

write turn

a publication of the nt writers' centre

THE NATIONAL POETRY FESTIVAL COMES TO WORDSTORM 2010

The NT Writers' Centre and Australian Poetry are pleased to announce an exciting new partnership that will see the *WordStorm* presented in tandem with National Poetry Festival in 2012.

The festival, which will run from May 10-12 next year, will be held in Civic Park and Brown's Mart, with a festival club running in Happy Yess each night of the festival, featuring guest artists, open mic and original music. Lead-up projects and satellite events will be held across the city and the Territory.

The National Poetry Festival is managed by Australian Poetry, the peak industry body for poetry in Australia. Their charter is to promote and support Australian poets and poetry locally, regionally, nationally and internationally. Since launching in January 2011, AP has put poets on iPhones, in cafes, on planes and on television, and profiled their poetry on radio, on pillows in hotels, at festivals and in gift books.

'We don't see poetry as having its own special spot within the festival,' said Australian Poetry Director, Paul Kooperman, 'but rather that the festival is infused with poetry, that it becomes woven into all the events that make up the festival'.

The festival will still include all the usual WordStorm favourites – such as the comedy debate, workshops, literary dinners, thought-provoking panels and film nights – alongside café poets, collaborations between genres and artistic disciplines, children's activities and digital projects.

A strong online festival presence will allow audiences across the NT and beyond to ride the 'Storm wherever there is Internet access, ensuring members across the territory can get a taste of the festival wherever they are. Principle media partners, ABC Radio, will be broadcasting and streaming audio and Australian Poetry's 'geek in residence' Benjamin Laird will be on-board ensuring as much content as possible is available online.

Festival Competition

In 2010, the Australian Poetry Centre held their poetry festival way down south in Goolwa by the mouth of the Murray: *Salt on the Tongue*. You can almost taste it, even if you weren't there. The flavour of poetry and a special part of the country linger unspoken in your mouth.

Australian Poetry and the NT Writers' Centre are seeking an image and a catchphrase to describe and promote *WordStorm* and the National Poetry Festival. Held in tropical Darwin at the beginning of the dry season, this festival celebrates Australian, Indigenous and South East Asian writers of all genres.

The image and phrase will both be used on all promotional material, from program and posters to T-shirts and badges, from websites and Facebook to banners and signage, and will be included in all aspects of our national advertising campaign. Original artwork will remain the property of the artist. Both artist and writer will be credited for their work.

Winners will receive \$250 each, plus a goodie bag of all promotional material and a handful of free festival passes.

Competition closes Monday November 14. Entries to be submitted electronically to: executive@ntwriters.com.au. Please use subject header 'Festival Competition' and include contact details in the body of the email. By entering, you agree for your image/phrase to be used for all festival promotional activities. Entries can be submitted in both categories and can be considered for use together if requested.

For more information contact:

NT Writers' Centre [executive@ntwriters.com.au]

or

Australian Poetry [paul@australianpoetrycentre.org.au]

dear members ...



Well, it's been rather too long between newsletters, but with a full complement of staff at the NT Writers' Centre once again, we're back on track and you can expect regular deliveries of *Write Turn* once again. Turn to pages 4 & 5 to meet our dynamic new staff members.

As the build-up kicks in here in the Top End, plans for WordStorm start to brew. The office is warming up along with the weather as our small but busy office kicks into top gear. Both the NT Writers' Centre and Australian Poetry are buzzing with the joy of booking writers and planning events. It's an exciting partnership, and the festival

promises to be exciting too. One of our aims for next year's festival is to deliver more content digitally, so that wherever you are you can get a taste of *WordStorm* and the National Poetry Festival. We're also working on plans to get a writers on the road across the Territory delivering workshops and events over the course of the year.

While our program for 2011 is nearing completion we still have an NT Literary Awards masterclasses with Lisa Lang coming up very soon, in both Alice Springs and Darwin. Lisa taught a workshop in Darwin last year, while researching the Top End for her latest novel. Participants all loved her workshop and were keen for more, so here's your chance folks...

And to wrap up a year of fantastic Off the Page events in Darwin, we'll be back at the Railway Club on 11/11/11 with hip hop artist Liam Monkhouse, and Dael Allison, who is enjoying an extended stay in Darwin to develop her Masters thesis on Ian Fairweather.

But for now, there's plenty to read. Don't forget to send us your achievements so we can share them with other members, and if you're after a couple of extra bottles of wine for Christmas, then send us a poem!

Happy writing

Robyn

write turn newsletter of the ntwriters' centre

Editor: Robyn McLean

Production & Layout:
Cj Fraser-Bell
Robyn McLean

advertising

1/4 page = \$85

1/2 page = \$150

Inserts = \$50 per 100

Deadlines for advertising

Bookings: the middle of the month
or by arrangement. Adverts in
electronic form are preferred.

