

SYDNEY**WRITERS'****FESTIVAL**

19–27 MAY

—

2025

MEDIA RELEASE: 6AM, 13 March 2025**Sydney, Australia**

- **Press Pack [HERE](#)**
- **Interviews Available**

SYDNEY WRITERS' FESTIVAL ANNOUNCES FULL PROGRAM FOR 19–27 MAY 2025

The **2025 Sydney Writers' Festival (SWF)** officially unveils its program today, delivering an engaging week of literary discussion and courageous storytelling across Sydney, **19–27 May 2025**. Vital conversations will take place at **200+ events**; with **40+ international guests** and **100+ Australian authors** participating. Of these authors, 34 will be releasing brand new books in 2025.

Artistic Director Ann Mossop said, "Sydney Writers' Festival is a place for brilliant writing and urgent conversations. Under the theme ***In This Together***, the 2025 Festival highlights extraordinary novels, poetry and writing of all kinds—and thought-provoking discussions."

"Writing remains one of the most powerful tools to make sense of the world, to spark change and foster understanding. The 2025 Festival presents great writers discussing a range of important topics: from the future of artificial intelligence to feminism's next battleground; from monumental global power shifts to First Nations truth-telling. The SWF program brings readers and writers together and challenges us to think, feel, and imagine what lies ahead," said Mossop.

FESTIVAL HEADLINE GUESTS

International best-sellers, literary icons and genre defining authors join this year's Festival lineup, alongside rising stars from across the globe.

2024 Booker Prize winner Samantha Harvey (*Orbital*, 2024) offers an introspective novel set aboard an International Space Station. **Jeanette Winterson** (*Oranges Are Not The Only Fruit*, 1985) celebrates the 40th anniversary of her landmark novel, and in a second event, explores how artificial intelligence is

GOVERNMENT PARTNERS

**CITY OF SYDNEY** 

PRINCIPAL PARTNER



PREMIER PARTNER



SYDNEY**WRITERS'****FESTIVAL**

19–27 MAY

—

2025

changing our understanding of being human. And the first openly trans woman nominated for the **Women's Prize for Fiction – Torrey Peters** (*Stag Dance*, 2025) brings her latest novel to the Festival.

Colm Tóibín (*Long Island*, 2024) continues the story of Eilis Lacey in the highly anticipated sequel to *Brooklyn* (2009). 2004 **Booker Prize winner Alan Hollinghurst** (*Our Evenings*, 2024) follows a biracial gay actor as he navigates shifting cultural landscapes from the 1960s to today. And master of crime fiction **Ian Rankin** (*Midnight and Blue*, 2024) showcases the 25th instalment of his legendary *Inspector Rebus* series.

International best-seller **Marian Keyes** (*My Favourite Mistake*, 2024) blends humour and emotional depth in a story of midlife reinvention. **David Nicholls** (*You Are Here*, 2024) takes readers on a tender, mystery-infused hiking journey. And **Yael van der Wouden** (*The Safekeep*, 2024) uncovers buried secrets and a love triangle in 1961 rural Netherlands in her **2024 Booker Prize-shortlisted** debut. Marking the 25th anniversary of her debut novel *After You'd Gone* (2000), **Maggie O'Farrell** (*Hamnet*, 2020) joins the Festival virtually to celebrate her body of work.

Sayaka Murata (*Vanishing World*, 2025) envisions a near-future Japan where reproduction is taboo, challenging the trajectory of human evolution in a tech-driven society. **Kaliane Bradley** (*The Ministry of Time*, 2024) redefines time-travel fiction with her debut novel, exploring the implications of time manipulation – co-presented by UNSW Sydney. And **Rumaan Alam** (*Entitlement*, 2024) sharply critiques privilege and power in contemporary New York.

For lovers of non-fiction, acclaimed historian **Ben Macintyre** (*The Siege*, 2024) delivers a gripping account of the 1980 Iranian Embassy siege in London, and philosopher **A.C. Grayling** (*Discriminations*, 2025) unpacks the history of cancel culture, advocating for reasoned debate in an era of polarising discourse.

