author talks & panels will be available on-site and on the BRWF website

FREE CHILDREN'S EVENTS

LOCAL AUTHOR MARQUEE

Saturday 9am - 10am

GUMBAYNGGIRR STORYTELLING

Join the region's much-loved (and hugely entertaining)

Uncle Micklo as he takes us on a journey through local Indigenous myths and stories

Saturday 10am - 10:30am

MAKING SPOOKY CHARACTERS

Join Children's Author Reece Carter

as he guides us through making our own spooky characters.

(Suitable for kids aged 8 - 12)

Saturday 10:30am - 11:00am

THE SOUND OF THE THING

Join Children's Author Maxine Beneba Clarke

Come celebrate poems about candy, peanut butter and pets.

Poems about a big brother's messy room, a grandfather's fading memory and a grandmother's garden magic.

(Suitable for kids aged 9 to 99)

TICKET INFORMATION

Individual Ticket: \$29.90 (\$26.15 concession)

Three Ticket Pass: \$80.75 (\$70.65 concession)

Six Ticket Pass: \$152.50 (\$133.50 concession)

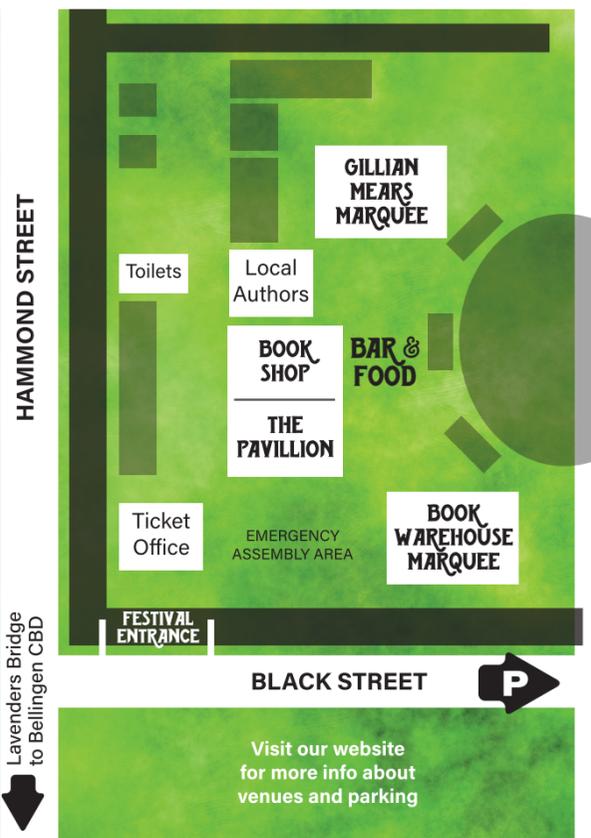
The Bellingen Readers & Writers Festival may amend the festival program at any time. Unavoidable program changes will be advised via the BRWF website, BRWF social media/newsletter and/or on-site.

Children under 10 must be accompanied by an adult.

Proof of concession must be presented at entry to event.

TICKETS AVAILABLE ONLINE AT:

www.bellingenwritersfestival.com.au/tickets



Proudly sponsored by:



BELLINGEN READERS & WRITERS FESTIVAL

JUNE LONG WEEKEND 9th - 11th JUNE

2023 FESTIVAL PROGRAM

www.bellingenwritersfestival.com.au



PROGRAM

JUNE LONG WEEKEND 9th - 11th JUNE

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FRIDAY

BOOK WAREHOUSE MARQUEE
POETRY SLAM
7:50pm - 10:15pm

It wouldn't be the same festival without our long-standing slam, so come along to see the most dazzling performance poets our region has to offer - and maybe even a surprise or two...

BOOK WAREHOUSE *Marquee*

GILLIAN MEARS *Marquee*

PAVILION *Stall*

SATURDAY

9am - 10am

Fr. Yawwakkalan | **MAXINE BENEBA CLARKE & KATE EVANS**
The award-winning author of 'Foreign Soil', 'The Hate Face' and 'How Decent Folk Behave', Maxine is a fearless explorer across memoir, non-fiction, poetry, short stories and children's fiction. This conversation will be one to remember.

10.30am - 11.30am

FREEDOM, ONLY FREEDOM: BEHROUZ BOOCHANI (LIVESTREAM), OMIID TOFIGHIAN & CRAIG FOSTER
'No Friend But the Mountain' recounted his experiences in detention on Manus Island. Now, Craig Foster leads this stirring conversation on Behrouz's latest book, 'Freedom, Only Freedom', alongside his translator, Omid Tofighian.

