



NORTHERN TERRITORY
Writers' Centre

WRITE
TURN

JUNE 2013

 Northern Territory
Government



Eye of the Storm Review

In 2013 the Eye of the Storm Festival returned to Alice Springs after a four year sojourn. The festival, held from the 25th-28th of April attracted an audience of around 1000 people across 36 events. The digital program reached an audience of over 50,000 people. The focus of the 2013 festival was 'new Australian writing', featuring 40 of the nations most prominent emerging writers and digital projects.

They broke through digital frontiers. They expanded sexual horizons. They broadened minds. They pondered if Australia was a cultural desert. They dared to break the mould.

Some of the nation's most outstanding authors, illustrators, spoken word performers and filmmakers reached for the moon (literally) when they converged on Alice Springs in April and exploded dramatically on to the literary scene as issues at the heart of Australian contemporary culture were explored.

Audiences heard tales of love and lunacy as the moon eclipsed at dawn, were regaled with saucy stories and lusty slips of the tongue, travelled the Highway of Lost Hearts through the desert at dusk, scribbled their way through the afternoon with graphic artists, got up close and personal with memoirists and met the writers who bear witness to violence, delve

into the sexual politics of brothels, bedrooms and AFL locker rooms, embrace the digital world and debate the role of books in teaching morality to children.

Festival Director Kelly-lee Hickey and NT Writers' Centre EO Panos Couros are the deadly duo who created an action-packed, diverse and sparkling literary program for the fourth incarnation of the biennial Eye of the Storm Festival.

I've been to a few writers' festivals over the years, but this four-day event, which had the added benefit of showcasing the spectacular scenery of Central Australia and being perfectly timed with a lunar eclipse, was particularly illuminating.

Eye of the Storm, which mainly took place in [Olive Pink Botanic Gardens](#) with a lustful serving

continued next page



Workshop with Anna Krien

of dirty words at the Totem Theatre, included the next generation of writers and thinkers including Anna Krien, Kate Holden, Krissy Kneen, Ali Cobby Eckermann, playwright Mary Anne Butler, Marie Munkara, Jennifer Mills, poet Lionel Fogarty and Adam Hadley.

But not only did participants get to celebrate the power of the written word, there were also plenty of opportunities to listen to the perverse poetics of Brisbane-based Ghostboy and his cross-dressing instrumentalist Sir Lady Grantham, be blown away by the young powerhouse Laurie May, draw with Pat Grant and Katherine Battersby, tingle to the soul wrenching sounds of Steph Harrsion and Catherine Satour, talk to filmmakers Beck Cole and Danielle McLean as well as get lost on the highway to find Burning the Bitumen.

It was this galaxy of words, readings, workshops, panels, and cabaret performances served up to inspire a new generation of writers, readers and thinkers, let alone the extensive crowd that turned up, that impressed me the most, along with slick, seamless organisation and a side serving of open mic sessions.

One wag wryly commented at a mainly female attended panel called Hungry Eyes: Women Sex and Power that the festival was possibly preaching to the converted. True, but Kelly-lee and Panos have started a trend of attracting a



Panel Space at Olive Pink Botanic Gardens

younger, more diversified audience, especially with the musings of Digital Poet in Residence Katie Keys and the unveiling of The Disappearing, an innovative new app for iPhone, iPad and Android devices that explores poetry and place.

I pretty much attended everything I could at Eye of the Storm, except the final panel on Sunday afternoon, Bearing Witness, and the closing comedy debate, Is Australia a Cultural Desert?, as I had to travel the 500km back to Tenant Creek. But as the red-encrusted bitumen disappeared under the car wheels on the highway home a kaleidoscope of images and ideas floated through my mind and I knew that I'd been privileged to witness a genuine flowering of Australian contemporary literary culture in the desert.

2013 NT Literary Award Winners

Congratulations to this year's winners of the NT Literary Awards:

ZipPrint Short Story Award - Lois Murphy 'Responsible'

NT Writers' Centre Poetry Award - Kaye Aldenhoven 'Five memories from the end of a life'

Kath Manzie Youth Award - Juliette Parsons 'Change Takes a Change'

Birch Carroll & Coyle Performance Script Award - Sarah Hope 'The Hoist'

Charles Darwin University Travel Short Story Award - Natalie Sprite 'It feels like happiness'

Charles Darwin University Essay Award - Glenn Morrison 'No direction home: Race and belonging in a frontier town'

Editorial

Welcome to our first digital edition of Write Turn. We are now producing this magazine for all ePub devices, Kindle and printable PDF. We are looking at resourceful ways in which we can direct our resources more towards writers. Digital publishing is inexpensive, and offers much more of a hypertextual, multimedia experience for readers. Over the course of this year we will experiment, and also listen to our members' feedback, so that we can make this publication relevant, contemporary and exciting.

