

2024 FESTIVAL PROGRAM

THE BRWF ARE EXCEEDINGLY GRATEFUL FOR THE GENEROUS SUPPORT & TIME RECEIVED FROM OUR PATRON, BRYAN BROWN.

TIMES FRIDAY

7.15pm - 10.15pm Memorial Hall **THE POETRY SLAM**
It wouldn't be the same festival without our longstanding slam, so come along to see the most dazzling performance poets our region has to offer. Yes, we will start on time so please be there by 7:00pm for 7:15pm sharp start.

FRINGE EVENTS

FREE EVENTS INCLUDING STORIES & ACTIVITIES FOR CHILDREN!
AT THE MAAM GADUYING MEETING PLACE PARK (OPPOSITE THE MEMORIAL HALL)

SATURDAY

10am - 1pm **WRITERS FROM THE FRINGE**
Presenting new works from those creative writers within our community.

11am - 12pm **WORDS ON THE STREET**
A workshop for children & the young at heart. Craftwork with books - making paper flowers, garlands & collage.

1pm **BUDAABANG BARI CULTURAL DANCE PERFORMANCE**

1.30pm **WHO IS ALICE CAMPION?**
More than your average book club! How did this group of women write & publish two books 'Shifting Light' and 'Painted Sky'!

2.15pm **OPEN MIC POETRY WITH JASON JOHN**
You have 3 minutes to wow us!
Come and sign up - a totally informal event.
Sign up between 10:00- 1:45, Saturday 8th June in the Fringe marquee.

SUNDAY

10am **GUMBAYNGGIRR STORY TELLING WITH UNCLE MICKLO**
Uncle Micklo takes us on a journey of myth and language - hugely entertaining... not just for children!

10.30am **HOW LONG IS A PIECE OF STRING?**
Crafting possibilities with illustrator and author Penelope Pratley.
Age: 5 - 12 years (children under 12 must be accompanied by an adult)

11.15am **SUNDAY STORYTIME**
Enchanting stories narrated by the authors to fire the imagination.
Age: 5 - 12 years (children under 12 must be accompanied by an adult)

1pm **INSPIRE SONG WRITING WITH TONY ROWLEY**
An engaging, interactive introductory fun masterclass in lyric writing.
All ages

1.30pm **TONY ROWLEY LIVE**
Titan Sky front man Tony, treats us to an intimate session of his original music with his guitar.

TIMES SATURDAY

9am - 10am Memorial Hall **In Conversation | TONY BIRCH WITH MELANIE KEMBREY**
Tony Birch is quite simply, one of the most engaging and respected writers in Australia, with his latest work 'Women and Children', shortlisted for the ABIA Literary Fiction Book of the Year. Join this conversation about love and the loss of innocence.

9am - 10am Studio **In Conversation | SHELLEY PARKER-CHAN WITH AMY LOVAT**
#1 Sunday Times bestseller for their first novel, USA Today bestseller for their second; Shelley conjures epic alternate histories in which murderous queers make extremely bad life decisions. Winner of two British Fantasy awards, don't miss this show-stopping festival special.

10.30am - 11.30am Memorial Hall **(RE)GENERATE: RACHEL WARD, MATTHEW EVANS, HANNAH MOLONEY, SHELLEY BURR**
In the midst of a climate crisis, more and more people are looking to the land. Understanding soil health, food security and sustainability have become vitally important tools, and this timely, practical conversation will inspire you to get your hands dirty.

10.30am - 11.30am Studio **WRITING WAR: YUMNA KASSAB, MISHA ZELINKSY, CATHERINE MCKINNON**
Writing of conflict and its aftermath is an intimidating task, yet these authors do so with empathy and a steady hand. Join them for a conversation about mortality, struggle, and the lengths we go to for our humanity.

12pm - 1pm Memorial Hall **THE HEART OF AI: TRACEY SPICER, TOBY WALSH, KATE MILDENHALL**
How do we approach the morality of artificial intelligence? What lies at the heart of AI - and might we someday think of AI as having a heart of its own? Join this profound conversation about progress and morality.

12pm - 1pm Studio **GETTING AWAY WITH MURDER: CHRIS HAMMER, BENJAMIN STEVENSON, MAX BARRY, ADAM NORRIS**
We're suckers for a good whodunnit. Why else would we keep returning to tales of mystery, suspense; to good ol' fashioned murder? Time to ready our weapons and dive deep into modern thrillers with these seemingly innocent-looking authors.