2025 ESSENTIAL FESTIVAL EVENTS

Liane Moriarty and David Nicholls (21 May) reveal what happens when an author's everyday life stories become global sensations! They will be comparing experiences of seeing their novels turn into bestsellers, bingeable television series, and films.

Festival favourite – the **SWF Great Debate** (22 May), returns with the topic *True Friends Stab You in the Front*. **Annabel Crabb** and **David Marr** lead opposing teams in this hilarious and provocative showdown,

GOVERNMENT PARTNERS



PRINCIPAL PARTNER



PREMIER PARTNER



SYDNEY**WRITERS'****FESTIVAL**

19–27 MAY

—

2025

interrogating Oscar Wilde’s infamous aphorism on betrayal. **Rhys Nicholson, Matilda Boseley, Justine Rogers and Jennifer Wong** battle it out under the adjudication of **Yumi Stynes**, with pithy, personal, and razor-sharp exchanges.

Australian Indigenous leader **Thomas Mayo**, historian **Clare Wright** and Walkley award winning journalist **Lorena Allam** reflect on the history of Australian First Nations movements for change and discuss the path forward in ***Past and Future of Indigenous Recognition*** (22 May).

Four brilliant literary minds: **Rumaan Alam, Samantha Harvey, Robbie Arnott and Torrey Peters**, take a pulse check on the artform in ***State of the Art: The Novel*** (22 May), hosted by *The Bookshelf* radio presenter **Kate Evans**.

The lines between fact and fiction are uncovered by novelist **Shankari Chandran**, investigative journalist **Kate McClymont**, and Diamond Dagger Award winner **Ian Rankin** in discussing their gripping crime stories with host **Matthew Condon** in ***Untrue Crime*** (23 May).

The Moriarty Sisters (23 May)—**Jaclyn, Liane, and Nicola**—come together for a lively discussion on their careers, creative process, and the joys and challenges of sharing a literary family legacy.

Jewish authors **Michael Gawenda** and **Philippe Sands** reflect on rising antisemitism and xenophobia in ***Holding Up the Mirror*** (23 May) hosted by **Samantha Selinger-Morris**. **Michael Gawenda** will also discuss his autobiography *My Life as a Jew* (2023).

Queer trailblazers **Torrey Peters, Rumaan Alam, Hasib Hourani, Daniel Nour** and others champion the LGBTQIA+ community’s culture and creativity one true story at a time in ***Queerstories*** (23 May).

Queens of Australian pastry **Nadine Ingram, Natalie Paull** and **Kate Reid** cook up a light, airy, heartwarming chat with host **Jennifer Wong** on the art and business of baking in ***Bakers’ Delight*** (23 May).

Beloved Sydney institution ***Bankstown Poetry Slam*** (23 May) returns with headlining poet **Plestia Alaqad** and host **Bilal Hafda**, bringing audiences together for a powerful night of poetry, performances and a shared passion for language.

GOVERNMENT PARTNERS

**CITY OF SYDNEY** 

PRINCIPAL PARTNER



PREMIER PARTNER



SYDNEY**WRITERS'****FESTIVAL**

19–27 MAY

—

2025

In the wake of the Federal election, an award-winning panel: **Waleed Aly**, **George Megalogenis**, **Amy Remeikis**, and **Niki Savva**, dissect the key issues shaping the nation, the political landscape, and what lies ahead for Australian politics in *Barrie Cassidy and Friends: State of the Nation* (24 May), hosted by **Barrie Cassidy**.

Trumpocalypse Now (25 May) brings together the world's sharpest political minds, **Nick Bryant**, **Emma Shortis**, and **Peter Beinart** with host **Barrie Cassidy**, to examine what the next four years under the 45th President of the United States will mean—for America, for democracy, and for the world.

Esteemed authors **Colm Tóibín** and **Charlotte Wood** reflect on the turning points that shaped their writing careers and how Ireland and Australia support and value their writers in *Making a Writer* (25 May), with The Monthly editor **Michael Williams**.

Spies, Lies and Secrets (25 May) uncovers the covert world of espionage with spy fiction author **Jack Beaumont**, acclaimed historian **Ben MacIntyre** and true-crime writer **Matthew Condon** in this conversation filled with intrigue and hidden truths for your ears only.

