

THE NSW WRITERS' CENTRE

PLAYWRITING FESTIVAL

SATURDAY 29 MARCH 2014, 10AM - 6.30PM

It is with great pleasure I welcome you to the 2014 Playwriting Festival.

This is the second playwriting festival to be held at the NSW Writers' Centre – the first was in 2011, directed by playwright/actor Kate Mulvany.

Gathered here today are a bunch of committed and dedicated theatre makers – directors, literary managers, artistic directors, dramaturgs, producers and of course the playwrights. These playwrights are a vibrant collection of voices; some emerging, some mid-career, some experienced, all passionate. They have generously agreed to come together and talk about what makes theatre for them, argue about why some plays sing and others loiter in desk drawers, ponder the riddles of development, the joys of collaboration and the skill of pitching your play to companies.

Like... the pattern of snowflakes, or vampire films from the last ten years or the many incarnations of Madonna since the eighties, playwrights are multi-faceted and diverse; playwrights have a million different stories to tell and a million different voices with which to tell those stories. One of those voices could be yours. Today, after all, is also a day for the aspiring playwright.

Be prepared to be inspired, provoked, amused and possibly outraged. There will be stories and anecdotes and brave fabrications. Of course. It's theatre.

The playwrights are in the house!



Vanessa Bates
Festival Director

HOW TO BOOK TICKETS

Online at nswwc.org.au or by phone (02) 9555 9757

NSW Writers' Centre Members \$60, Member Concession \$50, Non-Members \$90

There is plenty of free parking at the Centre. Food and coffee can be purchased on the day.

The NSW Writers' Centre is located in the grounds of Callan Park, Balmain Rd, Rozelle.

For directions and public transport options, visit our website nswwc.org.au



FESTIVAL SPEAKERS

Donna Abela has written over 30 original and adapted stage and radio plays for audiences of all ages. Her play *Jump For Jordan* won the 2013 Griffin Playwriting Prize and she is currently working on projects with the playwrights' collective 7-ON. **Vanessa Bates** is an award-winning playwright whose works include *Porn.Cake*, *Match*, *At Sea*, *Small Hard Things* and *The Magic Hour*. She is a member of 7-ON and a recipient of a residency at Cite Internationale des Arts in Paris. She has written for television dramas including *East West 101* and *Rush*, and won the 2012 NSW Premier's Literary Award for best play. **Hilary Bell** has written plays and libretti for musicals and operas including *Wolf Lullaby*, *Fortune*, *The Anatomy Lesson of Doctor Ruysch*, *The Falls*, *Memmie Le Blanc*, *The Bloody Bride*, *The Splinter*, *The White Divers of Broome*, *Mrs President* and *The Wedding Song*. She was the Tennessee Williams Fellow 2003-04 and is currently the Patrick White Playwrights' Fellow.

Chris Bendall is an award-winning stage director and producer. He was Artistic Director of Deckchair Theatre from 2008-2012. He was Guest Programmer for Playwriting Australia's 2013 National Play Festival, Chair of the WA playwright's advocacy body, Stages, and is a member of the Theatre Nominating Panel for the Helpmann Awards.

Angela Betzien received the 2011 Sydney Theatre Award for Best New Australian work, the 2007 Richard Wherrett Award for Excellence in Playwriting, a 2007 Australian Writer's Guild Award, and a 2012 Queensland Literary Award for Drama. Her plays include *Hoods*, *War Crimes*, *The Teenage Alchemist*, *The Dark Room* and *Helicopter*.

Jane Bodie is a playwright and screenwriter who is currently Associate Artist at Griffin Theatre Company. She was also Head of Playwriting at NIDA from 2010-2013. Her plays include *Fourplay*, *Hilt*, *Home By Now* and *Ride*. She has also written extensively for television, radio and film.

Kit Brookman is a Sydney-based writer and director. His recent work includes *Small and Tired* at Belvoir and *Night Maybe* for Stuck Pigs Squealing at Theatreworks in Melbourne. In 2014 he will co-write *Nora* for Belvoir and co-direct *Is This Thing On?* in the downstairs theatre.