What an amazing four months it's been since taking over at the helm of the NT Writers' Centre. Eye of the Storm is done and dusted, the new team have had the opportunity to meld together in a working pattern, and I've begun the task of moulding what is to come. It's early days, but I'm very excited at the prospect.

I'm conscious that written work is ubiquitous in all art forms so am looking at all forms of writing - journalism, essays and critical writing, arts reviewing, poetic dialogues, screen and play writing, copywriting and digital publishing as being viable methods by which writers can earn a living and be a part of a shifting economy.

Whilst this year is a transitional year as we shake it up and prepare a comprehensive program for 2014, the NT Writers' Centre will

still be offering a range of opportunities and workshops, all of these aimed at professional development and, ultimately, at increasing income potential for writers.

Coming up we have Deborah Franco, acting publisher [Currency Press](#), the main publisher of Australian plays, coming to Darwin to meet with playwrights. She will also be available to writers in Alice Springs and remote areas through online consultations.

We have also been rekindling relationships and discussing future collaborations between [Queensland Writers Centre](#), [if:book](#), [SA Writers Centre](#), [UWA Press](#), [IAD Press](#) and [Barkly Arts](#).

After several years of work by board members Marian Cox, Leonie Norrington and Kaye Aldenhoven, we will soon be inviting applications for a residency at the Eco House, Darwin Botanic Gardens, for three weeks in September. The winning writer will receive travel, a weekly stipend and three weeks in the gardens to do what writers do best, write.

And perhaps the biggest news is, we have set the dates for WordStorm 2014 and we are now planning an engaging and provoking festival, May 29 to June 1 next year.

Executive Director, Panos Couros

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Eye of the Storm, tiny little poems

Over four days, Katie Keys wrote 170 tiny little Eye of the Storm-themed poems on 21 festival sessions or events, which were re-tweeted 284 times, reaching a potential audience of over 53,700 people on Twitter alone.

Short Film Screening: Framed Women

She rubs my skin with colour.
She rubs my skin with home.

The sink fills up with country
and her land goes down the drain.

She looks behind the lens
to find the self she thought she'd lost.

Erotica Writing with Krissy Kneen

They didn't like my sexy words
(or liked them way too much)

They were both in uniform
and by her stripes, she was the one on top.

Memoir Writing with Benjamin Law

Some memories as awkward
and as raw as when were lived.

The tales we share with strangers
and the lies we tell ourselves.

Where we draw the line,
where other's stories cross our own.

Traditional Healers of Central Australia book launch

He did not speak for himself
but his stories still got told.

So we can heal
for many years to come.

If they need us, we will find them
and will share our healing breath.

Burning the Bitumen: Highway Readings at Dusk

The pieces of me
that they took. (for Mary Anne Butler)

Behind them, the headlights of the passing cars
will pick out their stories in lights.

Off the Page: late night cabaret edition

If we were different people
I'd be you and you'd be me. (for Laurie May)

His deepest pant and hiss,
his black-lipped kiss. (for Ghostboy)

On mutual ground, we start a life
where neither'd lost before. (for Hadley)

Past Tense: history and memory

Simple truths, now cupped
between her hands. (for Ali Cobby Eckerman)

His sacred rage on paper
scarred a place for poetry. (for Joanna Featherstone)

I had to leave the hurt
and find an ending more than this. (for Ali Cobby Eckerman)

Closing Comedy Debate

Celebri-shitty 'culture'
will soon erase 'culture' real. (for Hadley)

Denial of culture
and heat from the land
will make them all jump
foot to foot.

Now the debate is over...
Cultural desert: YES WE ARE!!!

You can follow Katie Keys on Twitter

<https://twitter.com/tinylittlepoems>

Five memories from the end of a life

i.m. Brett Aldenhoven 22/12/66 – 6/2/2013

'Take two panadol and don't waste my valuable time.'

Darwin Hospital Emergency Department

1 They don't even know who I am

I thought my son was safe curled up in the big chair I'd pushed into the room they said he would occupy when a spare bed was found. When I returned Brett was still in the big chair but in another room.

A nurse bent over his wrist, cutting off his identification tag with her scissors.

