

february / march 2010

write turn

a publication of the nt writers' centre

wordstorm 2010

The Festival of Australasian Writing



Tim
Flannery



Lily
Yulianti Farid



Deborah
Cheetham



Wesley
Enoch



Wendy
Harmer



Andrea
Hirata

WordStorm, the Festival of Australasian Writing, will be held in Darwin, 12–16 May, with satellite events to take place in Alice Springs between 7–19 May.

The interstate and international line-up this year includes Tim Flannery, Archie Weller, Andrea Hirata, Wesley Enoch, Wendy Harmer, Arnold Zable, Dina Zaman, José Belo, Don Walker, Marcia Langton, Robert Adamson, Ali Cobby Eckermann, Mohamad Guntur Romli, Deborah Cheetham, Morris Gleitzman, Alice Pung, Nick Earls, Melissa Lucashenko, O Thiam Chin, Randa Abdel-Fattah and a new, surprise guest to be an-

nounced soon.

Meanwhile, the Northern Territory contingent continues to grow and glow with the participation of Marie Munkara, Mary Anne Butler, Jennifer Mills, Rosemary Plummer, Andrew McMillan, Mardijah Simpson, Nicolas Rothwell, Barry Jonsberg, MK Turner, Di Lucas, Kaye Aldenhoven, Jill Jolliffe, Caroline Reid, Jacquie Williams, Leni Shilton, Leonie Norrington, James Murray and many more.

This year, an Indigenous Writers' and Educators' Conference will precede (and overlap with) the festival. In ad-

dition to the Indigenous writers listed above, the Conference will also feature Yvette Holt, John Maynard, Bruce Pascoe, Lorraine McGee-Sippel, Rosalie Kunoth Monks and more.

The late Dorothy Porter once said she'd learnt more at *WordStorm* than she'd learned in ten years of festival-going. Share the experience at *WordStorm* 2010.

Turn to page 8 for juicy biographies of four of our *WordStorm* writers. Keep an eye on our website for the announcement of our mystery guest.

TERRITORY READ WINNER ANNOUNCED

We are delighted to announce the shortlist and winners of the 2010 *Territory Read* NT Book of the Year Award.

Seventeen entries of recently published books were submitted from across the Territory. The judges included such literary luminaries as Gail Jones (longlisted for the Man Booker Prize) and Steve Grimwade (Director of the Melbourne Writers Festival). After much deliberation, the following six books were short listed (in alphabetical order): *Cassie* by Barry

Jonsberg; *Every Secret Thing* by Marie Munkara; *Listen Deeply, let these stories in* by Kathleen Kemarre Wallace and Judy Lovell; *My Private Pectus* by Shane Thamm; *The Devil you Know* by Leonie Norrington; and *The Red Highway* by Nicolas Rothwell (see pp 4 & 5 for more on the shortlisted books).

The winner of the 2010 *Territory Read* NT Book of the Year, announced at Parliament House on Friday 12 February, is Marie Munkara's *Every Secret Thing*.

Gail Jones said of the book, 'There is a beautiful humanity to both the characters and the tale and all is encompassed in brilliant humour, canny observations and a splendidly clever social vision.'

Also announced was the winner of the first Angus & Robertson Award for writers of children's and young adults' fiction. This prize was awarded to Leonie Norrington for her book *The Devil You Know*, a graphic novel telling the story of a boy who lives with domestic violence.

greetings from sandra



Greetings Members,

And apologies for the late start to the year. We weren't lazing about on a beach somewhere. Rather, we were hard at work preparing for the award ceremony for *Territory Read*, The NT Book of the Year. As you've seen on the cover, the 2010 winner is Marie Munkara for her novel, *Every Secret Thing*. Meanwhile, Leonie Norrington received the first Angus & Robertson Award in the Children's/YAF category. Marie, Leonie and the other short listed authors will go on to enjoy a year of intense promotion similar to that experienced by the inimitable Andrew McMillan last year. Congratulations to Marie, Leonie and all of the short listed authors, and 'well done' to Natalie

Sprite who managed the initiative.

We've also been preparing for our first workshops and events, and planning the Year of the Edit. See inside for details. Of course, *WordStorm* has been requiring a mammoth effort as usual, and we appreciate the extra festival funding provided by ArtsNT this year. This has enabled us to employ Andy Ewing again who runs festivals with great aplomb and good humour.

The NTWC Board President, Megan Nevett, and I flew down to Sydney a week ago to swat up on business planning under the tutelage (and financial support) of the Australia Council for the Arts. The process ahead is arduous as we prepare the NTWC Business Plan for 2011-2013. However, it is exciting to be re-visioning ourselves as one of the leading literary organisations of the nation (according to the Australia Council!).

The AGM looms again - please attend on 24th March at 5pm at the usual site of the Frog Hollow Conference Room, 56 McMinn Street. We are particularly in need of a Treasurer and a Secretary, and we would like to thank David Morgan (recently re-located to Melbourne) and Kaye Aldenhoven for their excellent work in these two roles.

I hope your writing year is a wonderful one.