In *Stories of Palestine* (25 May) writers **Sara Haddad**, **Hasib Hourani**, and **Samah Sabawi** share their personal experiences as part of the Palestinian and Lebanese diaspora, exploring how literature connects past and present, hosted by **Micaela Sahhar**.

And Festival hit, *Your Favourites' Favourite* (22–25 May) returns, bringing a behind-the-scenes look into which authors **Hannah Kent**, **Benjamin Law**, **Annabel Crabb**, and **Michael Robotham** are currently adoring.

OPENING AND CLOSING NIGHTS

The 28th Sydney Writers' Festival opens 20 May with an evening of readings and performances that bring this year's theme, *In This Together*, to the stage. The event stars Torres Strait Islander writer and activist **Thomas Mayo**, 2025 Festival Guest Curator, Yuwaalaraay writer and performer **Nardi Simpson**, Sunday Times–bestselling poet **Lemn Sissay**, and internationally acclaimed writer **Jeanette Winterson**.

The Festival closes on the 25 May with award-winning Australian writer **Anna Funder**, to share her perspective on writing in the age of AI, and how humans can resist becoming raw material for exploitation by technology in what is sure to be a formidable Closing Address.

GOVERNMENT PARTNERS



PRINCIPAL PARTNER



PREMIER PARTNER



SYDNEY WRITERS' FESTIVAL

19–27 MAY

—

2025

OTHER INTERNATIONAL GUESTS – FICTION

A host of visionary fiction writers transport readers to bold new futures and alternate pasts. **Catherine Chidgey** (*The Book of Guilt*, 2025) crafts a dystopian society where guilt becomes a tradable commodity, while **Neal Shusterman** (*All Better Now*, 2024) explores a world where a virus erases negative emotions, forcing society to confront profound ethical dilemmas. **Ferdia Lennon** (*Glorious Exploits*, 2024) transports readers to ancient Sicily, where prisoners and locals form unexpected bonds through theatre. And beloved British actor **Harriet Walter** (*She Speaks!*, 2024) reclaims the voices of Shakespeare's female characters in a bold new interpretation.

For lovers of gripping crime fiction and psychological thrillers, **Chris Whitaker** (*All the Colors of the Dark*, 2024) presents a haunting coming-of-age crime novel set in 1970s Missouri. **Asako Yuzuki** (*Butter*, 2024) unpacks a real-life crime case, exploring media narratives, gender expectations, and public perception. And horror fiends will die for **Mariana Enriquez** (*A Sunny Place for Shady People*, 2024), continuing her mastery of Latin American gothic storytelling, blending the supernatural with social critique.

Poetry lovers can look forward to **Afra Atiq** (*Of Palm Trees and Skies*, 2024) weaving personal and cultural narratives inspired by the Arabian Gulf, and **Lemn Sissay** (*Let the Light Pour In*, 2023) shares powerful meditations on identity, memory, and the ties that bind us across generations.

Young Readers

For young readers and those young at heart, adventure, resilience, and self-discovery await. International best-seller **Jeff Kinney** (*Diary of a Wimpy Kid: Hot Mess*, 2024) brings the latest instalment of his iconic children's series. **Terri Libenson** (*Entirely Emmie*, 2025) explores the ups and downs of early school friendships in her illustrated *Emmie & Friends* series. **Tricia Levenseller** (*The Darkness Within Us*, 2024) crafts another thrilling fantasy for YA readers.

OTHER INTERNATIONAL GUESTS – NON-FICTION

This year's international non-fiction authors bring audiences deep insights into history, politics, philosophy, culture, and science.

GOVERNMENT PARTNERS



CITY OF SYDNEY 

PRINCIPAL PARTNER



PREMIER PARTNER



SYDNEY**WRITERS'****FESTIVAL**

19–27 MAY

—

2025

Philippe Sands (*38 Londres Street*, 2025) uncovers hidden links between Chilean dictator Augusto Pinochet and a Nazi war criminal, meanwhile **Edward Wong** (*At the Edge of Empire*, 2024) blends investigative journalism with his family's lived experiences to reveal China's shifting political and social landscape. **Peter Godwin** (*Exit Wounds*, 2024) offers a moving family memoir partly set in post-colonial Africa. **Marcel Dirsus** (*How Tyrants Fall*, 2024) turns his attention to authoritarian regimes, analysing the political vulnerabilities that lead to their downfall.