Don't leave me here Mum, he cried tearfully.

Don't leave me, Mum.

They don't even know who I am.

An orderly had woken him, tried to take him to Tiwi Gardens Nursing Home, at first gently, then forcefully. Brett had protested: *I am not Anderson, I am Aldenhoven.*

He physically resisted his kidnapper. When the orderly, attempting to discharge his orders, sought assistance, the error was discovered, but not admitted, never admitted.

When kindly Dr Rob asked Brett how he was a short time later, Brett said:

Monty Python's Flying Circus continues,

and showed him the laceration from the sharp edges of the ID bracelet.

2 Red Jelly

How hard can it be to give me red jelly?

Only yellow, the anxious Filipina replies, handing him a tray with egg and lettuce sandwich (can't eat it) an orange (can't eat it) cold custard with canned peach slices (can't eat them)

I reconnoitre the trolley shelves in another ward, thief red jelly, return with my loot.

In his journal my starving son wrote:

'Three tea-spoons of red jelly

and a cup of green tea.

That's all.'

3 Yellow jelly

a glance at the old black dog was all I needed to be sure he would like yellow jelly, left-over yellow jelly that my son could not eat; yellow jelly that could not pass down, blocked by stomach cancer.

a sweet old black dog with grey beard his owner dropped him at the hospice on work days. he enjoyed the air-conditioning, visited my son's room, to lie with his stomach on the cool floor

as Brett lay dying, listening to the black dog's regular breathing.

chin resting on the floor, black dog watched over my son as his breath weakened.

4 In Sympathy

When I was crying loudly, walking around the boxes of your bits and pieces, sorting shells, feathers, stone tools, fossils of marine creatures collected at Gunn Point, photos of plants, gardens, babies, dogs, red glass cups you put on the louvres to watch the sun pass through, the weighty rib bones of dugong, coloured lures with barbs still attached, books I had inscribed to you, a poem handwritten in 1986, your Graduation Programme, your primary school reports, the ivory fish you chose from Rene's relics, the dragon Louis drew and framed for your birthday, your favourite velour dressing gown you wore on your Black Dog Days, mud crab claw trophies of your most impressive catches, a fish shaped candle, a bowl of spindle reels, when I was wailing loudly, pleading *Don't look Brett, Don't look Brett,* as I threw some stuff in the rubbish bin, Lily-dog lay on my bed with her brindle head on my fresh pillow-slip, and howled too.



NT Literary Award winner, Kaye Aldenhoven

5 Strange food

At 3am I get up to soak
dried apricots in a tin of apricot nectar.
I open a tin of baby food – rice cream the label says-
to eat with warm stewed apricots for breakfast.

I feed two chocolates to my grandson,
chocolates bought by Cousin Sonya.
You ate ones that melted in the warmth
of your mouth, the sweet smoothness
sliding down your hungry throat.
To your blocked stomach.

With the two packets of red jelly crystals
I will make a trifle
to eat after we spread his ashes
at his favourite fishing spots.

Kaye Aldenhoven

Katherine Region of Writers (KROW) is an active group of people that cover all genres writing and meet on the second Saturday of the month at the Katherine Library 10am – 12 noon.

KROW has had a busy year and is in the final stages of pulling together its 8th Anthology 'A Slice of Territory Life' a collection of stories about Territory characters. It was hoped that the book would be ready for launch at the Katherine Fringe Festival in June but life got in the way for many of the members and we are behind the planned schedule. It is hoped to be launched in October 2013.