Sandra

write turn newsletter of the ntwriters' centre

Editors: Natalie Sprite
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advertising

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1/2 page = \$100
Inserts = \$30 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

Angela Bell
Gail McNamee
Carli Williams
Megg Kelham
Jane Hampson
David Rhodes
Andrew Bifield
Madonna Cox

Disclaimer

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members' news

Michael Whitting's story *She brings the light in* will appear in the March edition of Australian Book Review (ABR).

Mardijah Simpson launched a chapbook of poetry, *A Hammock of Stars*, in Christchurch.

AGM Reminder:

Wednesday 24 March 2010,
Frog Hollow Conference Room
56 McMinn Street, Darwin

Please note that nominations are
due by C.O.B. 16 March 2010
email: info@ntwriters.com.au for
nomination forms.

Agenda:

1. Consideration of Accounts and Reports of the Committee
2. Election of new Committee members
3. Any other business.

I think you are
more perfect
than Helvetica.

Year of the Edit

In 2010, the Year of the Edit will be delivered in both Alice Springs and Darwin, although the programs offered in each town will vary. Below is the schedule of full-day workshops on offer, subject to numbers. Participants may elect to choose one, two, many or all of the workshops below, with discounts applying for bulk purchase. Please register now via the enclosed form.

Workshop 1

The Kindest Cut: Editing for Writers
All good writing is rewriting. This workshop examines the techniques great writers use and hunts down the 'sins' of poor writing that affect characterisation, voice, point-of-view, structure, flow, style and word choice. This workshop will help get the ms more fit to submit. Shelley Kenigsberg; April 10 (Alice Springs) and 11 (Darwin)

Workshop 2

Editing for Indigenous Writers
Darwin only (during Indigenous Writers' Conference)
Open to Indigenous participants only, this workshop will teach you how to develop and polish your work so that it is ready for publication. Bruce Pascoe; May 13 (Darwin)

Workshop 3

Editing Indigenous Content
Open to both non-Indigenous and Indigenous people working on Indigenous content and/or with Indigenous writers, this workshop will cover aspects such as cultural protocols and understandings, linguistic diversity and voice. Bruce Pascoe; May 14 (Darwin, during WordStorm) and May 18 (Alice Springs)

Workshop 4

Self-Editing for Beginners
Darwin only (during WordStorm)
A practical, hands-on workshop for writers of either fiction or non-fiction. Key elements include voice, tense, point of view, writing effective sentences, dialogue, description and detail, pace, bringing characters alive, 'showing and telling' and stylistic consistency (particularly, with spelling, punctuation and paragraphing). Janet Hutchinson; May 15 (Darwin)

Workshop 5

Manuscript Makeover
Alice Springs only
A workshop for first-time authors towards making the best manuscript possible prior to submission to publishers or agents. Key elements include theme, structure, pace and flow, language/style and additional material. Janet Hutchinson; May 19 (Alice Springs - evening class)

Workshop 6

Structural Editing
While copyediting looks at words and sentences, structural editing looks at the 'big picture', to find the best shape. This workshop presents practical techniques for identifying problems and developing the logic and flow of a text. Learn how to design elegant solutions. Shelley Kenigsberg; July 24 (Alice Springs) and 25 (Darwin)

Workshop 7

Editing for Business & Government
A practical editing workshop suitable for those writing (or interested in writing) for government departments, businesses and NGOs. Shelley Kenigsberg; July 23 (Alice Springs) and 26 (Darwin)

Workshop 8

The Final Touches
How to present your work immaculately, from proofreading to typography and layout. Robyn McLean (Darwin); September 11 (Alice Springs); September 12 (Tutor to be confirmed)

Tutors

Shelley Kenigsberg has worked in publishing for 23 years as an editor, publisher, trainer and writer. She works as a mentor and developmental, structural and copy editor for private clients, large and small trade and educational publishing houses, corporations and government departments. She leads courses for editors and writers at literary festivals around the world and masterclass retreats in Australia and Bali. www.editinginparadise.com



Shelley Kenigsberg

Janet Hutchinson is a writer, editor and manuscript consultant. For many years she taught creative writing, mostly at UTS, and she has also mentored authors for the ASA. A freelance editor for over 20 years, she is the editor of *The Milk in the Sky* and *Fishtails in the Dust* and commissioning editor of *Grandma Magic: true stories by & about grandmothers*.

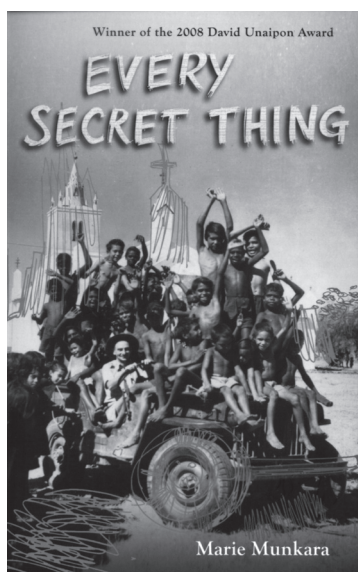


Janet Hutchinson

Bruce Pascoe is an award-winning, Indigenous Australian writer, editor and anthologist. His books include *Shark*, *Ruby-eyed Coucal*, *Ocean*, *Earth* and *Nightjar*. Bruce has also written a number of non-fiction works. The latest include *Convincing Ground*, a Wathaurong language dictionary and *The Little Red, Yellow, and Black Book*. His most recent novel, launched in 2009, is *Bloke*.