12PM - 1PM

SPECIAL EVENT TO BE ANNOUNCED!
Check the BRWF website for details

1.30pm - 2.30pm

SIT DOWN, STAND-UP: WIL ANDERSON, ZOË COOMBS MARR, TOM BALLARD, MARK HUMPHRIES No joke, four of Australia's best comedians in the ultimate fight to the death. Who will meet their untimely demise... Wait. They're telling me there's no deathmatch. Just non-stop laughter. Well, that's also good.

3.15PM - 4.15PM

Fr. Yawwakkalan | **PIP WILLIAMS & MELANIE KEMBREY**
Pip Williams' hugely engrossing 'The Dictionary of Lost Words' was a #1 Bestseller, and now she returns with 'The Bookbinder of Jericho' Join us to learn more about one of our most exciting contemporary novelists.

4.45pm - 5.45pm

Fr. Yawwakkalan | **AKUCH KUOL ANYEITH & ANTON ENUS**
Akuch was born just as war broke out between neighbouring tribes in South Sudan, beginning an odyssey that would ultimately see her reach Australia and the publication of 'Unknown', a harrowing, yet triumphant conversation.

6.15pm - 7.15pm

NOTHING BAD EVER HAPPENS HERE: HEATHER ROSE & MELANIE KEMBREY Heather has won or been shortlisted for a slew of major awards, including for her latest release, 'the memoir: Nothing Bad Ever Happens Here'. Join Melanie Kembrey to explore this dazzling life story.

7.45pm - 9.00pm

THE WORLD'S A STAGE: DEBATE & DEMOCRACY
KERRY O'BRIEN, PAUL BARRY, ANTON ENUS Join these acclaimed voices of news and current affairs for a vibrant conversation about the world of contemporary media and democracy. The tools of political truth and accountability are more important than ever.

9am - 10am

THE REPUBLIC: CRAIG FOSTER & PETER FITZSIMONS
Following the Coronation of King Charles III, join the current chair of the Australian Republic Movement, Craig Foster, in conversation with the preceding chair, Peter Fitzsimons for a discussion on the shape of the country's future.

10.30am - 11.30am

Fr. Yawwakkalan | **FIONA KELLY MCGREGOR & ELISA HALL**
'His' is an incredible character study and historical page-turner set in the wild underbelly of 1930s Sydney. Join Age Book of the Year winner Fiona to explore the themes and insights of this unforgettable read.

12.00pm - 1.00pm

Fr. Yawwakkalan | **HEATHER MITCHELL & ISOBELLE CARMODY**
Heather has performed in hundreds of productions, working alongside some of the world's greatest actors, directors and writers to conjure scores of characters. What better interviewer than a storyteller with one foot in imaginary worlds?

1.45pm - 2.45pm

Fr. Yawwakkalan | **SOPHIE CUNNINGHAM & STEVE COATES**
Sits down with this vivid storyteller - and co-founder of the Stella Prize - to explore what has been called her most important book to date. 'This Devastating Fire' is a dazzling novel shortlisted for the 2023 Victorian Premier's Award.

3.15pm - 4.15pm

IMAGINE A PLACE: SHAUN PRESCOTT, RHETT DAVIS, & CHRISTY ANNE JONES Roads that lead to new destinations. Buildings disappear into holes. What happens when your house isn't where you left it? Join these speculative fiction novelists for an imaginative discussion on anxiety, ennui, and shifting streets.

4.45pm - 5.45pm

SOMETHING STIRS: HOLLY THROSBY, MATTHEW SPENCER, KATE EVANS Across Holly's latest release, 'Clarke', to Matthew's engrossing debut 'Black River', we have the year's best mysteries to unravel. Time for Kate Evans to grab her deerstalker hat and magnifying glass - the game's afoot!

6.15pm - 7.15pm

AERO-AUSTRALIAN VOICES: EUGEN BACON, AKUCH KUOL ANYEITH, MAXINE BENEBA CLARKE These remarkable authors each possess a unique, stunning voice. From war-torn memoir, to Afrofuturism, to history alive within the lines of a poem, this exciting stand-out session is certain to stay with you.