Please provide as
150dpi tiff or jpg files.

new members

Jo Anna Perry
Lianne Blanch
Jacinda Brown

Disclaimer

The information provided in this publication is presented in good faith as a service to members of the NT Writers' Centre. The views expressed are not necessarily those of the NTWC. While the information is believed to be correct, the NT Writers' Centre takes no responsibility for its accuracy. No liability is accepted for any statement of opinion or any error or omission.

members news

Congratulations to the following NT writers...

Barry Jonsberg's book *Being Here* won the Queensland Premier's Literary Award for YA Fiction.

Karen Manton has had a story selected for Best Australian Stories.

Sophie Constable won the NT section of the short story competition *It's never too late... to learn to read*, run by the National Year of Reading. Jennifer Mills (ex Alice Springs) won the SA section.

In the latest Australia Council Literature Board Grants three NT writers were announced as grant recipients:

- **Barry Jonsberg** [Established]
- **Sandra Thibodeaux** [Developing]
- **Mary Anne Butler** [Emerging]

... poetry SLAM

Slammin' in Darwin 2011

Whenever I'm at a Poetry Slam I want to be a judge, 'Pick me! Pick me!' But I've never lucked it. The usual deal in a slam is about six audience members are randomly selected as judges by tossing out lollies, balls of wool or whatever, and whoever catches gets the gig – a texta, a scorecard, and instructions to score each contestant between 0 and 10. Then to avoid the bias, graft and supporter-stacking so inevitable when gangs of poets get together, the top and bottom scores of the combined results are eliminated.

Here we are at Brown's Mart for the Darwin heat of the 2011 national Poetry Slam. It's a classic sultry, frangipani-scented Darwin night, the crowd's thickening; the Happy Yess lounges are all lounged on, there are plenty of bums on the plastic seats and a queue at the bar. I've scored a texta and judges' card, and I'm about to discover that judging a Slam is much harder than it looks!

Sandra Thibodeaux, Australian Poetry's first Poet-in-Residence, picks up the mic calling all comers to put their names on the Slam list. She's warm, she's inviting; 'Slamming isn't scary, the audience is going to adore you. You each get two minutes and we want you up here!' Dammit, she's seductive! There's talking, there's movement, poets shuffle from the shadows for a clandestine listing.

Then Sandra's back up, pulling us into the mood with a poem of her own. It's political, its feisty, its heartfelt, the crowd's cheering and she's saying there are people on this list who have never been to a slam before, never read or performed a poem; 'And I want to tell you there's love in this room tonight, whatever you do we're gonna love it, and one person from here is going to be going down to Sydney! Yes the winning poet gets a \$500 prize and they'll be off to the Nationals – which our own Kelly Lee Hickey won last year – and we want to see an NT poet up there again!'

The crowd's stomping and clapping and we're off. Names are pulled out of a hat. Being first starter is, got to admit, scary as hell, but Casey Homes does the spot proud with a poem about Australian Settlement. Then there's Garry on love & quantum physics, Clayton Bennett rapping global politics and media and Lola Stewart takes us swimming Darwin-style, dodging crocs, stingers & Parliamentry-generated poo. Antony Combe bares his soul on clandestine conception, first timer Thalon Fallon is up for an 18 second sprint, Will Kendran takes us down the Stuart Highway to visit the local sex shop and Liam Parry-Mills from the band Aborted Jesus Milkshake gives us the night's most

visceral line; 'A kiddy pool of menstrual blood'. Jeremy Garnet offers the apocalypse from his iPhone and Robbie Wesley affirms life without children and a mortgage. Then Jemma Whittaker comes out from behind the Happy Yess bar and wows us with a sisterly poem she's slung together during the slam, followed by Matt Haubrick who has the audience howling like wolves. Tim Parish scorns the appropriation of words that turns ecstasy into a drug and heaven into an icecream, and Liam Monkhouse raps the event to a rousing finale.

Well, not quite. There've been some old fellers who've wandered into the audience who've been itching to get up on stage. So while the NTWC's Robyn McLean, who has been frantically time-and-score-keeping, tots up scores from the sweat-lathered judges (I've discovered this is no easy job), Ned Kelly, who *could* be Ned Kelly reborn into Darwin long-grass, and who has been providing intermittent harmonica accompaniment to the slammers clambers up to give us some more riffs and a rant about the cops, and an old man who has lost his brother sings a song in language.

Sandra's back up there exhorting us all, in the spirit of local poetry, to support the local sex shop and asking, 'Where could you see a better open mic than here in the Territory? It's all so raw and free and unpredictable, you have no idea what's going to happen. You just have to stand back and appreciate the guts. We are a bomb-blasted, cyclone-shredded town, so the words really matter, and the hearts in this room are take-homeable.' And to cap a fabulous night she announces the winners: Jemma Whittaker as runner-up, and Tim Parish as the poet who'll take the Top End down to the national finals in Sydney.