Robyn McLean has a Bachelor of Arts in Professional Writing and Multimedia. Currently Office Manager at the NT Writers' Centre, Robyn is also a freelance writer and editor with a background in academic research, arts management, teaching and design.

2010 NT Book of the Year



Every Secret Thing

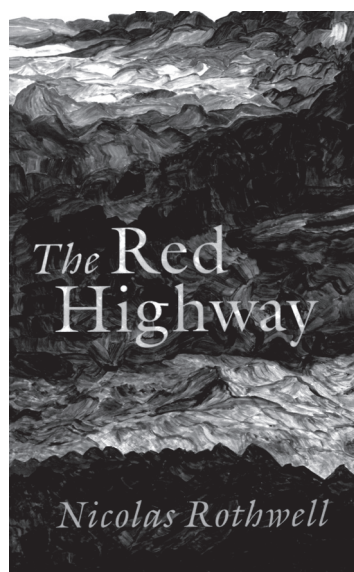
Marie Munkara

(UQP, 2009)

In the clash of culture and faith, sometimes humour is the only refuge.

When culture and faith collide . . . nothing is sacred. In the Aboriginal missions of far northern Australia, it was a battle between saving souls and saving traditional culture. *Every Secret Thing* is a rough, tough, hilarious portrayal of the Bush Mob and the Mission Mob, and the hapless clergy trying to convert them. In these tales, everyone is fair game. At once playful and sharp, Marie Munkara's wonderfully original stories cast a taunting new light on the mission era in Australia.

Of Rembarranga descent, Marie Munkara was born on the banks of the Mainoru River in Arnhem Land. She now lives in Darwin. *Every Secret Thing* is her first book and was the winner of The 2009 David Unaipon Award.



The Red Highway

Nicolas Rothwell

(Black Inc. 2009)

This is the story of a quest – a journey down the red highway. After a spell reporting the Iraq War, Nicolas Rothwell returns to Australia, to explore the deserts and towns, sleepy coastline and hidden worlds of the north. As he travels, his journey gathers momentum and finds a shape. He has unforgettable, even mystical encounters: with a nun, an explorer, a collector and a hunter. It becomes a quest – for knowledge and a sense of home – that builds to a stunning culmination. *The Red Highway* offers a fresh vision of Australia, its deserts and ancient past, art and people. It explores death, friendship, travel and art, and evokes a unique and mesmerising part of the country.

Nicolas Rothwell is the award-winning author of *Wings of the Kite-Hawk*; *The Red Highway* and *Another Country*. He is the northern correspondent for *The Australian*.



The Devil You Know

Leonie Norrington

(Allen & Unwin, 2008)

88 is angry. Damien can feel it prickling the air between them. Every muscle in his body is taut, ready to run, planning his escape over the fire between those chairs and straight down to the creek. But he can't run. Not yet.

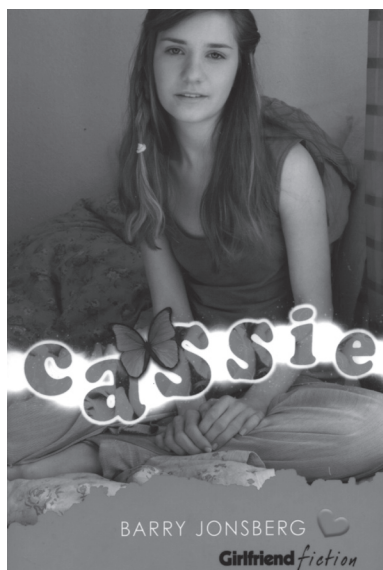
Damien is horrified when his father, a violent man known to his motorcycling peers as 88, moves back to live with him and his mum. Memories of past violence are too strong. But there's also glamour in having a father who rides a Harley Davidson. Set in a small-town community in northern Australia, *The Devil You Know* takes you inside the mind and under the skin of a troubled boy with a vivid imagination and one who must wrestle with his own violent impulses and minor betrayals.

Leonie Norrington was born in Darwin and spent most of her childhood on a remote Aboriginal community. Her books include the *Barrumbi* series and have been shortlisted for the CBCA Book Awards 2003 and the 2008 Territory Read NT book of the year award.

In 2010, *The Devil You Know* won the Angus & Robertson NT Children's & Young Adult Fiction Award.



Territory Read short list...



Cassie

Barry Jonsberg

(Allen & Unwin, 2008)

I'm Holly Holley and I'm short, I'm ugly and I'm overweight.

Holly Holley has an embarrassing name and terrible life. And, as if all that isn't enough, now her household is being turned upside down by the arrival of her aunt and a cousin who has severe cerebral palsy, and is confined to a wheelchair.

Cassie is a story about friendship, loyalty and self image, and also explores issues including disability and honesty.

Barry Jonsberg has been shortlisted for the 2005 Children's Book Council Awards. His book *It's not all about YOU*, Calma won the 2006 South Australian Festival Award for Children's Literature. *Dreamrider* was shortlisted for the 2007 NSW Premier's Award. *The Dog that Dumped on my Doona* was shortlisted for the 2009 Territory Read Book of the Year Award.



Listen deeply, let these stories in.