Timothy Daly is one of Australia's most internationally-produced playwrights. His play *Kafka Dances* has won over a dozen national and international awards, and is the most

internationally-performed Australian play of all time. He is the 2013 recipient of a Paris Studio Residency Award by the Australia Council for the Arts. **Jane Harrison** is a descendant of the Muruwari people of NSW. Her best known play is *Stolen*, which follows the lives of five Aboriginal people from the stolen generations. It has been produced around Australia, and in the UK, Tokyo, Canada and New York. **Noëlle Janaczewska** is a writer of plays, performance texts, lyrics & libretti, monologues, poetry, essays, gallery and on-line explorations, and radio scripts. Her works include *Third Person*, *Cloud Cover*, *Eyewitness Blues* and *The Hannah First Collection, 1919–1949* for the Zendai Museum of Modern Art in Shanghai. **Lally Katz** writes for theatre, film and television. In 2013 her one-woman show, *Stories I Want to Tell You in Person*, played to packed audiences at Belvoir and Malthouse Theatres. Lally's work for television includes *Wonderland*, *Wentworth* and *Spirited* and children's series *The Elephant Princess*. She is currently adapting her play *Neighborhood Watch* for the screen with Gillian Armstrong attached to direct.

Leland Kean is the Artistic Director of Tamarama Rock Surfers Theatre Company. He is a regular dramaturg with Playwriting Australia, a committee member of the Critical Stages touring program and a tutor of the NIDA Directors Course. **Verity Laughton's** work includes main-stage adult dramas, adaptations, plays for family audiences, and work for dance, puppets and theatre of image. Her awards include the Griffin Prize, 2001, Adelaide Critics' Circle Best New Australian Play, 1999 and the Inscription Award, 2009.

Caleb Lewis' plays include *Nailed*, *Monkeyboy*, *Dogfall*, *Death in Bowengabbie*, *Rust and Bone*, *Clinchfield* and *Maggie Stone*. He was mentored by Nick Enright and later Edward Albee, and is the winner of an Inscription Award, the Mitch Mathews Award and an AWGIE. He is also the inaugural winner of the Richard Burton Award for New Plays.

Lee Lewis is the Artistic Director of Griffin Theatre Company and has directed plays for Griffin, Bell Shakespeare, Sydney Theatre Company and Belvoir. Her recent work includes *The Bull the Moon and the Coronet of Stars*, *Highway of Lost Hearts*, and *The Serpent's Table* at Sydney Festival.

Nakkiah Lui is a Gamilaroi/Torres Strait Island woman who grew up in Mount Druitt. In 2012, she won the Balnaves



Angela Betzien



Lachlan Philpott



Lally Katz



Chris Bendall



Jane Bodie



Ned Manning



Jane Harrison



Stephen Sewell

Foundation Indigenous Playwright Award, won the Australia Council's Dreaming Award, finished her law degree and had her play *This Heaven* programmed for Belvoir's 2013 Season. **Ned Manning** is a writer, actor and educator. Among his published plays are *Us or Them*, *Milo*, *Close to the Bone*, *Luck of the Draw* and *Alice Dreaming*. As an actor, Ned has appeared in some of Australia's most loved film, television and theatre productions including *Looking for Alibrandi*, *Offspring* and *Aftershocks*. **Suzie Miller** is a multi-award winning playwright currently working with Sydney's Griffin Theatre, Black Swan State Theatre Company, ATYP, Legs on the Wall, LIVE theatre in Newcastle UK, Oran M'or and the Perth Theatre in Scotland. **Jane Phegan** is a Company Artist with version 1.0 Inc. and has devised and performed in most of their major works since 2005, including the Helpmann Award winning *THIS KIND OF RUCKUS*, *Deeply Offensive & Utterly Untrue* and *The Table of Knowledge*. **Lachlan Philpott** is Chair of the Australian Writer's Guild Playwrights Committee and does extensive work as a teacher, mentor and dramaturg. He was Literary Associate at ATYP where he ran Fresh Ink, and he has been Writer in Residence at Red Stitch Theatre, Griffin Theatre Company and The Playwrights Foundation among others. In 2013, he was awarded an Australia Council Cultural Leadership grant. **Katie Pollock** is a Sydney-based playwright and dramaturg. Her plays for theatre include

The Hansard Monologues: A Matter of Public Importance, *The Blue Angel Hotel*, *A Quiet Night In Rangoon*, *A Girl Called Red* and *Blue Italian*. **Tim Roseman** is a director, dramaturg and producer, and is Artistic Director of Playwriting Australia. He has worked extensively in new writing and has directed plays in the UK with the Royal Court Theatre, National Theatre, Old Vic, Young Vic, Tricycle Theatre, Hampstead Theatre, Soho Theatre, Gate Theatre, Theatre Royal Haymarket, Pleasance and Salisbury Playhouse. **Polly Rowe** has been Literary Manager at Sydney Theatre Company for six years. Her role includes consulting on programming decisions, commissioning new plays and providing dramaturgical support to playwrights. She also curates STC's Rough Draft creative development program. **Stephen Sewell** is the Head of Writing at NIDA and is well-known for his film and theatre work, including his AFI Award winning script of *The Boys*, as well as plays including *The Blind Giant is Dancing* and *It Just Stopped*. He was awarded the prestigious ANPC Award for Significant Contribution to Australian Theatre in 2004. **Augusta Supple** is the Assistant Director of the Casula Powerhouse Arts Centre. She is a theatre director, creative producer, arts commentator and reviewer. She was Festival Co-director of the Mayday Playwrights Festival and the inaugural Festival Programmer for Sydney Fringe Festival.