Plestia Alaqad (*The Eyes of Gaza*, 2025) documents the resilience of those living through ongoing violence and humanitarian crisis in Gaza. **Peter Beinart** (*Being Jewish After the Destruction of Gaza*, 2025) challenges readers to rethink history, belonging, and moral responsibility.

Ittay Flescher (*The Holy and the Broken*, 2025) urges audiences to envision a shared future for Israelis and Palestinians. And **Raja Shehadeh** (*Forgotten*, 2024) uncovers hidden Palestinian memorials. Both appear at the Festival digitally.

Rhodri Lewis (*Shakespeare's Tragic Art*, 2024) explores the enduring power of Shakespeare's tragedies, revealing how the playwright's vision of fate, morality, and human frailty continues to resonate in the modern world.

And 'the world's number one sleep expert', **Matthew Walker** (*Why We Sleep*, 2017) continues to influence global conversations on the critical role of rest, unlocking the mysteries of the brain and human behaviour.

AUSTRALIAN GUESTS – FICTION

The beloved **Moriarty sisters** bring their signature storytelling styles to the Festival: **Jaclyn Moriarty** (*The Impossible Secret of Lillian Velvet*, 2023) continues her whimsical fantasy series *The Kingdom and Empires*; **Liane Moriarty** (*Here One Moment*, 2024) delivers an emotionally charged novel that explores the tension between control and the unpredictability of life; and **Nicola Moriarty** (*Every Last Suspect*, 2024) crafts a gripping psychological thriller filled with twists and turns.

Fiction remains a vital space for reexamining the past at the Festival. **Yumna Kassab** (*The Theory of Everything*, 2025) delivers a fearless fictional manifesto that questions how we make sense of the

GOVERNMENT PARTNERS



PRINCIPAL PARTNER



PREMIER PARTNER



SYDNEY**WRITERS'****FESTIVAL**

19–27 MAY

—

2025

universe, meanwhile **Malcolm Knox** (*The First Friend*, 2024) explores ambition and rivalry in a gripping drama set against the backdrop of Stalin's Soviet Union.

Human connection and self-discovery are also explored in many ways. **Zoë Foster Blake** (*Things Will Calm Down Soon*, 2024) presents a heartfelt and humorous take on modern relationships. **Nikki Gemmell** (*Wing*, 2024) crafts a powerful exploration of female friendship, set against the rugged beauty of the Australian bush. And **Jacqueline Maley** (*Lonely Mouth*, 2025) offers a deeply introspective novel examining how women perceive their bodies, appetites, and societal roles.

Sarah Sasson (*Tidelines*, 2024) delivers a moving coming-of-age novel, exploring the intricacies of sibling bonds and family loss. **Jessie Tu** (*The Honeyeater*, 2025) crafts a thought-provoking exploration of language, longing, and complex family ties. And **Charlotte Wood** (*Stone Yard Devotional*, 2024) will talk about the arc of her career as well as her Booker Prize-shortlisted novel. She is the first Australian to be shortlisted for the prestigious award in a decade.

For lovers of suspense and psychological fiction, **Jane Caro's** chilling new murder mystery *Lyrebird*, 2025; and **Christian White's** *The Ledge*, 2024 – a taut thriller brimming with dark secrets and deception; present gripping, edge-of-your-seat reads.

Stories of migration, displacement, and resilience take centre stage in **Jumaana Abdu's** debut novel *Translations*, 2024 - exploring Palestinian–First Nations solidarity; while **Shankari Chandran** (*Unfinished Business*, 2025) crafts a sweeping novel set in post-war Sri Lanka. **Sara Haddad** (*The Sunbird*, 2024) and **Hasib Hourani** (*rock flight*, 2024) bring lyrical and thought-provoking perspectives on migration, family, and ties to homeland.