Kathleen Kemarre Wallace / Judy Lovell

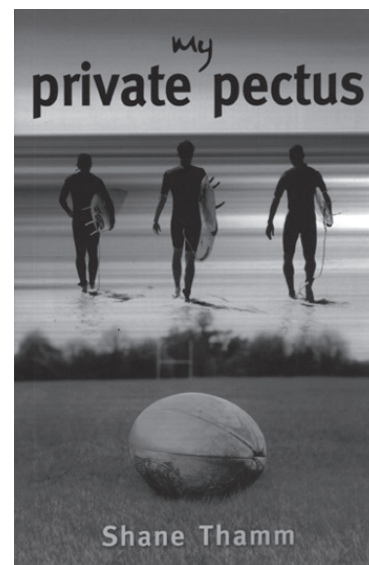
(IAD Press, 2009)

To all the people I would say: "Come, listen to us, we will tell you our culture. Learn from us. That way we will all survive."

Renowned Eastern Arrernte painter, Kathleen Kemarre Wallace tells stories of her elders and their way of life that she learnt as a child and young woman. Her storytelling illuminates the origins and beliefs of Eastern Arrernte people, and calls for respect for the ancient traditions of the *altyerre* spirits who brought her country into being. Kathleen's knowledge of country, law and culture shine through in her words and mesmerising painting.

I hope you listen deeply and let these stories in. They are for all time, for the old days, to help remember the old people, but also for the future and for young people now.

Kathleen Wallace was raised by family in the bush at Uyetye, and trained from an early age in the stories of her culture and country. Kathleen is one of only a few surviving community members who has these stories and skills. Her connection to her country and to her law and culture has remained strong.



My Private Pectus

Shane Thamm

(Ford Street Publishing)

"There's something different about my body. It's not something I'm proud of either, not something I show anyone. It's like the missing piece of a jigsaw you can't take your eyes off. If I were to take off my shirt you'd just suck your cheeks in and stare. All you'd see is the depression in the middle of my chest."

My Private Pectus is a serious yet comical portrayal of teenager Jack McDermott's struggle to discover who is, what he's meant to look like, and how much he should care about what other people think. Jack's chest deformity, pectus excavatum, is symbolic of the body image issues teenage boys face in schools today.

After six years working in high school outdoor education, and the masculinised outdoor adventure industry, Shane Thamm became interested in what makes young men tick, and the emotional challenges they negotiate each day, often in silence. His first novel, *My Private Pectus*, gives these boys a voice.

competitions ... awards...

CORIOLE WINE POETRY GIVEAWAY

Ongoing

Submit a poem (maximum 15 lines/100 words) to win two bottles of Coriole wine. To enter you must be an NTWC member. Submissions can be made at any time throughout the year. Send entries with subject header 'Coriole Poetry' to: E: executive@ntwriters.com.au

105.7 ABC DARWIN FLASH FICTION COMPETITION

Closing 30 April

Submit a short short story of 100 words or less with a Territory twist. Winner receives a weekend double pass to WordStorm, a prize pack of ten books by guest writers, and their work will be published online on ABC Darwin's website. Entry forms can be downloaded at the competitions page at abc.net.au/darwin

2010 HENRY KENDALL POETRY AWARD

Closing 12 March

A biennial award offered by the Central Coast Poets Inc. Poems to 32 lines. First prize \$500, with prizes for 2nd and 3rd. Entry \$7 per poem. Open theme. An anthology will be published, including many poems selected from the entries.

Download entry forms from the website.

W: www.centralcoastpoets.com.au

NEW KATIKATI HAIKU CONTEST 2010

Closing 16 April

An open theme haiku contest with proceeds going to the Haiku Pathway project. 18 & over: \$NZ100 for first; \$NZ50 for second. Haikus entered should preferably be typewritten, otherwise clearly handwritten; previously unpublished (including on the web or broadcast). Entry fee: Within NZ: 18 & over \$5 for 3 haiku or \$2 for 1 haiku. 17 & under \$1 for up to 2 haiku. For overseas entrants: \$US5/3 haiku or \$US2/haiku.

Post entries to: Katikati Haiku Contest, PO Box 183, Katikati 3166, Bay of Plenty, New Zealand. Results will be announced and presented on Sunday, June 6. More info: E: nzhaiku@gmail.com

NEW BUSH LANTERN AWARD 2010 for BUSH VERSE

Closing 21 May

Fancy yourself as the reincarnation of Henry Lawson or Banjo Paterson? Bush verse to 100 lines showing good rhyme and rhythm, and Australian theme. First prize \$200. Entry \$8. This year the club has also decided to run a written competition for Primary & Secondary school children. Entry forms for both competitions from NTWC or email the competition contact E: lees@fastel.com.au

NEW BIG BREAK SCREENWRITING CONTEST

Closing 15 June

The Big Break is an annual, global screenwriting contest designed to launch the careers of aspiring writers. The Big Break Contest rewards screenwriters with cash, prizes, and A-list executive meetings. Winners and finalists alike have had their screenplays optioned and produced and have secured high-profile representation as well as lucrative writing deals. With over \$20,000 cash prizes plus many other bonuses, this is a must to enter.