1.30pm - 2.30pm Memorial Hall **SEE ME NOW; MODERN MEMOIR: JACKIE HUGGINS, WENDY HARMER, AMY LOVAT**
Laying yourself bare on the page is an act of particular courage, and can build bridges to readers that few other genres can hope to achieve. Join these remarkable women on the ways we share our stories, and why.

1.30pm - 2.30pm Studio **In Conversation | STUART COUPE WITH SETH JORDAN**
The best ever music trivia teammate, Stuart has literally written the book on many chapters of Australian music history. Band manager, radio guru, interviewer of more famous names than you could count - join us for a wild ride to 'Shake Some Action'!

3pm - 4pm Memorial Hall **AUSTRALIA & AUSTRALIA: LEAH PURCELL, SIANG LU, YUMNA KASSAB**
When we speak of Australia, what exactly do we mean? Is it the pulse of city life, or rural fellowship? The forgotten places of the familiar home? How do we give a voice to all this country has to say?

3pm - 4pm Studio **In Conversation | TOBY WALSH WITH MAX BARRY**
Professor Walsh is recognised as a leading authority on the relationship between AI and humanity. The winner of the 2023 Eureka Prize, this is a conversation that covers the strange and startling history of artificial intelligence - and what it does next...

4.30pm - 5.30pm Memorial Hall **HISTORY FOR THE FUTURE: HENRY REYNOLDS, BRUCE PASCOE, ADAM NORRIS**
Those who cannot remember the past are condemned to repeat it, said Santayana. But history is always moving, and speaks volumes to the kind of world we will someday inherit. So where does it lead?

4.30pm - 5.30pm Studio **In Conversation | TRACEY SPICER WITH AMY LOVAT**
Walkley Award -winning journalist; social justice advocate; bestselling author. Tracey Spicer is no stranger to looking head-on at hard truths. A key investigator across Australia's #MeToo movement and champion of gender parity, join us for what is certain to be a festival favourite.

6.15pm - 7.15pm Memorial Hall **THE JOURNALIST'S CREED: LOUISE MILLIGAN, BRUCE WOLPE, CHRIS HAMMER, JP POMARE**
Today, the world's news and current affairs is just a tap away. But how those stories are framed and what purpose they serve is not always transparent - so how do we navigate turbulent times when information arrives so swiftly?

6.15pm - 7.15pm Studio **In Conversation | CATHY WILCOX WITH WENDY HARMER**
Named Cartoonist of the Year three times by the Museum of Australian Democracy, winner of multiple Walkley Awards for Cartooning, Cathy is one of the country's most incisive commentators on politics and culture. A conversation to uncover the person behind the page.

7:45pm - 8:45pm Memorial Hall **In Conversation | BRYAN BROWN WITH INDIRA NAIDOO**
We all recognise Bryan Brown as an icon of the screen, but with the release of his second book we see him cemented as one of the most distinct voices in Australian crime. Join Indira Naidoo for this highlight festival event.

TIMES SUNDAY

9am - 10am Memorial Hall **In Conversation | LOUISE MILLIGAN WITH CHRIS HAMMER**
Louise Milligan is a multi-award-winning investigative journalist for Four Corners, the author of two bestselling non-fiction books, and her debut crime novel, 'Pheasant's Nest'. To explore the sweep of Louise's writing, join Chris Hammer for this riveting conversation of survival and suspense.

9am - 10am Studio **WILD FICTION: SIANG LU, KATE MILDENHALL, MAX BARRY, SHELLEY PARKER-CHAN**
Deep in the woods of literature, certain stories defy expectations. But how do we coax those wild tales onto the page? These speculative fiction authors show us that the most captivating stories can come from the most unexpected directions.

10.30am - 11.30am Memorial Hall **BEYOND THE SURE; HISTORICAL FICTIONS: BRUCE PASCOE, CATHERINE MCKINNON, KATE MILDENHALL**
We can note the facts and figures, but there comes a time where our engagement with the past passes the point of certainty, and our imaginations must fill in the rest. How do we voice those no longer speaking?

10.30am - 11.30am Studio **PAINTING POLITICS: CATHY WILCOX, BRUCE WOLPE, SETH JORDAN**
Politics is the art of the possible... but in an era of unrest and fake news, what does that 'possible' look like when division is the new status quo? Join this timely, thought-provoking conversation on the canvas of modern politics.