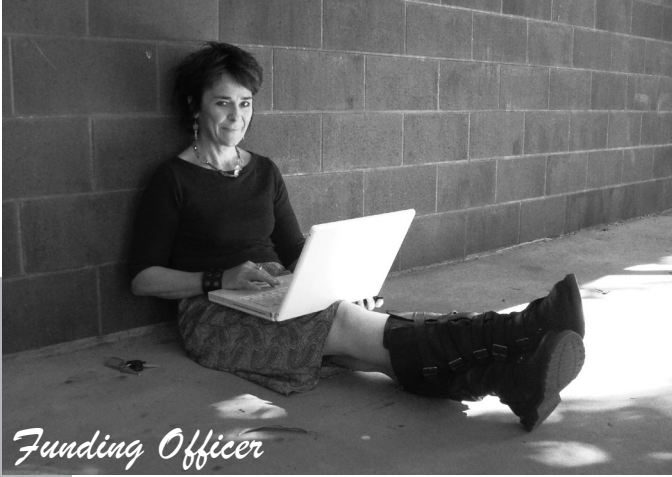
Dael Allison

Slammin' in Alice Springs

Celestine Rowe Byerley was the winner of the Alice Springs heat of the National Poetry Slam. The Alice Springs heat was held as part of the Alice Springs Desert Festival following workshops with Organics. Celestine described her poem as being 'about Aboriginal mob and how people look and them but don't actually know what they're going through... Writing can hold our stories and also it's a way to heal and to get stories out there,' she said. 'I've written poems and short stories ever since I could write.'

Last year's national winner was Kelly Lee Hickey of Alice Springs. NT Writers' Centre wishes Celestine & Tim the very best for the national finals in Sydney on November 27. Go team Territory!

meet the staff...



Mary Anne Butler

I'm delighted to be back at the NT Writers' Centre with the terrific team that Robyn is amassing. Robyn has brought me on as a grant writer for the organization, and I'm part-time - which is perfect, as I can then also focus on my own creative projects. I love the balance.

In 1994, I applied to Arts Queensland for a grant to develop a Young Adult fiction novel. The grant got rejected, but I knew the woman who worked as 'grants officer' there, and she rang me after the event to give me feedback. After picking my application apart, she said: 'Mary Anne, if you're serious about this business then you need to learn how to write grant applications in their own right'.

Flash forward 10 years, and I find myself as Executive Officer of the NT Writers' Centre [2003-2006]. A large part of the job was applying for, and acquitting grants. Operational grants, project grants, travel grants. Grants for wages/writers fees/infrastructure. If we didn't get the grant, we didn't have activity for our writers. So I entered the grant writing learning curve: vertical, and did my level best.

Since then, it's a job I've done for a number of organizations - and I actually love the process of writing grant applications [budgets aside!]. I enjoy refining the 'pitch', wrestling with semantics, encapsulating the 'aims and objectives' precisely within that 150 word field. I'm a nerdy, obsessive user of the online thesaurus; and my worst enemy is the cut-and-paste tool - because it's so easy to use, but rarely does any application justice.

I'm lucky in that I've been invited onto local and national funding panels as an assessor. While these involve pages and pages of reading - consequently taking up a lot of time - they're also a great way to learn more about the whole process. And it's amazing how few discrepancies there are among panel members. The strong, do-able projects generally float to the top of the pile.

cont. next page...

Cj Fraser-Bell

It's interesting, the twists our lives and careers take us on. I was freelancing as a theatre worker and visual-artist-come-gallery-sitter when I got a call asking what shape my post Darwin Festival life would take. I didn't have an answer so I came to an interview. Enter Robyn. "Would you like to work at the NT Writers' Centre?"

I'm not a writer. Not in any tangible, likely to be published way at least. I've scribbled out the odd song and soliloquy I suppose but I don't know anything about writers. I had to begin somewhere; I know about stories. I know about crawling in between miles of sheets with a torch and a musky, well-thumbed secret. I know that I'm more comfortable expressing joy and sorrow and triumph with my friends in a book than with anyone I would meet in the real world. You read something fantastic, and you withdraw, mark your

page and smile, clap your hands in glee before delving back in. There's something about words flat on paper being plucked off the page and inserted straight into that place where our feelings come from. We don't have time to go into that feeling place very often, what with jobs and kids and life - but in a book, or watching players on a stage or screen, we get to live in someone else's place for as long as we can stand it before we are thrust back out again, panting and hungry. Maybe that's what a writer is, they create the words that live in that feeling place and they rip them out of themselves with some dark magic somehow, and they put them on a page for the rest of us.

Cj is relatively new to the Darwin Arts Scene and comes at it with a passion for youth involvement and community arts. She is a dedicated member of the Happy Yess board and has worked and volunteered her skills in production and as a Stage manager for a number of music and theatre shows with Tracks Dance, Top End Terror, Corrugated Iron Youth Arts and Darwin & Palmerston City Councils since 2009. She dislikes shoes and hopes to finally have her license before she turns 22.