Entry fees: \$40 (enter by 1 March), \$50 (enter by 1 June), \$65 (enter by 15 June). Dates reflect deadlines for electronic submission of scripts. All entries must be electronically submitted by their respective deadlines. Visit the website for more details.

W: www.finaldraft.com/bigbreak

NEW KARRINYUP WRITERS' CLUB 25th ANNIVERSARY WRITING COMPETITION

Closing 21 May

The Karrinyup Writers' Club Inc is celebrating its 25th Anniversary and we have launched a nation-wide writing competition. It has two sections fiction (to 2000 words, open theme) and poetry (to 60 lines, open theme), with a first prize of \$300 in each section. Entry \$7. Entry forms from NT Writers' Centre or email the competition contact (see below).

E: rogans1@bigpond.com

2010 PRESSPRESS CHAPBOOK AWARD (POETRY)

Closing 31 May

The PressPress Chapbook Award is for an original manuscript of poetry between 20-40pp. The winning manuscript will receive \$600 and chapbook publication with PressPress. The Award will be announced in July 2010 on the PressPress site.

The manuscript must be unpublished and not on offer to another publisher in Australia or elsewhere (except that individual poems can be already taken or on offer to journals, sites or anthologies where you keep the copyright).

Entry conditions and form from the website.

W: http://members.ozemail.com.au/~writerslink/PressPress/Press-Press_Award_conditions.html

FAWNS VIBRANT VERSE POETRY COMPETITION 2010

Closing 18 June

Category A - Free verse, open style, open theme

Category B - Traditional, rhymed or structured verse, open style, open theme.

Maximum 60 lines (both categories)

Prizes: 1st \$100, 2nd \$50, (both categories), certificates awarded at the judges' discretion

Entry fee: \$5. Cheque or postal/money order made out to: Fellowship of Australian Writers North Shore Regional.

Entries must not be concurrently submitted elsewhere nor have won a cash prize or been published previously. Judges' decision is final and no further correspondence entertained. Send entries to: Competition Convenor, 28 Berkeley Close, Berowra Heights, 2082

Enclose SSAE for results and judges' report.

More information from the website.

W: <http://sites.google.com/site/fawnorthshoreregional/>

GOING DOWN SWINGING #30 - calling for submissions

Closing 31 March

In 2010, Australia's much-loved literary and spoken word journal Going Down Swinging turns 30 years old, and to celebrate the journal is producing a very special anniversary 30th edition.

GDS No.30 will feature new poetry, short fiction, comic art, and spoken word from around the world in a bumper book/CD edition, with some special guest editors drawn from the illustrious GDS alumni and the global spoken word community, new commissions, plus a haiku section edited by co-founder Myron Lysenko - just some of the treats in store! GDS No.30 will be launched in a series of fantastic performance events in August and September, in Australia and New Zealand.

GDS is now calling for submissions of poetry, short fiction / non-fiction, flash, comic art, haiku and haiga, and spoken word recordings. Head to the GDS website to download the Guidelines and Cover Sheets and send in your work, to be a part of GDS history.

W: <http://www.goingdownswinging.org.au/submissions>

prizes...

NEW BRIDPORT PRIZE 2010

Closing 30 June

The Bridport Prize is the richest open writing competition in the English language – with £5000 first prize for a short story (of up to 5000 words); and £5000 first prize for a poem (of up to 42 lines). This year we are delighted to launch a new category of Flash Fiction – there's £1,000 to be won for the best short, short story of under 250 words. Anyone can enter – so long as the work is previously unpublished. It costs £7 per story, £6 per poem or £5 per flash fiction. Visit the website for more details and entry forms.

W: www.bridportprize.org.uk

NEW CRICKET POETRY AWARD 2010

Closing 1 September

This annual poetry award offers \$2000 cash prize to the winning poet in conjunction with the Cricket Art Prize. The 2010 Cricket Art Prize organisers invite writers from test playing nations to submit a composition that depicts life in and around the game and sport of cricket, in settings of backyard, street, park, beach, club cricket or social-cricket. Poets are invited to use a global sport and national pastime as the 'vehicle' to unsettle preconceptions, generate new ideas and challenge our contemporary culture. The winner will be announced at the Cricket Art Prize opening event at the Members Pavilion of the SCG – 7th Oct 2010.

W: www.cricketartprize.org/cricket-poetry-award/entry-2010/

E: info@publisherscup.org.au

FAWNS SUPER SHORT STORY COMPETITION 2010

Closing 17 September

Category A: Super Short Story Category B: Memoir

Maximum – 700 words. Prizes: 1st – \$100; 2nd – \$50, Highly Commended and Commended certificates.

Entry fee; \$5 per entry. Cheques made payable to: Fellowship of Australian Writers North Shore Regional.

Results will be posted on FAWNS website on Friday 5th November 2010.

Send entries to: Competition Convenor, 28 Berkeley Close, Berowra Heights 2082

More information from the website.

W: <http://sites.google.com/site/fawnorthshoreregional/>

ISLET (ISLAND ONLINE) - seeking contributions

Islet is a new, free, online literary publishing space. It is an initiative of Island magazine, providing a space to promote and support emerging writers and visual artists. Islet is published quarterly, and each issue features the work of one visual artist, alongside approximately two reviews, six poems, and seven works of fiction. Islet has a particular interest in publishing micro writing, so please take careful note of maximum lengths for submissions: short story (600 words), reviews (400 words), poetry (25 lines). Payment \$75 for fiction/review, \$50 for poems.