12pm - 1pm Memorial Hall **In Conversation | MATTHEW REILLY WITH MELANIE KEMBREY (Livestream)**
Matthew Reilly is one of the most propulsive and prolific action/thriller writers in the world. To celebrate his latest epic, 'Mr Einstein's Secretary', strap yourself in for a conversation spanning forty years of history's most dangerous times.

12pm - 1pm Studio **In Conversation | HENRY REYNOLDS WITH JACKIE HUGGINS**
Having forged a career as one of the most widely lauded historians of settler-Indigenous relations in the country, Henry's work helped pioneer new ways of looking at Australian history. Join us for what is certain to be a highlight conversation.

1.30pm - 2.30pm Memorial Hall **In Conversation | INDIRA NAIDOO WITH TRACEY SPICER**
Indira's latest book, 'The Space Between the Stars' is a moving journey of how the natural world can help us through even the most profound grief. Join two of our most respected broadcasters for this uplifting tribute to life, death and healing.

1.30pm - 2.30pm Studio **In Conversation | MATTHEW EVANS WITH ALISA BRYCE**
Food critic, chef, television presenter and passionate advocate for sustainable living; Matthew has worn many hats. His book 'SOIL' opens our eyes to the wonder - and fragility - of the literal ground beneath our feet.

3pm - 4pm Memorial Hall **In Conversation | KATE GRENVILLE WITH MELANIE KEMBREY (Livestream)**
One of Australia's most celebrated writers, Kate's remarkable body of work has won numerous awards at home and abroad. 'The Secret River' is a modern classic, while 'Restless Dolly Maunder' is currently long-listed for the Women's Prize for Fiction.

3pm - 4pm Studio **In Conversation | JACKIE HUGGINS WITH SETH JORDAN**
Author, historian, social justice activist, truth-teller - Jackie Huggins incredible work has touched countless Indigenous Australian issues. She has devoted her life to a reconciled Australia that embraces all people, and we are proud to share this moving conversation.

4.30pm - 5.30pm Memorial Hall **In Conversation | HANNAH MOLONEY**
Hannah has spent decades getting her hands dirty in the garden, alongside community-change projects, and climate activism. Her latest book 'Good Life Growing' continues her mission to encourage people to live a better life in the face of a changing climate.

4.30pm - 5.30pm Studio **SUNDAY CRIME CLUB: JP POMARE, SHELLEY BURR, STUART COUPE**
Crime stories keep us in their thrall, revealing the darkness that can suddenly shadow our waking days in the most sinister - and page-turning - ways. Time to learn why we're all so drawn to those bumps in the night...

6.15pm - 7.15pm Memorial Hall **In Conversation | LEAH PURCELL WITH TONY BIRCH**
Leah Purcell is one of our most versatile talents, equally at home on the page, stage and screen. Her work has transported audiences for decades, and we are thrilled to showcase the breadth of Leah's work in this festival highlight.

6.15pm - 7.15pm Studio **WRITE FUNNY, DAMMIT!: WENDY HARMER, BENJAMIN STEVENSON, ADAM NORRIS**
Always leave 'em laughing, they say. But in reality, writing comedy is one of the hardest tricks in the book. So how do you keep readers chuckling and turning pages at the same time? We're about to find out!

7:45pm - 8:45pm Memorial Hall **In Conversation | AMBASSADOR VASYL MYROSHNYCHENKO WITH MISHA ZELINSKY**
Vasyl Myroshnychenko was appointed as the Ambassador of Ukraine to Australia less than a month after Russia invaded his homeland in what has become the largest attack on a European country since WWII. Don't miss this festival closing night special event.

With over 30 writers attending, featured guests include:



TRACEY SPICER is a multiple Walkley Award winning author, journalist and broadcaster. Her first book, **The Good Girl Stripped Bare**, became a bestseller immediately and her TEDx Talk, **The Lady Stripped Bare**, attracted 6 million views worldwide. Her latest book **Man-Made: How the bias of the past is being built into the future**, is about artificial intelligence.



KATE GRENVILLE is one of Australia's most celebrated writers. **The Secret River** was adapted for stage and as a TV miniseries. Other novels include **Sarah Thornhill, The Lieutenant, Dark Places, The Idea of Perfection**. Her non-fiction includes **One Life: My Mother's Story, The Case Against Fragrance** and **Elizabeth Macarthur's Letters**. Her most recent novel is **A Room Made of Leaves**.