Office Manager

Margaret McDonell has been an editor and indexer for more than 20 years, and a word lover for a lot longer than that. She has worked as a freelance editor for many publishing houses, universities and organisations, as well as with many individual writers, on a diverse range of projects ranging from Indigenous life writing for University of Queensland Press to aviation texts for University of Western Sydney. Most recently, she has worked on Indigenous language texts and biographies at IAD Press in Alice Springs.

Margaret was born in Bega NSW (where the cheese comes from!) and has lived in rural and regional areas — apart from a few years in Canberra (which felt like a small town in those distant days) and too long in Brisbane



Alice Springs Project Officer

... cont from page 4

For me, the main constants when writing grants are:

- 1] I need to be screamingly clear about the parameters of the project, including aims, objectives, process, outcomes etc, and
- 2] I need to feel passionately about the project. I just can't fake this aspect of it, and I can't 'sell' a project that I don't feel passionate about. I probably drive Robyn mad with a million questions at the start of forming a grant, but once I fully understand it and believe in it, then the fun of writing it begins.

So bring on the thesaurus, and hit me with your limited fields.

...just don't ask me to do the budgets...

(she hates humidity). Coming to Alice Springs seemed a natural progression on the journey. She finds it an amazing place to live: full of extraordinary scenery, amazing plants, wonderful people and remarkable creativity.

After editing standard English for a number of years, Margaret had the opportunity to edit a few of the David Unaipon award-winning manuscripts for University of Queensland Press. Working with non-standard English and Aboriginal Englishes sparked an interest in the effect of different cultural backgrounds on the use of English. This led to a few years of research and a master's degree for a dissertation on non-Indigenous editing of Indigenous women's life writing.

Margaret's interest in cross-cultural editing then took her to India in 2005, where she spent three months with Penguin India on an Asialink residency. While she was there she worked on a new English edition of some of the Jatakas, tales of the Buddha's lives and the lessons to be drawn from them, as well as a couple of novels, a political biography and a book for Indian wine buffs.

In her non-professional life Margaret is a budding weaver, inspired by the texture of the landscape (and fascinated by the fact that the word "text" comes from a Latin word meaning "to weave").

As well as editing books Margaret loves reading them. As for genre, her attitude is that a good story is a good story, though she is partial to speculative fiction. She loves working with authors to help them accomplish what they set out to achieve. Working for NT Writers' Centre in the Centre will give her another opportunity to do so, working with the wide variety of writers to be found in Alice Springs and the Barkly.

Arnhem Writers conducted our first writing contest as part of the Gove Peninsula Festival 2011 in Late July. *By The Sea* was the theme of the festival and the subject for both the poetry and short story contest. The winners of the contest were announced at the opening Cocktail party event of the Art exhibition.

Best Poem: *Sea Storm* - Author: Anthony Burge

Best Short Story: *AYolngu Dreaming Story* - Author: Roger Goitze

Our next event in October will be a writing workshop on developing Characterisation by local writer Lynley Fisher, followed by an open mic night before year's end.

We are looking forward to a much expanded involvement of local writers in 2012 as part of The Gove Peninsula Festival.

Next year is the 40th year celebrations of the establishment of the town of Nhulunbuy. and the theme of the festival will be "40yrs of Nhulunbuy - 40yrs ahead".

This will be the slant of 2012's writing activities as well.

Interested and aspiring writers are encouraged to contact Ian Maclean of Arnhem Writers via our page on www.goveonline.com/clubs

Ian Maclean

competitions...prizes

Closing: November 11, 2013

The ANZAC Centenary Poetry Project challenges poets to answer the following question: What does ANZAC Day mean to you, to today's families, communities or nations? Total prize pool of AUD\$5000

[w] www.ozzywriters.com

[p] 61 (0)3 6362 4390

[e] anzac.poetry@pnc.com.au

Closing: November 13

The Ten Minute Quickie: Ten Minutes - Ten Plays - \$1,800 up for grabs

Eltham Little Theatre Inc. is happy to announce the return of their highly successful short play competition. **\$1,000 Best Script \$500 People's Choice Award** and introducing an additional **\$300 Youth Award (14-21yo)** Youth Category is open for 14-21 year olds and open category is for 21 and over and is Australia-wide. Successful selected plays will be performed at The Eltham Performing Arts Centre, Research, Melbourne 24th —26th May 2012. Open to Australian residents only. Actors and directors interested in participating in this event please email Paula or see the website for more information.

[e] 10minquickie@gmail.com

[w] www.elthamlittletheatre.org.au

Closing: November 21

Entry to the eighth annual *Australian Book Review* poetry prize – renamed **the Peter Porter Poetry Prize**, in memory of the late Australian poet – is now open.