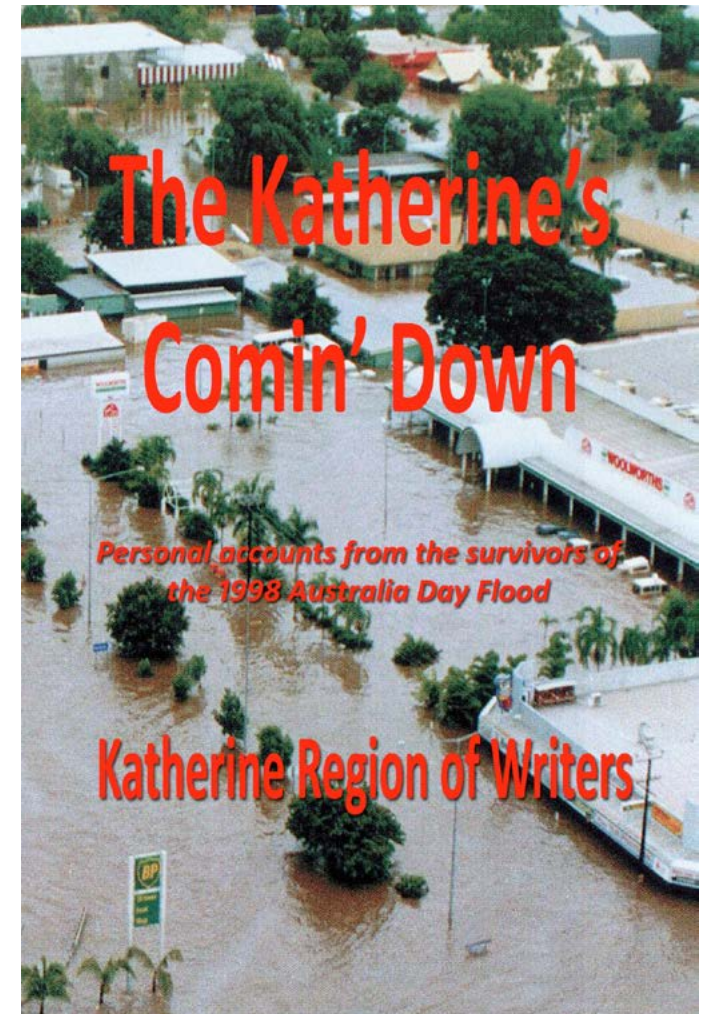
Following the loss of the electronic copy of 'The Katherine's Comin' Down' stories from the survivors of the 1998 Australia Day Floods, KROW members re scanned the original book and have reprinted it. Though it is now 15 years since that fateful flood, the recent QLD floods bring many of the memories rushing back for Katherine residents and the book remains an important historical documentation of one of the major Northern Territory disasters since Cyclone Tracy. You can purchase copies by contacting KROW.

KROW is thrilled to be able to partner with the NT Writers Centre and support the second Katherine Fringe Festival by providing a 'Writing for Film' Workshop with Mary Anne Butler and a Literary Lunch with guest speaker Mary Anne

Butler, the NT Writers Centre and readings by Katherine writers at Knott's Crossing Resort on Saturday 22 June at 1.00pm.

Details and bookings can be made via
<http://tinyurl.com/book-krow-workshop>
<http://tinyurl.com/book-krow-lunch>

Toni Tapp Coutts



15 years later, this book has been re-printed

Reviews

First Nations Australia Writers' Workshop

Queensland State Library May 9-10 2013

Imagine walking into an auditorium filled to the brim with Indigenous and non-indigenous people from across Australia and the world. Writers, publishers, poets, playwrights, screen writers, academics, linguists, editors and facilitators all together in one room to talk about Aboriginal Literature - the only word I can use to describe it is "humbling".

Humbling because I did not understand the depth of work that has come before me – the depth of work of our people's "literature warriors".

Humbling to be in the presence of our forefathers and foremothers, in both a physical and spiritual sense, who have taken a once foreign medium "the written word", introduced and enforced centuries ago, used as a tool of oppression and assimilation, and reinvented it as a weapon of empowerment and change.

Humbling because I too am part of this movement – part of a fire that was lit in the bellies of our pain and our joy many years ago, now burning more strongly and brightly than ever.

Humbling because I can sit back and see that there is a new generation of writers coming forth



Playwrights, Jane Harrison and Kamarra Bell-Wykes

that have the freedom to write about whatever they want because we are no longer restricted to writing about "Aboriginal issues" or autobiographies because of the work that has come before them.

Humbling because I realised I have a hell of a lot of reading to do to catch up on 100 years of my people's writing.

Humbling because I really had no idea of the magnitude of our industry; that our voices are becoming so loud, so diverse and so powerful that white-Australia really has no choice but to listen.

Kamarra Bell-Wykes

I was immersed in three days of creative, exciting, optimistic energy of many people with a collective desire to develop, protect and support a vibrant Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander writing sector, which could offer greater opportunities for Indigenous Australians to participate in their chosen field of practice.

The workshop was a great opportunity to bring together emerging and established writers not only from across Australia but successful international speakers from New Zealand and Canada. I particularly enjoyed watching the young emerging writers soaking up the wisdoms being shared by their peers and role models.

I enjoyed talking and listening to the sessions presented by passionate writers, poets, story-tellers and playwrights. The talent at the workshop was inspiring and has energised me to continue working on my third book and I am committed to staying a part of this new emerging community of literature loving First Nation Australians.