W: http://www.islandmag.com/islet_submission.html

E: islet.online@utas.edu.au

NEW DOG EAR TALES - seeking contributions

Dog Ear Tales is a new monthly mag that publish short fiction to 3000 words. Any genre, barring excessive sex, violence or profanity. Visit the website for submission details.

W: www.dogeartales.com

opportunities...

BEST AUSTRALIAN ESSAYS, STORIES & POEMS 2010

Closing 30 July

Recent work only, published or unpublished – published work must have been published after 1 August 2009. Submission guidelines available at:

W: <http://www.bestaustralianwriting.com.au/>

ERIC ROLLS PRIZE

for ENVIRONMENTAL or NATURE WRITING

Closing 30 June

Prize for prose fiction or nonfiction in the genre of natural history writing (defined as writing that 'gives information about the natural world ... that is put into an interpretive framework that gives meaning beyond mere facts and is presented in a literary style'). Maximum 6000 words. Entry \$10. First prize \$1000, plus participation in the 2011 Watermark Literary Muster, including airfares and accommodation. Download entry forms from the website.

W: www.watermarkliterarysociety.asn.au/About/About-Prizes.htm

ADRIFT ON POETRY –publishing opportunity

Have you ever wanted to just sail away? Do you drift aimlessly, or love the idea of it?

Ian Fairweather, one of Australia's most enigmatic and recognised artists, took off from Darwin on the night of April 29, 1952, on a tiny makeshift raft and disappeared. Searches were mounted, an obituary was published. Against the odds Fairweather made landfall on the Timor island of Roti, after sixteen days adrift. Obsessed, creative, insane, inspired—adrift on the joy of life?

Dael Allison plans to publish poems inspired by Ian Fairweather's epic raft trip, as part of her Masters in Creative Arts Fairweather project.

You are invited to submit poems on the theme Adrift. The poems do not have to relate specifically to Ian Fairweather, or Darwin, or even water. Previously published poems must be accompanied by publication details. Please include a 50 word bio. Email your submission to Dael at dael@mudlark.com.au by March 21st.

The poems will be launched with a poetry reading and refreshments at Fanny Bay on the evening of April 29, the anniversary of Fairweather's launch of his raft.

GILGAMESH CONNECTIONS FABLE COMPETITION

Gilgamesh Connections is holding a second literary competition of Fables. Closing at 5pm on Friday May 7th, the Fable must be in English, previously unpublished and must not exceed 700 words. An industry panel will conduct judging (members will be announced closer to the closing date).

With such an excellent response to the first one, this competition holds bigger and better prizes ...

First prize is \$2000, second prize \$1000 and third prize \$500.

These winners and seven other shortlisted entrants will be offered publication in a book, 'Contemporary Fables Volume II', which will be published by Gilgamesh Publications.

The winners will be announced at an awards party at Claypots Seafood and Wine Bar, St Kilda on Sunday June 13th, which will be followed by a launch party for the book during July.

For further details and entry forms please contact:

harriet@gilgameshconnections.net

wordstorm 2010

The Festival of Australasian Writing - Darwin - May 12-16

Plans for *WordStorm* are well underway, and it just keeps on building up to be a bigger and more engaging festival the closer it gets. Covering topics as diverse as the Food Chain, Women and Islam, and the NT Intervention, incorporating panels, film, food, comedy, poetry slam, cabaret, and workshops, *WordStorm* has something to offer everyone. Read on to find out more about some of our featured writers, and keep an eye on our website for updates.



Wendy Harmer



Alice Pung



Archie Weller



José Belo

Wendy Harmer

It would be a rare Australian who did not recognise the face of Wendy Harmer. A TV and radio personality and journalist, comedienne, author and playwright, in 1989 she became the first woman to host a comedy show on Australian television in her own right (*The Big Gig*).

Harmer's writing credits include numerous magazine columns and articles and eight books for adults. The most recent, *Roadside Sisters*, was published in April 2009. Her *Pearlie in the Park* series for young readers are bestsellers in Australia and have been published around the world and produced as an animated series for Australian television. *I Lost my Mobile at the Mall* is her first book for teens. Harmer's books have been described as 'Hen lit' (as opposed to Chick lit) and have been described as appealing to 'women zapping a Lean Cuisine in the microwave and looking for an emotional connection.'

Alice Pung

During the 1960s and 70s Cambodia was the most bombed country in the world. Alice Pung's parents grew up together against this backdrop. Their first daughter was born a month after they arrived in Australia. Her father named her Alice because, like Lewis Carroll's protagonist, she was a girl who has found herself in Wonderland. At the age of 13, Pung began her first book - a self-deprecating take on the Guinness Book of Records, where she made herself the world record holder in all the categories. Five years later she looked back over her journals and found them hilarious. At this point, Pung decided to write a funny book rather than produce another miserable book by an Asian woman describing oppression. *Unpolished Gem* took three and a half years to write. Pung, a lawyer, has never written full-time. She says 'I don't believe in living the life of a tormented artist'.