First prize: \$4000 Shortlisted poems: \$250

Judges: Judith Beveridge and David McCooey

The Peter Porter Poetry Prize is one of Australia's most lucrative and respected awards for poetry, and guarantees winners wide exposure through publication in *ABR*.

Full guidelines and entry form available online [w] <http://www.australianbookreview.com.au/prizes/peter-porter-poetry-prize>



Closing: December 1

Australian Book Review (ABR) seeks entries for the sixth **Calibre Prize for an Outstanding Essay**, the nation's premier award for an original essay and one of the world's most lucrative essay competitions. The **Calibre Prize** is intended to generate brilliant new essays and to foster new insights into culture, society, and the human condition. We welcome essays from leading authors and commentators, but also from emerging writers. All non-fiction subjects are eligible.

FIRST PRIZE: \$7000, SECOND PRIZE: \$2000,

THIRD PRIZE: \$1000

[w] <http://www.australianbookreview.com.au/prizes/calibre-prize>

Twelfth Planet Press Novel Manuscript Submission Month – January 2012

Submission entry commences January 1, 2012 and ends January 31, 2012.

Twelfth Planet Press is looking to develop a new line of dynamic, original genre novels. Twelfth Planet Press novels will push boundaries to question, inspire, engage and challenge. We are specifically looking to acquire material outside that which is typically considered by mainstream publishers.

[e] manuscripts@twelfthplanetpress.com

[w] <http://www.twelfthplanetpress.com/news/twelfth-planet-press-novel-manuscript-submission-month-january-2012>

Closing: March 30 2012

Ethel Webb Bundell 2012 Literary Awards. For further information and entry forms, please visit

[w] www.swwofwa.com

Submissions accepted between 1 September and 30 November 2011

Short and Twisted, an anthology of short stories and poetry with a twist at the end, is seeking submissions of stories, super short stories and poetry for the 2012 issue. For submission guidelines see website

[w] www.celapenepress.com.au

[e] shortandtwisted@celapenepress.com.au

or send SSAE to 2 Bonview Court, Knoxfield, VIC, 3180.

Black Inc. is now inviting submissions for this year's Best Australian Stories, Essays and Poems anthologies. The submission guidelines are available online.

[w] <http://www.blackincbooks.com/>

awards..opportunities

Short + Sweet: We're on the lookout for experienced theatre professionals to become Short+Sweet Script Assessors. If you have a strong background in theatre, communications or teaching we would love to have you involved. Further info can be found online:

[w] <http://www.shortandsweet.org/shortsweet-theatre/submit-script/become-script-assessor>

FOOT FALCON Share

Your Stories, Your Jokes, Your Tips, Your Photos, Your Art. Would you like to have your say? Would you like to Thank Someone? We want Your stuff for Your newspaper. Stories, jokes, tips, photos, art, letters, puzzles, crosswords, opinions, poetry, fiction, recipes, remedies, classified ads, book reviews, movie reviews, music reviews, sports results, sports reviews. Be part of a newspaper that's for You and about You. For more information and contributions Please contact Michael, Sharon or Jo at OZANAM HOUSE
[p] 08 89814374
[e] footfalcon@yahoo.com.au

Learn the art and business of writing with The Australian Writer's Marketplace's Online Learning Centre. Discover inspiring, flexible online courses and learn at your own pace, wherever you are. Interact with fellow writers and get one-on-one feedback from our tutors, who are all published authors and industry professionals. Check out the AWM Online Learning Centre website for course details or give Queensland Writers Centre a call.

[w] <http://www.awmonlinelearn.com.au/>
[p] (07) 3842 9922.

The Red Room Company, a privately funded poetry organisation, presents its 'Clubs and Societies' project. For further information

[e] johanna@redroomcompany.org
[p] phone 0425 312 334 or 02 9319 5090
[w] <http://clubsandsocieties.org.au/>

The Tasmanian Town & Country Communicator

is a monthly magazine published in Northern Tasmania. It includes poetry and carries a regular open short story competition (1500 words max) with the winning entry receiving a \$100.00 book voucher from Fullers Bookshop each issue. Please email your submissions

[e] tandcc@aapt.net.au

Submissions are also invited for new novels, short stories or books exploring any aspect of Tasmanian life written by Tasmanian based authors for the review section. Books for review should be sent to: Book Review, P.O. Box 645, Kings Meadows, 7249.

Become a Commonwealth Correspondent

Are you interested in international events or issues in your local community? Young people aged 15-29 from Commonwealth countries are invited to join the Commonwealth Correspondents - an international collective of writers and young activists who report on local and worldwide issues and events to share their thoughts and analyses. Commonwealth Correspondents write short articles of between 150 to 500 words in length which are published online. For more details visit:

[w] www.yourcommonwealth.org

Positive Words Magazine

Seeking submissions of poetry and prose for upcoming issues of the monthly magazine. Send submissions and SSAE for response to the Editor.