7.45pm - 8.45pm

A DARK AND STORMY NIGHT: RHETT DAVIS, FIRST DOG ON THE MOON, ISOBELLE CARMODY, ANGELA MEYER From telling tales via group-chat, to crafting messages from cartoons, to showcasing the real world through fantasy or non-linear narratives - this is your session on the story of stories.

9am - 10am

Fr. Yawwakkalan | **ROBERT DESSAIX & ADAM NORRIS** Robert's celebrated work includes novels, non-fiction and autobiography, and has been translated into multiple languages. To discuss his latest release, 'Abracadabra', we sit down with this esteemed lover of language.

10.30am - 11.30am

ON POLITICS AND STUFF: MARK HUMPHRIES Did you know satirist Mark Humphries is co-author of quite possibly the most comprehensive book on Australian politics ever written? It's essential, undownloadable reading, mostly because something went wrong with the printing and it's all sticky.

12pm - 1pm

KOALA: DANIELLE CLODE AND TIM CADMAN From their megalaternal ancestors to the disastrous effects of colonisation, from remarkable conservation success in the 1920s to the devastating bushfires of 2019-2020, this is the story of koalas and their complex relationship with humans.

1.30pm - 2.30pm

CROSSING GENRES: KATHRYN HORE, ISOBELLE CARMODY, SHAUN PRESCOTT Genre fictions allows us to cross from the standard to the startling with the turn of a page and leave us asking: what comes next? Join these authors as they take you into unfamiliar territory.

3pm - 4pm

Fr. Yawwakkalan | **JANINE MIKOSZA & CLAUDINE TINELLIS**
'Homesickness' is a return to the many houses of Janine's youth. It explores how childhood lives on within our adult selves, and while there is suffering, there is also hope.

4.30pm - 5.30pm

FICTOHISTO: GAIL JONES, FIONA KELLY MCGREGOR, PAUL DALGARNO, ADAM NORRIS Some claim all history is a kind of repeat. Each of these incredible authors use historical echoes to write fictions that inform our lives today.

6pm - 7pm

GOING HOME: JANINE MIKOSZA, KIM MAHOOD, GAIL JONES
Homecoming sits at the heart of the past; our memories extend to include not only the people, but places that came before us. A captivating conversation of what it is to return to our source.

9am - 10am

VOICE TO PARLIAMENT: THOMAS MAVO, KERRY O'BRIEN
With the Voice Referendum scheduled later this year, there is ongoing uncertainty between the Yes and No camps. Indigenous leader Thomas Mavo and acclaimed journalist Kerry O'Brien share a balanced and detailed conversation ahead of this historic decision.

10.30am - 11.30am

THE BATTLE OF LONG TAN: PETER FITZSIMONS, MATTHEW SPENCER Peter explores Australia's deadliest Vietnam War battle. He brings to life the personal stories of the men who fought, the events leading up to the battle and the long war that followed.

12PM - 1PM

SPECIAL EVENT TO BE ANNOUNCED!
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1.30pm - 2.30pm

LIFE, WORDS: HEATHER ROSE, HEATHER MITCHELL, AKUCH KUOL ANYEITH, JANINE MIKOSZA These authors, writing from varied backgrounds with varied voices, come together to discuss the ways they have pinned their life to the page. Stories that stretch continents and generations; a session not to miss.

3.00pm - 4.00pm

Fr. Yawwakkalan | **FIRST DOG ON THE MOON AND MARK HUMPHRIES** First Dog on the Moon is Australia's only Walkley award-winning marsupial-based cartoonist, whose cartoons for 'The Guardian' are shared far and wide. But exactly who is the dog behind the page?

4.30pm - 5.45pm

THE MAKE-BELIEVE WORLD: ISOBELLE CARMODY, EUGEN BACON, ANGELA MEYER, KATHRYN HORE, RHETT DAVIS Join this cavalcade of renown storytellers as they share enthralling tales of the worlds beside our own, followed by insights into exactly what inspires their creation.

6.15pm - 7.15pm

QUEERSTRALLA: ZOË COOMBS MARR, TOM BALLARD In her ABC series, Zoë explored the fascinating Queer history of Australia - a place of gay Diggers, lesbian convict gangs, trans entrepreneurs and cross-dressing bushrangers. Dive deep into the untold annals of Oz Queensland.

7.45pm - 9pm

BOOKWIZ Our 2023 big finale! An evening of hijinks, hilarity, and many other words beginning in H! Take your seats to a quiz show like no other - chiefly because it's never been done before. Join our secret festival guests as they compete for festival glory!