Emily Maguire (*Rapture*, 2025) transports readers to ninth-century Mainz in an unforgettable tale of faith and survival. **Micaela Sahhar** (*Find Me at the Jaffa Gate*, 2025) delves into migration, displacement, and history in Jerusalem. **Sara M. Saleh** (*Songs for the Dead and the Living*, 2023) and **Zainab Syed** bring a new edited poetry collection (*Ritual*) to the Festival.

As climate change continues to shape our world, a new wave of Australian fiction wrestles with ecological themes. **Robbie Arnott** (*Dusk*, 2024) brings his signature nature-infused storytelling to a richly atmospheric tale set in Tasmania. **James Bradley** (*Landfall*, 2025) crafts a gripping near-future novel exploring the threats of climate collapse and the secrets hidden beneath the ocean's surface. And

GOVERNMENT PARTNERS

**CITY OF SYDNEY** 

PRINCIPAL PARTNER



PREMIER PARTNER



SYDNEY**WRITERS'****FESTIVAL**

19–27 MAY

—

2025

Charlotte McConaghy (*Wild Dark Shore*, 2025) blends conservation, survival, and resilience into a compelling eco-thriller.

Jock Serong (*Cherrywood*, 2024) delivers a gripping rural noir that examines environmental destruction, corruption, and the power struggles shaping Australia's coastal landscapes. And **Inga Simpson** (*The Thinning*, 2024) presents a haunting vision of a future threatened by environmental collapse.

Challenging form and convention, these authors' works push the boundaries of contemporary fiction: **Ceridwen Dovey's** *Only The Astronauts* (2024) - on humanity's ideals and shortcomings through anthropomorphism; **Dylin Hardcastle's** *A Language of Limbs* (2024) a bold and experimental exploration of queer identity set in 1970s–80s Australia; and **Chloe Elisabeth Wilson's** *Rytual* (2025) – a sharp and satirical deep dive into the cult-like nature of the beauty industry.

Novels exploring cultural identity form a powerful thread in this year's Festival. **Nardi Simpson** (*The Belburd*, 2024) offers a deeply moving reflection on family, culture, and resilience. And **Anne-Marie Te Whiu** (*Mettle*, 2025) presents an evocative novel about strength and the enduring power of storytelling.

Michael Mohammed Ahmad (*The Other Half of You*, 2021) and **Winnie Dunn** (*Dirt Poor Islanders*, 2024) celebrate Western Sydney's burgeoning writing culture through their involvement in *Sweatshop Literacy Movement*.

Youth Fiction

The lineup of Australian youth fiction delivers stories that inspire, challenge, and transport young readers. **Amie Kaufman** and **Meagan Spooner** (*Lady's Knight*, 2025) crafts a high-stakes fantasy adventure set in a world of knights and rebellion. **Lynette Noni** (*Wandering Wild*, 2025) introduces her latest novel, a thrilling lost-in-the-wilderness adventure filled with romance and survival.

Pete Helliari (*Detective Galileo*, 2025) brings his signature humour to a delightfully sharp and entertaining detective story with a twist. **Allison Rushby** (*Miss Penny Dreadful and the Mermaid's Locks*, 2023) blends gothic mystery with historical intrigue in a spellbinding adventure. And **A.L. Tait** (*The First Summer of Callie McGee*, 2023) delivers a gripping coming-of-age mystery.

Taking young readers on thrilling, unforgettable journeys: **Keshe Chow** (*For No Mortal Creature*, 2025) reinvents the vampire myth with a fresh, thrilling twist; **Sophie Clark** (*Cruel is the Light*, 2025) blends

GOVERNMENT PARTNERS

**CITY OF SYDNEY** 

PRINCIPAL PARTNER



PREMIER PARTNER



SYDNEY**WRITERS'****FESTIVAL**

19–27 MAY

—

2025

dark magic, danger, and revenge in a spellbinding gothic fantasy; and **Megan Daley** (*The Beehive*, 2024) introduces young readers to the fascinating world of bees and the magic of nature.