Sandra James, PO Box 798, Heathcote 3523, Victoria.

For further information please email

[e] positivewordsmagazine@live.com.au

Publication Deadline: December 31, 2011

Stories in the Ether is an anthology which will "represent a compelling collection of short stories and flash fiction that were first published online in the fantasy, science fiction, and steampunk genres," and "will be published individually through Nevermet Press as a blog series, and later as a collected print, PDF, ePub and audio anthology for fans to enjoy offline or through other means." Learn more here:

[w] <http://bit.ly/ek0wDG>

Body Gossip is looking for real stories from real people and are compiling a selection of these stories for their forthcoming book. Stories that will inspire, encourage and reassure. Maximum 1500 words. Find out more about Body Gossip online

[w] <http://clicks.aweber.com/y/ct/?l=LMeOY&m=JDfjq1w7Nt3faC&b=3PCiLAqnWD.JnXSelZqrWQ>>

Digital reading survey

Are you using iPad and Kindle to read books? Are you producing your works in ePub format? What use do you make of social media to market your titles? Bobby Graham would like some help with a survey she is conducting. She will make the findings of the survey available to participants and the Centre so that we can all gain a better understanding of this exciting new world of publishing. You may pass the survey on to other local writers. You can access the survey via this link:

[w] <https://www.surveymonkey.com/s/publishing-ebooks>

review

the gap

by Meg Mooney

published by Picaro Press, 2010, 28 pages, \$5

reviewed by Kaye Aldenhoven

Well worth the cost of purchase, Mooney's poetry speaks of her experiences living and working in Central Australia with her own family and Aboriginal people. The poems are enthused with her love of the dry country and its people, a love that is intellectually and emotionally knowledgeable about country, its geological formations, flora and fauna, history, indigenous culture.

Ruby Gap beautifully evokes a break through the MacDonnell Ranges, bringing vivid birds to our attention – *a mob of zebra finches zoom into a bush / dozens of wings thrumming*. This poem ends *how this world enters you, looks after you*, which summarises the effect of Mooney's poems on me – they enter the reader, take us to another world and allow us to learn something profoundly important and authentic.

The eponymous *The Gap* is a series of 11 poem-contemplations which form a complex picture of an area of Alice Springs. A mosaic of multiple observations begins in a conversation with Jackie about indigenous housing, revealing a reverse view of how we live in boxes, but suite of poems covers a wide distance – a naive politician, quartzite, gneiss and shale, the creation of The Gap by the ancestral caterpillar, the restricted access for women caused by the activities of Dreamtime shapers. She describes a colourful world – folk walking Gap Road, *an old man with a cowboy hat / women in bright skirts and beanies, ... I see these people / and I see things are not right / for them / or for us*.

Mooney's ability to show us what we whitefellas are losing in contemporary interfaces of black and white is a valid yet unusual stance. Her images are brilliant, her vocabulary richly beautiful, her language elegantly plain and her insights acute. Meg Mooney has been in Central Australia for 23 years, living and working with Aboriginal communities for most of that time.

I hope millions of Australians buy this small book to enjoy the confident clear poetry, and to come to understand the pleasures of camping in a creek, the power engendered by understanding the desert country.

This collection of poems won the Picaro Poetry Prize at Byron Bay Writers Festival 2010.

Picaro is a specialist Australian poetry press, and on their website you can purchase many poetry chapbooks.

www.picaropress.com



Trollies

The big roundabout
on the town side of the Gap
is surrounded

by supermarket trollies
nose-to-tail
at least forty of them

a local builder and his mate
collected them before dawn
from footpaths and drains

'the police asked us what we were doing,
I said it was an art installation,
and they drove off' he says

actually it's a protest
against supermarkets
not picking up the trollies

left all over town
by those without cars –
not the builder and his mate

the trollies brighten everyone's day
as they drive past
more slowly than usual

it seems like these metal carts
have come together for some ceremony
like people used to here

and I miss the trollies
their cheeky, metallic grins
when they're gone

Meg Mooney



October 22 - November 12

fridge poetry

Got some poetry in your soul? Get it on the fridge. Visit Casuarina, Karama, Darwin or Nightcliff Libraries or the NT Writers' Centre and create a poem with word magnets on one of the fridges supplied.

Come along to the workshop at Casuarina Library (Sat October 29, 2pm-4pm) with Sandra Thibodeaux. Learn the fundamentals of good poetry while playing with magnets.

If you're shy, just get poetic in the privacy of your own home. Photograph the finished thing and email it to info@darwinfridgefestival.com.au for a shot at fame, fortune and fridge fabulousness. Prizes from Deck Chair Cinema, The Coffee Club and the NT Writers' Centre.