Bilawara Lee
Elder of the Larrakia Nation

Mothers' Day Readings

As the sun set on Mothers Day, six mother-authors took to the stage, presenting an evening of beautiful, moving readings that dived into the incredible depth and breadth of experience inside that simple word 'mother'.

Thanks to readers Sandra Thibodeaux, Johanna Bell, Natalie Sprite, Marie Munkara, Anna Solding, Kim Lock and Abbey Rose for her stunning musical interlude. Special thanks to Helen Hansen for keeping the kids entertained with poetry and card-making.

Here is an excerpt from Marie Munkara's reading from her new book 'A Most Peculiar Act', due for release by Magabala later this year.

Sugar listened to the shrieking turn to rapidly diminishing sobs as the tortured pair made their way down the corridor to freedom while Mrs Young-Harvey's sensible shoes clumped past the office. Pausing momentarily as the toilet door squeaked open and then closed, the footsteps clopped in and made their way to the loo before shuffling briefly and then becoming silent.

"And if people only knew what a monumental feat it is to train you lot to do the most basic things then they wouldn't go whining to newspapers

demanding better rights for blacks" he grumbled oblivious to Sugars disinterest in the topic.

"Next thing they'll be telling us we mustn't take coloured children from their mothers because it upsets them."

Sugar watched the fly make a few more weak attempts at ungluing itself from the sticky paper before stopping for a rest. For some strange reason she felt an odd affinity with the fly that like her had also found itself stuck in an ugly situation.

"I know the mothers really are grateful to us for finding homes for their children but as primitives they just can't express it like we do" said the Superintendent as he recalled the traumatic scenes that he'd witnessed of native mothers being relieved of their offspring. "Father Fellon



Johanna Bell

told me so and as a man of the cloth he should know."

Sugar watched the fly resume its wriggling with renewed vigour. The toilet flushed and Sugar listened to the sounds of Mrs Young-Harvey clopping straight out of the toilet without washing her hands, and then off down the corridor. No doubt on the prowl once again for more unfortunate misfits to flog.

"Are you listening to me?" demanded the Superintendent as he noticed Sugars eyes glazing over from the boredom of his monotonous ranting. He'd never been particularly fond of Sugar and her insolent ways and today she was being particularly trying.

"Yessir" said Sugar with a start. She hadn't heard a word he'd said.

"Go find Mrs Young-Harvey so she can give you some work to do" he said turning to his paperwork with an unmistakable annoyance in his voice. He'd have to do something about her impudent behaviour. Locking them up and starving them for a day or two usually worked although this one would be bloody minded enough to die on him like the boy earlier in the year did.

Marie Munkara

The Lion Tamer, by Sandra Thibodeaux, directed by Alex Galeazzi



Rob Hoad & Ella Watson-Russell

May 2013 saw Brown's Mart Theatre, Darwin, morph into the Big Top when The Lion Tamer, written by Sandra Thibodeaux and directed by Alex Galeazzi, came to town.

This exciting and surprising play explores sensitive themes with razor wit and abandon. Together, Thibodeaux and Galeazzi weaved their magic, bringing to life themes of sex, politics, power and control writ large in flamboyant circus style.

The simply fantastic set (designed by Kris Bird, lighting by Luiz Pampolha) and costuming (Robyn McLean) evoked tremendous atmosphere layering each scene with visual intensity.

The soundscape (created by Panos Couros) was integral to the narrative, using lions, honking

geese and calliope to create a surreal, almost holographic, fifth character in this play that goes behind the scenes of one of the NT's most notorious political dramas.

Both funny and frightening, with more questions than answers, the characters draw you in. By the second act, the audience is walking the tightrope with Max (played by Rob Hoad) as he navigates his web of lies, whip in hand, surrounded by lions, pigs, honking horns, unicycles and seductive women. Ring 'mistress' Courtney (Ella Watson-Russell) struts her stuff in fishnets and corset, riding off on her mechanical horse and confidant. Sound strange? It is.

Lit with circus metaphor, the drama unfolds on sexual liaisons, cut throat deals and domestic violence – and then folds in on itself and unfolds again in a different shape. Predators and victims

merge as each character's humanity is revealed; the undoubted highlight being the horribly disturbed Eddie (Luke Scholes) negotiating with his other head.

As the tension mounts, the laughs get bigger and the audience balances on a knife's edge: Will Rosita (Shareena Clanton) escape the magician's sword? Does she want to? Who will the menacing Eddie kill - Max, Rosita or himself? Will the unicycles be enough to distract the Greens from the V8 Supercars? Will Max get fired?