9am - 10am

WHO TELLS THE STORY? PIP WILLIAMS, KATHRYN HORE, CHRISTY ANNE JONES Kathryn takes the western and subverts it completely into a grand feminist epic. Pip's novels explore the access to knowledge, while Christy recreates the practices of famous authors. This is a unique journey into how stories shape the world - and who gets to tell them.

10.30am - 11.30am

Fr. Yawwakkalan | **TOM BALLARD AND PAUL DALGARNO**
Millennials have been handed a housing crisis, crippling student debt, the gig economy, a cooked planet, and a truly broken political system. But never fear - Tom's new book is going to fix everything! Phew!

12.00pm - 1.00pm

IT'S IN OUR NATURE: SOPHIE CUNNINGHAM, DANIELLE CLODE, NATALIE ISAACS From a naturalist memoir, to stories hidden in museum backrooms, the chronicles of natural history in Australia make for profound reading. Natalie Isaacs leads this conversation on the importance of nature writing.

1.30pm - 2.30pm

I AM NOT FINE, THANKS: WIL ANDERSON AND MELANIE KEMBREY More than just a ruggedly handsome face who saves drowning nuns from burning orphanages, Wil has also penned a memoir-mantifesto that is both funny and insightful. It's a book of how to endure these turbulent times.

3.00pm - 4.00pm

WANDERING WITH INTENT: KIM MAHOOD AND GARY FRY A testament to personal freedom and a powerful argument for Indigenous self-determination, 'Wandering with Intent' demonstrates, with candour, humour, and hope, how necessary and precious it is for each of us to choose how to live.

4.30pm - 5.30pm

Fr. Yawwakkalan | **HOLLY THROSBY AND STEVE COATES** Since her engrossing debut, 'Good Wood', Holly brings to life the darkness at the edge of small town communities with unforgettable characters and plots. Here, Steve Coates leads a conversation around her remarkable new novel, 'Clarke'.

6pm - 7pm

RIGHT HERE, RIGHT NOW: NATALIE ISAACS AND CAROLYN HEISE Founder of 1 Million Women, Natalie believes that it is women, set to be most adversely affected by climate change, who have the will, skills, and power in numbers to lead the way on this critical issue.

9am - 10am

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9am - 10am

A TASTE FOR WORDS: MAXINE BENEBA CLARKE, ANGELA MEYER, JASON JOHN These authors bring their passions to the page in the oldest genre of all. For lovers of impassioned spoken word, blanketed quiet sonnets and everything between, join us for a literary feast.

10.30am - 11.30am

Fr. Yawwakkalan | **EUGEN BACON AND SETH JORDAN** Eugen's writing stretches across Afrofuturism, black speculative fiction, non-fiction, prose poetry, and more. Her latest novel, 'Serengotti', set in a fictional migrant African outpost in rural Australia, and is a love letter to the women who bind families.

12pm - 1pm

Fr. Yawwakkalan | **ANGELA MEYER AND CHRISTY ANNE JONES**
Angela's writing is not afraid to take risks. In second novel 'Moon Sugar', we find stunning odes to love and friendship, as well as darkness, desire (and astronaut),

1.30pm - 2.30pm

THE WORLD, POCKET-SIZED: FIONA KELLY MCGREGOR, ROBERT DESSAIX, JANINE MIKOSZA, CLAUDINE TINELLIS
Essays illuminate the world beyond our experience, like a panoramic view through a single window. To share their observations we bring you three of the most engaging writers of the craft.

3pm - 4pm

SALONIKA BURNING: GAIL JONES AND KATE EVANS Amidst terror and destruction, four familiar names emerge from this powerful historical fiction, each compelled to create something meaningful in the ruins of a seemingly broken world. Kate Evans explores this immersive, gripping novel.

4.30pm - 5.30pm

GAINED IN TRANSLATION: ROBERT DESSAIX, OMIID TOFIGHIAN, ERNA WALRAVEN Translation is one of the most curious, complex, and malleable elements in literature. To peer behind this literary legerdemain, join us for a fascinating conversation on one of the most important, often overlooked, features of writing.

6pm - 7pm

A COUNTRY OF ETERNAL LIGHT: PAUL DALGARNO & CLAUDINE TINELLIS A sweeping novel recounted from beyond the grave, as the recently deceased Margaret Bryce revisits scenes of a life across 75-years. From wartime Germany to modern-day Scotland, Australia and Spain, this heart-breaking novel has it all.