The Darwin Fridge Festival is a celebration of Darwin, its people and the humble fridge. It's also a chance for everybody, everywhere, to make art. Paint a fridge. Glitter up an esky. Make a magnet. Get poetic. Put a group together or go solo. When you're done, join in one of the exhibitions around town or email us photos of you and your art and we'll upload them as part of the online community art exhibition.

Full program available at www.darwinfridgefestival.org.au

NT Literary Awards Masterclass: Short Story workshop with Lisa Lang

Alice Springs: Saturday 29 October

9am - 4pm @ Red Hot Arts

Darwin: Saturday 5 November

9am - 4pm @ Frog Hollow Centre for the Arts

bookings essential: [p] 08 8941 2651

[e] info@ntwriters.com.au

Full price \$125 | member OR concession \$110

member & concession \$90

Please book early to ensure these workshops go ahead and to give Lisa time to review your work prior to the day.

An opportunity for people to deepen their understanding of the short story form and develop their own writing practice. Participants are invited to submit a story (3000 word limit) to be read and workshopped in the class. Topics covered will include: voice, character, conflict, structure and the all-important ending.

Lisa's 'Fact to Fiction' workshop in late 2010 was a big hit with participants. With the NT Literary Awards opening for entries soon, it's a perfect opportunity to get started polishing up your work. Pieces for workshopping should be emailed to info@ntwriters.com.au by the Monday prior to the workshop you wish to attend.

Lisa Lang is a Melbourne writer and workshop facilitator. Her novel, *Utopian Man*, was a joint winner of the Australian/Vogel Literary Award, and shortlisted for the NSW Premier's Literary Awards and WA Premier's Book Awards. She is also the author of *E.W. Cole: Chasing the Rainbow*, a non-fiction title in the popular Arcade history series. She was named a *Sydney Morning Herald* Best Young Novelist in 2011.



a most useful book

What's another word for Thesaurus?

Flicking through a book of synonyms and antonyms is always a welcome diversion for this lonesome scribbler. Derived from the Greek word meaning 'treasure', the thesaurus is a trove of literary porn and, for me, the more esoteric and unusual the words, the better. Of course, there's also a massive risk in thesaurus diving. It only takes one misstep for a sentence to go completely tumultuary.

As *Daily Writing Tips*' Jenny Blanchard says, 'Not all synonyms were created equal,' and it is these fine differences in meaning and usage that I find fascinating and why the Thesaurus holds such interest for me.

Bronwyn Lea spoke about the importance of word choice at the Australian Poetry Workshop held in Wollongong, NSW that I attended earlier this year. She contrasted Anglo Saxon words which are often more concrete, funny and emotional with those from French and Latin which can be more conceptual, abstract and euphemistic. Think about 'cow' versus 'beef', for instance. And about 'gone' versus 'disappear.'

Like most writers, I'm always on the lookout for inspiration, for ways to expand my literary repertoire and to make my writing fresher. Recently, I directed my *Tips4Writers* followers to some unusual thesauri on a site called The Bookshelf Muse at <<http://thebookshelfmuse.blogspot.com>>. Using their *Emotional Thesaurus*, you can look up different ways to show a character's indifference for instance, or confusion. And there are lists of words and phrases to describe a range of Settings, Character Traits, Weather, Textures and Shapes. I also cautioned that some of the listings were already quite tired and that if nothing else they might serve as a prod for us to keep searching and experimenting.

If you'd like to receive *Tips4Writers*, please intercommunicate with, drop a line, give a hoy or send a message in a bottle to Bronwyn. Or email her at b_mehan@bigpond.com

Mining the Thesaurus

Absailing the deep shaft of synonyms

I slide

on loose shales of meaning.

Burrowing, I'm after the apt yet unpredictable.

Comprehensive wordlists can prove

Dangerous though (nothing more than

Empty shells).

First thoughts are

Golden and this dogged delving of mine sends their value

Hurting on poetry's Standard & Poors.

Inevitably, I get waylaid by the search -

Jump from

Kimberlite to chromium

Losing my way until I fall for something

Mellifluous

[ORIGIN: Middle English from Old French or Late Latin mellifluous, from mel 'honey' + fluere 'flow'.]

Necessitating tortuous manipulations

Overcooking my work into the literary equivalent of a TV dinner.

Polysyllabic pap. It's dirty work. Like a guiltily satisfying Quickie with a

Reference Librarian between the hard-backed

Serials Collection and

Thesauri: Collins, Macquarie, Merriam-Webster. I try, but I'm

Unable to resist digging for the most

Voluptuous

Words. Why settle for any old rock when I have

Xenolith

Yttrium and

Zeolite to play with?

Bronwyn Mehan



Obituary Dr Allan Skertchly 1929 - 2011

Dr Allan Skertchly had a long career as an academic scientist, university administrator and public servant in academic institutions around Australia and internationally. As Public Officer of the NTWC for many years he was the crucial writer of our constitution, a mammoth task he completed with verve. Allan wrote much NTWC policy, and helped to establish sound HRM practices. Allan was valued for his calm courageous advice in hot spots, and his expertise in ensuring correct governance of our fledgling NTWC.