Mike Lucas (*One by One They Disappear*, 2024) delivers a spooky, fast-paced mystery full of eerie twists and unexpected turns. **Margot McGovern** (*This Stays Between Us*, 2025) explores secrets and shifting friendships in a suspenseful psychological drama set on an island school. And **Kirli Saunders** (*Afloat*, 2024) weaves poetic storytelling into a heartfelt tale of self-discovery, family, and finding where you belong. **Jessica Townsend** (*Silverborn: The Mystery of Morrigan Crow*, 2025) returns with the eagerly anticipated fourth instalment of her beloved *Nevermoor* series.

AUSTRALIAN GUESTS – NON-FICTION

Celebrating the richness of First Nations storytelling and connection to Country: **Daniel Browning** (*Close to the Subject*, 2024) gives a deeply personal account of identity, art, and the role of storytelling in Indigenous cultural survival; **Debra Dank** (*Terraglossia*, 2025) presents a powerful linguistic and cultural journey through the many layers of Indigenous languages and storytelling; and **Stan Grant** (*Murriyang*, 2024) delivers a personal and philosophical reckoning with Australia's colonial past, reflecting on the enduring legacy of First Nations resistance.

Thomas Mayo (*Always Was, Always Will Be*, 2024) offers an urgent call to action on Indigenous rights, truth-telling, and self-determination. **Bebe Oliver** (*if this is the end*, 2024) delivers a poetic and raw exploration of loss, healing, and the enduring strength of First Nations communities. **Vanessa Turnbull-Roberts** (*Long Yarn Short*, 2024) presents a powerful critique of the child protection system, centering Indigenous voices in the fight for justice.

Australian historian **Clare Wright** (*Näku Dhäruk: The Bark Petitions*, 2024) uncovers the impact of the Bark Petitions, shedding light on one of the earliest recorded Indigenous claims to sovereignty. And **Kate Grenville** (*Unsettled: A Journey Through Time and Place*, 2025) delivers a compelling reimagining of Australia's colonial history.

Two fearless Australian voices take on ingrained stereotypes: **Hannah Ferguson** (*Taboo*, 2024) tackles modern feminism, cancel culture, and the fight for equality; and **Anne Summers** (*Damned Whores and God's Police*, 1975) revisits her pioneering feminist work in the context of today's gender politics, reflecting on how expectations of women have evolved—and how they haven't.

GOVERNMENT PARTNERS



PRINCIPAL PARTNER



PREMIER PARTNER



SYDNEY WRITERS' FESTIVAL

19–27 MAY

—

2025

Authors and public figures tackling the complexities of identity, family, and belonging in a changing world include **Lech Blaine** (*Australian Gospel*, 2024), who lays bare the tumultuous experiences of his family fostering children from a background of extreme religious fundamentalism. **Candice Chung** (*Chinese Parents Don't Say I Love You*, 2025) unpacks the ways love is expressed in Chinese-Australian families. And **Michael Gawenda** (*My Life as a Jew*, 2023) lays bare his experiences as a Jew in the context of Australia's growing antisemitism.

Abbas El-Zein (*Bullet, Paper, Rock*, 2024) traces the impact of war, migration, and colonialism across generations. **Daniel Nour** (*How to Dodge Flying Sandals and Other Advice for Life*, 2025) offers a heartfelt and humorous look at growing up between cultures. And **Samah Sabawi** (*Cactus Pear for My Beloved*, 2024) brings a deeply moving and poetic perspective to displacement, resistance, and life in exile.

Yves Rees (*Travelling to Tomorrow*, 2024) presents a deeply personal and intellectual exploration of time, identity, and the human impulse to reinvent ourselves. **Rhys Nicholson** (*Dish*, 2023) serves up sharp and hilarious observations on fame and queer culture. And **Art Simone** (*Drag Queens Down Under*, 2024) brings readers into the vibrant and theatrical world of Australian drag.

Some of Australia's most respected political commentators and foreign correspondents examine power, war, and global affairs in this year's program. **Nick Bryant** (*The Forever War*, 2024) offers an incisive look at America's obsession with conflict and its far-reaching consequences. **Peter Greste** (*The First Casualty*, 2018) reflects on press freedom, propaganda, and the role of journalism in war. **Louisa Lim** (*Indelible City*, 2022) unpacks the history and identity crisis of Hong Kong. **John Lyons** (*A Bunker in Kyiv*, 2023) delivers a firsthand account of life in Ukraine's war zone, revealing the resilience of its people under siege. And **Emma Shortis** (*Our Exceptional Friend*, 2021) critically examines Australia's political and military relationship with the United States.