CHRIS HAMMER is an award-winning Australian crime fiction novelist, author of the bestselling Martin Scarsden series: **Scrublands, Silver** and **Trust**. **Scrublands** was awarded the Sunday Times Crime Novel of the Year 2019 and won the prestigious UK Crime Writers' Association 'New Blood' Dagger Award. His recent book, **The Seven**, is a compelling thriller filled with intrigue and an evocative sense of place.



JACKIE HUGGINS is a well-known historian, author and speaker on Aboriginal issues and author of the acclaimed biography of her mother, **Auntie Rita, Sister Girl** and her biography of her father, **Jack of Hearts: QX11594**. A writer of memoir, life story and nonfiction, writing the truth in what is now the era of truth telling in our country



MATTHEW EVANS is a food writer, television broadcaster and chef who lives and works on Fat Pig Farm, a soil-to-stomach regenerative farm and restaurant. Author of over a dozen books on food, including **On Eating Meat, The Real Food Companion** and **SOIL**. His latest book, **MILK**, looks at the truth and lies behind the original superfood.



TONY BIRCH is the author of four novels, five short fiction collections and two poetry books. His book **Dark As Last Night** was awarded the Christina Stead Literary Prize and the Steele Rudd Literary Award. In 2017, he became the first Indigenous writer to win the Patrick White Award. His most recent book is the novel, **Women and Children**.



BRYAN BROWN is known as an actor, having appeared in over 80 films and TV series across 20 countries, including Australia and the USA. His first book, **Sweet Jimmy**, is a collection of seven short stories centred around crime. With his characteristic laconic storytelling, his second book, **The Drowning**, combines humour, toughness and suspense in a seemingly idyllic town.



WENDY HARMER has been a pioneer for women in media as a journalist, columnist, radio broadcaster, TV host, author, playwright and comic performer. The author of dozens of fiction books for children, teens and women and has written plays and an opera libretto. **In Lies My Mirror Told Me**, Wendy reflects on her life in a frank, funny, fearless memoir.



MATTHEW REILLY is the internationally bestselling author of the **Scarecrow** series, the **Jack West** series and numerous standalone novels. He wrote his first book, **Contest**, at 19 and his second book, **Ice Station**, while studying at the University of NSW. He has since sold over 8 million copies of his books worldwide, in over 20 languages.



CATHY WILCOX is an award-winning Sydney based cartoonist. Over the years, she has moved from drawing small 'pocket' cartoons, to drawing larger format editorial cartoons. She is now the main Editorial Cartoonist for the Sydney Morning Herald, and one of several for The Age. She has also illustrated numerous children's books and twice won 'Picture book of the Year'.



LEAH PURCELL is an award-winning actor, writer, producer, singer and director. Appearing in film, TV and theatre such as *Lantana*, *The Proposition*, *Police Rescue*, *Wentworth*, *Parramatta Girls* and *Radiance*. A mainstay of the First Nations canon, her work includes the widely acclaimed novel, **The Drover's Wife**. Her latest production, *High Country*, sees her as lead actor, executive producer and cultural consultant.



HANNAH MOLONEY is a host of ABC TV's *Gardening Australia*, a permaculture educator, designer, community worker and best-selling author. Her book **The Good Life: How to Grow a Better World** is about how to live a good life in the face of the climate emergency and **Good Life Growing** provides inspiration to grow fruit and veg in any Australian climate.



BRUCE PASCOE has published 38 books including **Dark Emu**, winning the NSW Premier's Award for Literature in 2016, and **Young Dark Emu** which won both the Booksellers Association Prize and CBCA non-fiction award in 2020. In 2024 he is releasing his first novel, **Imperial Harvest**, and **Black Duck**, a memoir of life caring for Country co-written with Lyn Harwood.



KATE MILDENHALL's debut novel, **Skylarking**, was named in Readings Top 10 Fiction Books of 2016 and **The Mother Fault** was long-listed for the 2021 ABIA General Fiction Book of the Year. Her most recent book **The Hummingbird Effect** is long-listed for the 2024 Stella Prize. Kate also co-hosts *The First Time Podcast* – conversation with writers.