Dr Skertchly contributed immensely to the thriving Writers' Centre we enjoy. Dr Skertchly passed away April 2011.

announcing... the final
Off the Page
for 2011

The Darwin Railway Club

featuring

Liam Monkhouse
Dael Allison

and other fabulous talent

... including ... YOU?

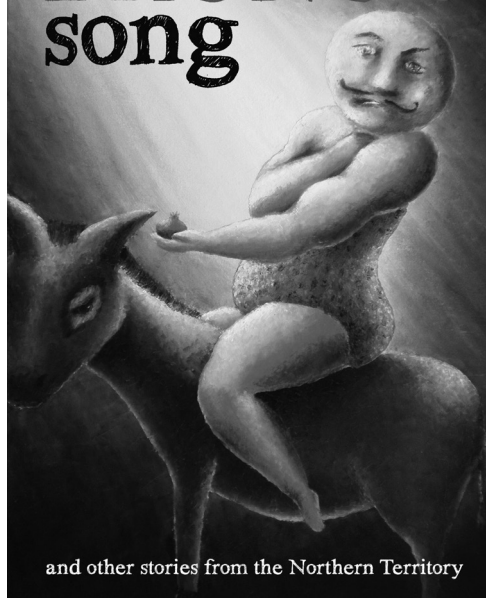
open mic registration from 7pm

food available + live music

11-11-11
eleven eleven eleven

The voices in 'Bruno's Song' ring out loud with emotion, are true and mysterious: you'd be hard pressed to find a better collection of stories in the country.
- Sophie Cunningham

**BRUNO'S
song**



and other stories from the Northern Territory

stuck for ideas for
Christmas presents?

NT Writers' Centre
stocks a small range
of NT titles that make
great gifts.

At only \$15,
***Bruno's Song and
other stories from the
Northern Territory***
is not only a great
read, it's a bargain!

The voices in 'Bruno's
Song' ring out loud with
emotion, are true and
mysterious: you'd be hard
pressed to find a better
collection of stories in the
country.

- Sophie Cunningham

nt writing groups

darwin/palmerston

DAGS: The Darwin Authors' Group is an informal network of Darwin-based writers with a common interest in sharing and discussing the craft and business of writing. Writers of all genres welcome. The group generally meets at the Frog Hollow Centre for the Arts Conference Room on the second Thursday of each month. All welcome. For further information contact Bronwyn Mehan: b_mehan@bigpond.com

POW: Palmerston Own Writers meet at the Community Room, Palmerston Library, on the first Wednesday of every month from 5:30-7pm. All welcome. Contact Sandra Parker on [t]: (08) 8988 2172 or [e]: sandra@parkershouse.net.

The Fellowship of Australian Writers are currently in recess and urgently require a new facilitator. FAW have a strong nation wide history. If you are interested in reviving the Darwin chapter of FAW, please contact: Ted Kilpatrick on [t]: 8948 1216.

other regions

A GROUP FOR ARNHEM LAND is now meeting in Nhulunbuy. For more information, contact Ian Maclean on E: ian@nightsskysecrets.com

ALICE WRITERS' GROUP Currently the group is meeting at 5.30pm @ redHOT Arts on the first Tuesday of the month.

KATHERINE REGION OF WRITERS: Contact Jill Pettigrew: wjpp@clearmail.com.au for more information.

nt support networks

The NT Film Office provides advice on locations, policy, industry contacts and production matters, and offers support through annual grants programs. (t) T: 8951 1162. email: film.office@nt.gov.au

The Australian Writers' Guild is the peak national organisation for writers working in screen, theatre, radio and performance. [w]: www.awg.com.au.

If you know of local writers' groups open to new members, please let us know!

There's a Road Out Of Town

There's a road out of town. It runs for as long as you can handle it. It runs 'til you find someplace to settle down. And then it runs on again.

It runs straight for miles and miles at a time, an endless time, across black-soil plains revealing – inch by inch - the gentle curvature of the earth.

Bordered by fresh road-kill and decaying memorials, it crosses dry creek beds and raging torrents and bends and twists and turns and climbs through hills and drop-side mountains and down freeways and city streets and out the other side through farmlands and forests and lonesome bush tracks, through elegant boulevards of measured, exotic trees, through grey walls of gum, the scrag of stunted scrub, burnt-out wastelands, tufted carpets of spinifex smeared across the deserts, head-lit tunnels through darkness. White lines, no lines.

It sweeps around beaches devoid of footprints, weaves through swamps and rainforests on pummeling rickety bridges, disguises itself in deep billows of bull-dust, blows tyres on tar and dirt alike.

It's a road out of town. Above it, the tapestries of the skies unfold.



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