With wit and incisiveness, leading journalists and political thinkers examine the forces shaping contemporary Australia. **Joe Aston** (*The Chairman's Lounge*, 2024) unmask the backroom deals and privilege that define Australia's corridors of power. And **Josh Bornstein** (*Working for the Brand*, 2024) turns his attention to the erosion of workers' rights, exposing the deep divide between corporate interests and the everyday Australian.

GOVERNMENT PARTNERS



CITY OF SYDNEY 

PRINCIPAL PARTNER



PREMIER PARTNER



SYDNEY WRITERS' FESTIVAL

19–27 MAY

—

2025

Jess Hill (*The Reckoning*, 2024) confronts the systems that enable abuse, inequality, and institutional failure. **George Megalogenis** (*Minority Report*, 2024) explores the political and demographic shifts redefining Australia. **Rick Morton** (*Mean Streak*, 2024) delivers a powerful investigation into the Robodebt scandal, exposing the government negligence that devastated thousands of Australians. And **Carl Rhodes** (*Stinking Rich*, 2025) examines the moral failures of extreme wealth and the growing divide between billionaires and the rest of society.

From grief and survival to reinvention, memoirs offer raw and moving insights into the human experience. **Michelle Brasier** (*My Brother's Ashes are in a Sandwich Bag*, 2024) blends dark humour and heartbreak in a reflection on love and loss. **Gina Chick** (*We Are the Stars*, 2024) recounts her extraordinary solo survival in the wilderness, while her mother **Suzanne Chick** (*Searching for Chairman*, 1994) searches for family and identity in her classic personal memoir.

Robert Dessaix (*Chameleon*, 2025) contemplates ageing and self-reinvention, while **Helen Garner** (*The Season*, 2024) offers a tender meditation on coming of age through her grandson's football games. **Anna Funder** (*Wifedom – Mrs Orwell's Invisible Life*, 2023) talks about flawed artists in a special live episode of the *Minefield* with **Waleed Aly** and **Scott Stephens**. And **Hannah Kent's** memoir *Always Home, Always Homesick* (2025) recounts her love affair with Iceland.

Ailsa Piper (*For Life*, 2024) examines the evolving nature of love and friendship, and **Michael Vistonay** (*Noble Fragments*, 2024) pieces together a fragmented family history. Author of *The Book Thief* (2005), **Markus Zusak** (*Three Wild Dogs and the Truth*, 2024), turns to non-fiction, reflecting on storytelling, truth, and memory.

A full serving of food and culture is assured with **Natalie Paull** (*Beatrix Bakes: Another Slice*, 2024), **Nadine Ingram** (*Love Crumbs*, 2024) and **Kate Reid** (*Lune*, 2022) celebrating the power of baking. **Durkhanai Ayubi** (*Parwana*, 2020) offers up vibrant Afghani culinary culture. **Tony Tan** (*Tony Tan's Asian Cooking Class*, 2023) brings decades of expertise to an exploration of Asian cuisine. And **Jennifer Wong** (*Chopsticks or Fork?*, 2024) brings together an all-star line-up of cooks and storytellers for *FEAST: Family-style*.

Art, music, and cultural movements are dissected with passion in **Kerrie Davies's** *Miles Franklin Undercover* (2025), a fresh perspective on one of Australia's most significant literary figures, and **Andrew Ford's** *The Shortest History of Music* (2024), an accessible history of sound and rhythm.