THE DRAMATIST IS IN MICROSESSIONS

Got a knotty problem with your new play? Don't know where to go with your first draft? Written a character who doesn't play fair? Friendly. Informal. One on one. These microsessions are with a professional dramatist who promises not to bite. Chat to The Dramatist for five minutes and see what happens!

The sessions will run throughout the day, and are all scheduled to take place during program breaks:

➤ 11.30-11.45am ➤ 12.30-12.45pm ➤ 1.30-1.45pm ➤ 2.15-2.30pm ➤ 3.15-3.30pm ➤ 4.15-4.30pm

You won't know until your session who you will meet with, but all dramatists will be drawn from the fantastic line-up of festival speakers.

If you already have a ticket purchased for the Playwriting Festival, email us at nswwc@nswwc.org.au to book a place. Please indicate your first and second preference timeslots. We will endeavour to fit you into your nominated timeslot, but if we are unable to, we will get in touch to discuss alternate options. Be quick as spaces are strictly limited!

SATURDAY 29 MARCH 2014, 10AM – 6.30PM

PATRICK WHITE ROOM

10-10.40am

Keynote Address by Lally Katz

10.45-11.30am

State of Play

What's been happening since the last festival? What's been resolved, what's been left to fester? Count some wins and losses for playwrights with Suzie Miller, Tim Roseman, Lachlan Philpott, Jane Bodie, Tim Daly and Stephen Sewell.

11.45-12.30pm

Pitch Perfect

Getting a play on, selection criteria, what sort of pitches are companies after, how are long term goals reflected in programming? With Chris Bendall, Polly Rowe (Sydney Theatre Company), Lee Lewis (Griffin Theatre), Leland Kean (Tamarama Rock Surfers Theatre Company) and Anthea Williams (Belvoir).

12.45-1.30pm

Diversity/Identity

Just how widely do our stages stretch? Are we showing a true representation of Australian stories in our theatres? We talk about the diversity box on funding applications. It might get ticked but does it mean non-mainstream stories and voices get heard? With Tim Roseman, Ned Manning, Donna Abela, Nakkiah Lui and Jane Harrison.

1.30-2.30pm Lunch

2.30-3.15pm

Leaving on a Jet Plane

A residency in Paris or Ireland? A spell in San Francisco? A conference in Canada? How do these benefit playwrights? Is there a correlation between travel and production, both there and here? Do Australian playwrights have to go overseas to be properly considered in their own country? With Timothy Daly, Suzie Miller, Caleb Lewis and Lachlan Philpott.

3.30-4.15pm

The Collaborative Process

Ways of working together. When does collaboration help the process? Is it worth committing to a co-writer or a group? Can you have an ongoing relationship with a director? With Caleb Lewis, Augusta Supple, Jane Phegan and Hilary Bell.

4.30-5.30pm

Survival of the Species?

What do playwrights need/do to survive? Is it a sign of the times? Are we an individualist industry or can we be part of a community and thrive? Various speakers, chaired by Ned Manning.

5.30-6.30pm Drinks on the Verandah

JUDITH WRIGHT ROOM

In the Beginning Was the Word

How to start? Do a course or just put pen to paper and get started? Do short plays lead to long careers? How do playwrights start careers, mornings, plays? There are many pathways to playwriting, some might surprise you. With Hilary Bell, Katie Pollock, Noëlle Janaczewska and Kit Brookman.

True Stories

Based on transcripts, interviews or recordings of actual events. Verbatim, doco theatre, real life theatre; there are loads of variations but whatever the name this genre is as strong as ever. Why do playwrights, audiences and companies love plays based on true stories? With Noëlle Janaczewska, Katie Pollock, Jane Phegan and Angela Betzien.

Love or Money – Whose Play Is It Anyway?

Commissions versus the spec script. Is it just a matter of writing for love or writing for money? Who do we write our plays for? The playwright? The audience? The company? With Chris Bendall, Jane Bodie, Nakkiah Lui and Verity Laughton.

What Just Happened?

Drama needs conflict but conflict doesn't always help a playwright. What happens when things start getting bumpy? When is it time to get help? With Suzie Miller, Lachlan Philpott and Katie Pollock.

Please note the program and speakers are subject to change.