Like any circus, The Lion Tamer has a big finish... with a twist. Well worth seeing more than once!

Kaye Hall



Luke Scholes

Voiceworks: The Importance of Getting Published

The first time you see yourself in print is something else. Especially for younger writers, it's a (I'm gunna go right ahead and say it) magical moment. A tactile confirmation that all those words you've struggled over are sentences, stories and statements of high quality. Someone who isn't family, a teacher or direct peer thinks it's so good they want a range of others to have the chance to read it as well. That's pretty great.

Having said that, the allure of competitions can be powerful too. Maybe it's also less intimidating. While there are some big fish out there, more localised comps can feel more tailored to wherever you feel you're at. And the money attached to some of them doesn't hurt. The kick of recognition is there, but in my admittedly biased opinion, it's just not the same. Getting your work out there is so important for young writers. After all, what is all this for if not the reader?

Voiceworks is super excited and proud to be the first place of publication for many of the now celebrated names of the Australian literary landscape. These talented peeps include Benjamin Law and Anna Krien. On a less grand note, the first time one of my stories made it in the mag I carried it around to every class for over a week. You can't do that with a certificate. Doesn't have the same heft.

Again, biased, but Voiceworks is a particularly wizard place to submit. First up, we pay a neat \$100 per story, poem, article or visual art piece which is accepted. Second, we go through an editing process with all short-listed work, which is invaluable industry experience. Collaborating with an editor gives you the opportunity to strengthen your craft instead of trying to go it alone. Third, even if you don't get into the mag itself, Voiceworks provides feedback for all unsuccessful submissions. Can't lose!

Kat Muscat

A Pounding Hope

When you look at me,
I see my world of dreams.
So beautiful and tempting,
But unreachable like the furthest star.
No poetry can describe,
A pounding hope,
A silent wish.
Now the weeks go by,
Like a flower, it withers.
But never truly dies.
You have the means,
To heal the blemish in my outer shell.
A pounding hope, at the core.
Beating for you and I.

Stephen Enciso



Kat Muscat



Stephen Enciso



The Voiceworks Group

Coming up

Writing for Short Film

Turn a short film concept into a well-structured screenplay with Mary Anne Butler. Sat 22 June, 9am-12noon at Smith Family, Katherine

Katherine Fringe Festival Literary Lunch

Join KROW for a banquet of inspiration, with readings from local writers. Sat 22 June, 1pm-3pm at Knotts Crossing, Katherine

Writing for Love & Money

Turn passion into profit. Combine your passion for writing with earning an income, in six easy steps, with Helen Chryssides. Sat 22 June, 9am-12noon at Red Hot Arts, Alice Springs

ALSO Sun 30 June, 10am-1pm at Frog Hollow Centre for the Arts, Darwin

Freelance Journalism Workshop

Ideas, researching, interviewing and putting your article together for publication, with Helen Chryssides. Sun 23 June, 9am-12noon at Red Hot Arts, Alice Springs

From Fact to Fiction

Truth is truly stranger than fiction. Learn how to turn real life into a best-seller, with Helen Chryssides. Sun 30 June, 2pm-5pm at Frog Hollow Centre for the Arts, Darwin

Writers & Copyright Law

Key principles of copyright law, relating to writing and writers, with Louise Buckingham, Senior Legal Officer at the Australian Copyright Council. Thurs 18 July, 10am-11.00am at Frog Hollow Centre for the Arts, Darwin

Meet the Publisher: Currency Press

Hear from Deborah Franco, Australia's performing arts publisher of theatre, music, and film and television. Supported by readings from local playwrights. Fri 19 July, 8.30pm at Browns Mart Theatre, Darwin

Private consults available Sat 20 July. Darwin f2f. Regional playwrights online. Call for bookings.

Playwriting Workshop

Expand and strengthen your craft with 'The Lion Tamer' playwright, Sandra Thibodeaux. Sun 21 July, 10am-1pm at Frog Hollow Centre for the Arts, Darwin

Poetry Masterclass

Workshop your poems with celebrated local poet, Sandra Thibodeaux. Sun 28 July, 10am-1pm at Frog Hollow Centre for the Arts, Darwin

Bold Type

Writing for Performance workshop suitable for 14-18yos. Mon 15 to Fri 19 July, 11am-4pm at Corrugated Iron, 8/18 Bauhinia St, Nightcliff

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