GOVERNMENT PARTNERS



PRINCIPAL PARTNER



PREMIER PARTNER



SYDNEY WRITERS' FESTIVAL

19–27 MAY

—

2025

FREE EVENTS

The SWF offers audiences over **50 FREE events** across Sydney, with more than 30 featuring at Carriageworks. Here are a few:

Returning for 2025 is the beloved **Curiosity Lecture Series (22–23 May)**, supported by UNSW Sydney:

- **Toby Walsh on the Six Ideas You Need to Understand AI**
- **Joe Aston on What He Learned about Qantas**
- **Adam Bayes on Mind-Altering Mental Health**
- **Linda Jaivin on the Cultural Revolution in China**
- **Kerrie Davies on Miles Franklin's Little-Known Years**
- **Norman Swan on What's Good for Your Kids**
- **Marcel Dirsus on How Tyrants Rise (and Fall)**
- **Luke McNamara on Hate Speech and the Law**
- **Andrew Leigh and Richard Holden on Inequality**
- **Jess Hill on Stopping Family Violence**
- **George Megalogenis on the New Shape of Australian Politics**

Family Day returns on **Sunday, 26 May**, with a full program of talks, activities and performances for young readers, including storytelling sessions, live author events, a visit from Taronga Zoo animals, and an illustrator showdown. **Costa Georgiadis** from *Gardening Australia* and **Pete Helliard** introduce their latest books. And the family-friendly **ABC Kids podcast *Story Salad*** is performed live, with everything from a cartooning workshop to the retelling of Greek myths and even an attempt to break a world record.

Dreaming Inside: First Nations Voices from Correctional Centres (22 May), amplifies First Nations voices from inside. *Sista's Green Sea Dreaming: Voices from Dillwynia Women's Prison* and *Dreaming Inside: Voices from Junee Correctional Centre* explore themes of family, justice, resilience, and identity.

Firetalk (28 May – 11 June) presented in partnership with **Vivid Sydney**, is a free one-of-a-kind open-air storytelling event set against the flickering glow of the Bon(d)fire Vivid Light installation; starring Wiradjuri poet and activist **Jazz Money** alongside other First Nations writers, poets, and songwriters.

GOVERNMENT PARTNERS



PRINCIPAL PARTNER



PREMIER PARTNER



SYDNEY WRITERS' FESTIVAL

19–27 MAY

—

2025

Humour Me (25 May) sees **Richard Glover** announce the 2025 winner of the **Russell Prize for Humour Writing**. The only Australian award recognising humour writing across fiction, non-fiction, poetry, and short stories.

The full Sydney Writers' Festival 2025 program can be found online at swf.org.au.

Sydney Writers' Festival runs from 19–27 May 2025. Tickets are on sale from 10am Saturday 15 March. Please call 02 9256 4200 or visit swf.org.au for more information or to book.

MEDIA ENQUIRIES

Lachlan Camilleri, Publicity Lead

E: lachlan@originalspin.com.au M: 0426 744 063

Amber Forrest-Bisley, Senior Publicity Advisor

E: amber@originalspin.com.au M: 0405 363 817

*****Sydney Writers' Festival Press Pack and Images Available [HERE](#)**

WITH SPECIAL THANKS TO OUR PARTNERS

GOVERNMENT PARTNERS

The NSW Government & The City of Sydney

PRINCIPAL PARTNER



ARA GROUP is the Festival's Principal Partner. The Building Services company continues to support the Festival and Russ the Story Bus – SWF's education outreach program that visits

GOVERNMENT PARTNERS



PRINCIPAL PARTNER



PREMIER PARTNER



SYDNEY WRITERS' FESTIVAL

19–27 MAY

—

2025

Western Sydney schools.

PREMIER PARTNER



UNSW SYDNEY is the Sydney Writers' Festivals Premier Partner and exclusive university sponsor. This year's Festival features UNSW academics and researchers on Sydney Writers' Festival stages. This partnership brings together a shared vision of creativity, curiosity and thought leadership, providing opportunities for the UNSW and Sydney Writer's Festival communities to foster unique collaborations and connect with like-minded and curious people.

EDITOR'S NOTES

ABOUT SYDNEY WRITERS' FESTIVAL

From Monday 19 to Tuesday 27 May 2025, the 28th Sydney Writers' Festival brings together some of the world's most exciting literary voices for a week of insightful discussions, thought-provoking ideas, and unforgettable storytelling. The Festival features a dynamic program of in-person and livestreamed events, including author talks, panel discussions, workshops, and special events across Sydney. For more information, visit swf.org.au.

GOVERNMENT PARTNERS



CITY OF SYDNEY 

PRINCIPAL PARTNER



PREMIER PARTNER