HENRY REYNOLDS is one of the nation's leading authorities on the history of Australia's Indigenous people and Aboriginal-white relations. His ground-breaking work, **The Other side of the Frontier** examines Aboriginal responses to British colonisation. Henry is notable for arguing for justice for Aboriginal land rights; his work with Eddie Mabo contributed to the High Court's recognition of these rights.

FESTIVAL EXPERIENCES

THE VALENTINES

The Valentines, two of Cupid's favourite emissaries will be wandering around Bellingen on Saturday 8th June, for the express purpose of instigating and delivering words of love, kindness and compassion.

THE WORD ON THE STREET PUBLIC ART PROJECT

An Exhibition titled 'PAPERBACK' - four contemporary artist's work exploring the prompt of STORYTELLING: Ceramics, photography, drawing, and multimedia genres.

The Stables, Bellingen, June 7th-9th, opening Friday 7th 5pm

VISUAL POETRY

Find poetry in new places such as pavements, across walls & shop windows.

WORDS ON THE STREET

present visual writing prompt words featuring local students' poems – go on a hunt to find them!

POCKET POETRY PROJECT!

Collect poetry, excerpts, and written quotes with your tea & coffee at participating locations orders over the weekend.

LOCAL SHOP WINDOW DISPLAY COMPETITION

supported by Affirmations Publishing House.

WRITE YOUR OWN STORY!

Locate one of a series of typewriters around town for all to enjoy & to generate story telling.

An Arts project for the people of Bellingen. Curated by Marc Renshaw & Julia Ehemann.

TICKET INFORMATION

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

Early Bird Tickets: 20% discount per ticket from 18th-28th April only (no concessions)

Multiple ticket purchase discounts available from 29th April

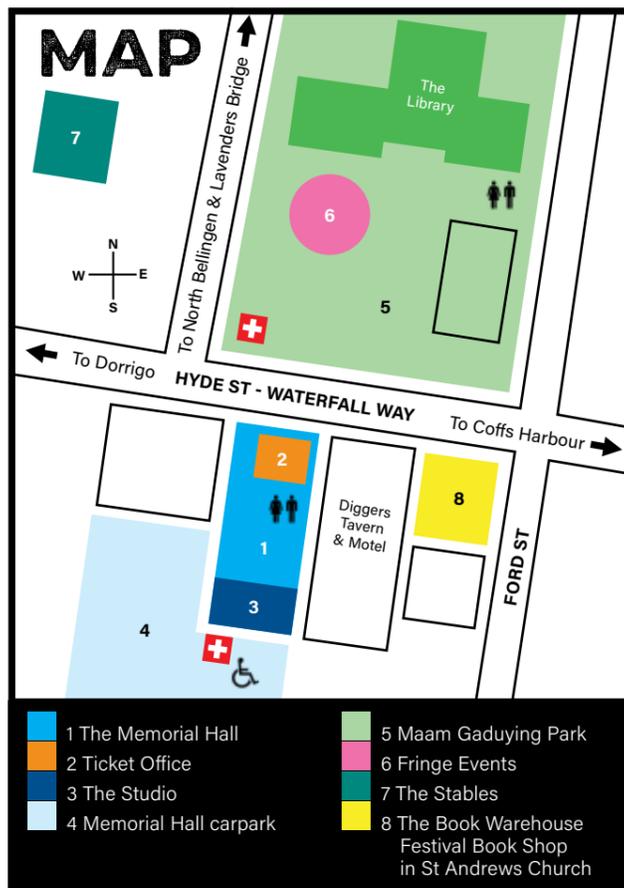
Poetry Slam Tickets: \$15.00 (no concession/discounts)

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

Children under 10 must be accompanied by an adult. Proof of concession must be presented at entry to event.

TICKETS AVAILABLE ONLINE AT:

www.bellingenwritersfestival.com.au/program



PROUDLY SPONSORED BY:

Proudly supported by the NSW Government through Create NSW

Supported By



BELLINGEN SHIRE COUNCIL

Festival Sponsors



Poetry Slam Sponsor

Schools Program Sponsor

The Fringe Sponsor



BELLINGEN READERS & WRITERS FESTIVAL

JUNE LONG WEEKEND 7th - 9th JUNE

BACK AT BELLINGEN MEMORIAL HALL

2024 FESTIVAL PROGRAM



www.bellingenwritersfestival.com.au