Archie Weller

Archie Weller's first full length novel *The Day of the Dog*, was runner-up in the inaugural Australian Vogel Award in 1980. Ten years later winner Paul Radley admitted that he had not in fact written his winning entry and Weller's book became the winner.

A man of many talents, Weller has since been published many times and has won a number of awards. He writes novels, short stories, poetry and plays and also lectures. Recently, he studied horticulture at Albany TAFE and he is currently working towards his BA in horticulture at Denmark TAFE. In 1991 Weller was the only Australian writer invited to the first Black Writers Conference in Johannesburg, where he entertained an audience of hundreds playing the mouth organ. His most recent book is *The Window Seat and other stories*, a collection of short stories, some dating back as far as the late 1970s.

José Belo

José Belo was three years old when Indonesia invaded East Timor in December 1975. In 1996 he joined guerrillas led by David Alex, who was to inspire him to become a journalist. From 1999 until 2006 he worked as a correspondent and cameraman with Associated Press, the ABC, SBS and Channel Seven.

In 2006, with a \$1000 donation, \$500 of his own money and a single computer, Belo founded *Tempo Semanal* (The Weekly Times). The paper, which focuses on investigative reporting, now employs a staff of twenty and its circulation in East Timor is increasing. Belo's uncompromising commitment to free speech has seen him imprisoned or detained on numerous occasions. He has been beaten, tortured and starved at the hands of authorities, and yet he continues to defy them, simply by speaking the truth.

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Beginnings

A workshop with Bronwyn Mehan
Parliament House Library 2-5pm, Saturday, March 20th

Want to get writing? Do you have an idea for a short story but don't know where to start? Have you a personal or travel journal that could turn into something more? Or do you need some techniques for kick-starting your imagination?

This workshop will show you how to:

- tap into your imagination
- draw from everyday experiences and memories
- give structure to your writing
- use characters, place and dialogue

This practical workshop will have you writing straightaway and give you lots of take-home techniques to improve your creative writing skills and develop confidence to pursue your own writing projects.

Cost:

Full \$50/member \$40/conc. \$30/conc. member \$25

Bookings:

email: info@ntwriters.com.au or ring: 8941 2651



It's early January 2010, and I've already had two major rejections this year. It's enough to keep a woman down – but somehow, I'll make sure it doesn't. I'll do this with a combination of good friends, family, an active search for life perspective, and – doubtless – a few glasses of ice-cold champagne. But mostly, I'll do it by putting more of my work out there and opening myself up to fresh rejections.

Years ago, when I was considering quitting this strange task of writing wherein I set myself up over and over for rejection, I realised it's nothing but an odds game. If I put enough work out there, sooner or later someone, somewhere will see some of it and either want it or express interest in some aspect of it – which may lead to something else. Fear of rejection for a writer, I figured, is much like a mechanic being afraid of getting engine grease on her hands. It's going to happen. It's how you wash it off that counts.

So I taught myself not to take rejection personally. It's not me, my ideas or my overall 'voice' being rejected, I told myself. It's this particular piece, for this particular publisher/competition/initiative, at this particular time. In feedback to one recent application, I was told: 'You were very close, but they funded a work similar to this last year'. The 'close' told me that the work held its own, despite the lousy timing.

Sometimes, despite the above, a rejection can still knock me for six. In this case, I give myself time to process it. This might entail shouting, swearing, crying; ringing my friends and ranting to them about the unfairness of this world ... I try not to judge the process, and allow it to fully occur.

Only after this processing is fully over do I seek feedback. I'll write a formal email or make a formal phone call requesting verbal or written copies of the panel's feedback. Some respond that this isn't possible. Others give me the standard: 'The field was competitive in this round'. But from time to time, I get onto someone who actually talks me through my work, tells me how close I was [or wasn't] and lets me know how tough the competition really was. These rare moments illuminate my place in 'the field', and some of my best advice for the development of my craft or for re-application has come through these quarters.

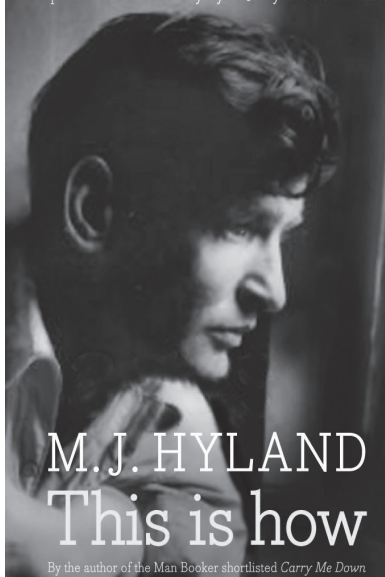
Then I get back on the horse. As writers, we're extremely lucky. The daily grind and random disasters notwithstanding, we can do this every single day for the rest of our lives. It will ALWAYS be there. So I go back to what I love, and remind myself that I do this for the process, not the product. I do it for the curiosity, the learning I get from my research, the pure rush of adrenalin I get when the work is singing. I get smarter about the marketplace, keep developing my craft skills, and send my work back out there. Again, and again, and again.

... it is an odds game, after all ...

*Mary Anne Butler will be appearing
at this year's WordStorm*

reviews ...

'Expect to be blown away by M.J. Hyland.' *Guardian*



THIS IS HOW

MJ Hyland

Review by Michael Whitting

MJ Hyland is an internationally recognised Australian writer who now lives in London. Her previous novel, *Carry Me Down* (2006), was short-listed for the Man Booker prize.

How the Light Gets In depicted its exchange-student heroine estranged from her new parents' ideals of excellence, whereas *Carry Me Down* brought the fate of its twelve year old hero, the owner of a powerful ability to detect lies and falsity, to the brink of catastrophe.

Her third novel, *This is how*, takes the next step from alienation to meeting disaster head on. In this story Hyland is concerned with the solitude and virulent inner turmoil of the central character, ex-university student and now tradesman Patrick Oxtoby,

with other characters drawn with comparatively quick sketches. We don't know a lot about Patrick either, his past being more outlined than otherwise. His former fiancée, his parents and brother, all seem tangential to what drives him to be who he is.

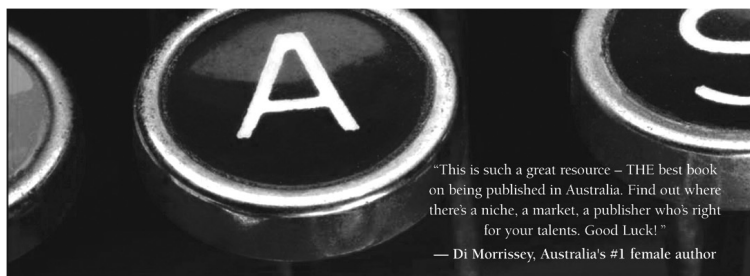
Hyland's most successful achievement here is that what we don't know about Patrick doesn't matter. She strips the plot to its bare necessities, allowing her to focus upon the ominous development of his frustration with what appear to be normal events and disappointments. We are curious as to why Patrick is so furious, but Hyland refuses to spell out the reasons.

Patrick arrives in a seaside town after his fiancée breaks off the relationship to make

a fresh start to his life. His every action backfires, until this rising anger overflows and leads him to a criminal act. At the core of Patrick is a naivety about the world, which in less skilful hands would be unconvincing. Nevertheless Hyland takes the reader through the labyrinth of the penal process to see the lesson that Patrick needs to learn.

Perhaps Hyland's greatest strength over three novels is her talent for dramatic dialogue, and when Patrick dialogues with himself, his self-reflection is as powerful as when he's with other characters. Hyland has a novelist's eye, but the ear of a dramatist. *This is how* is a wonderful story.

Michael Whitting



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fantasy writing



fantasy: it's fiction, only bigger

In the words of the great Stephen King, 'Fiction is the truth inside the lie', and in no form of fiction, whether short or long, is this truer than in Fantasy.

Why read Fantasy? This is a question many people have asked themselves as they've pondered the weighty tomes bunched together down one end of the bookshop, images of hours spent on one book sidling through their mind. But why is it people read? Is it to complete as many novels as they can, as quickly as possible? No, it is for enjoyment, and there is no greater enjoyment to be found than in the varied fictional realms of Fantasy.

Emotions are deeper, worlds are larger, and magic is something that is real. Fantasy takes that which we associate with everyday life and multiplies it by ten, expanding it into a story that is so vivid, so complex, that the characters seem real and their world but a hairsbreadth away.

For those who scoff at the thought of 'magicians', magic usually isn't the main focus of these novels, and though it may play a main role, the plot, the very essence of the story, is never solely based on it. What makes

Fantasy great is that characters can be pushed where they have never been pushed before, experience things that go beyond imagination, and take readers places that they will never see. Magic is simply an exciting way to tell a beautiful story.

There is also the dreaded 'cliché Fantasy', which does, unfortunately, exist. But there is no reason to be discouraged by the endless legion of Fantasy clones. Look no further than your local bookshop, there is some amazing originality out there, and, luckily, there is a simple way to find it, thanks to the wonderful addition of blurbs.

If one is feeling dubious about the quality of a Fantasy book, why, pick it up, flip it over, and read the back. Are there things on there never seen before, or is it reciting the plot of *Lord of the Rings* almost word for word? Does it induce lethargy by the first sentence, or does it instantly bring the imagination to life? If looking for originality, those questions will never lead astray.

As for Fantasy, it is, overall, the largest, most magnificent fiction of all, telling everyday stories, every truths ...

Only bigger.

by Regan Lynch

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@parkershousen.net.

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

Australian Society of Authors contact in Darwin is Helen Pavlin [t]: 0402 482 384.

other regions

A NEW GROUP FOR ARNHEM LAND: is now meeting in Nhulunbuy. For more information, contact Ian Maclean on E: ian@nightskysecrets.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: wjip@clearnet.com.au for more information.

nt support networks

The Society of Editors (NT) welcomes editors and writers interested in networking and sharing information. Contact: NT Society of Editors. E: editors_nt@yahoo.com.au.

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!



deny

even birds fly
that have no name
that have no scars
or memory
to pull them down
or smear the sky
with their shame

ever patient
are brewing clouds
on a day
denied of rain



Maurice O'Riordan is this month's winner of the Coriole poem prize. For your chance to win, email your poem to executive@ntwriters.com.au

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