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## SYDNEY WRITERS' FESTIVAL ANNOUNCES FULL PROGRAM FOR 17–24 MAY 2026

The 2026 Sydney Writers' Festival (SWF) officially unveils its program today, delivering **200+ events** from **250+ authors** to transform Sydney into a week-long celebration of storytelling, **17–24 May**. **39 international guests** join **over 220 Australian writers** for vital conversations spanning fiction, non-fiction, poetry, politics, memoir, journalism and children's literature.

**Artistic Director Ann Mossop** said, "Sydney Writers' Festival is home to the world's best contemporary writing and the open exchange of ideas. With the theme, *Show Me the Truth*, the 2026 Festival highlights how these brilliant authors explore truth and trust in times of uncertainty across all forms of writing."

"Writers bring the truth to life in many different ways, whether it is in a novel that transports us to another time and place or in rigorous journalism that reflects the current moment. The 2026 Festival brings readers extraordinary international and Australian fiction writers, from Booker Prize winners and bestselling writers of fantasy to a range of stellar debuts.

"We'll explore important questions about the future of democracy and the impact of AI on the arts and culture, but we'll also celebrate a major anniversary for one of Australia's favourite cookbooks and the joys of Dav Pilkey's *Captain Underpants*. The SWF program opens up a space for writers and readers to explore books, ideas and storytelling in all of their variety and richness," said Mossop.

### **HEADLINE FESTIVAL GUESTS**

International bestsellers take centre stage across the week. One of the world's most prominent contemporary fantasy writers, **R.F Kuang** (*Katabasis*, 2025), takes audiences through her extraordinary career. **Mick Herron** (*Clown Town*, 2025) takes us behind the success of the *Slow Horses* series and its latest installment. Investigative journalist **Patrick Radden Keefe** (*London Falling*, 2026) unpacks his new

book and his catalogue of bestselling non-fiction and also presents a special session on *Say Nothing* (2018).

Political leaders and innovators bring sharp global insights to the May Festival. Former prime minister of New Zealand, **Jacinda Ardern** (*A Different Kind of Power*, 2025), shares her path to global leadership in her deeply personal memoir. Wikipedia founder **Jimmy Wales** (*The Seven Rules of Trust*, 2025) looks at the vital role of trust in all aspects of our lives.

Multiple Booker Prize-winning and shortlisted authors join the Festival from across the globe. **David Szalay** (*Flesh*, 2025) explores how intimacy can become emotionally damaging in his **2025 Booker Prize winner**. **Susan Choi** (*Flashlight*, 2025) examines family, absence and alienation in her new novel. Author of *Life of Pi*, adapted into an Oscar-winning film, **Yann Martel** (*Son of Nobody*, 2026) reimagines the Trojan War in his latest work. One of Ireland's most celebrated writers, Booker Prize winner (and 2025 Chair of Judges), **Roddy Doyle** (*The Women Behind the Door*, 2024), discusses his life's work and latest novel.

Novelist (*Ghost Eye*, 2026) and author of brilliant non-fiction (*The Nutmeg's Curse*, 2021) **Amitav Ghosh** explores the full range of his work. Master of weird fiction, **Bora Chung** (*The Midnight Table*, 2025), invites audiences into her modern horror fable. Women's Prize for Fiction winner **Tayari Jones** (*Kin*, 2026) discusses the bonds of mothers, daughters and sisterhood in her latest novel. New York Times bestselling author, **S.A. Cosby** (*King of Ashes*, 2025), brings gritty crime fiction and Southern noir to the SWF stage.

**Dav Pilkey** (*Captain Underpants: The First Epic Manga*, 2026), the world-famous creator of *Captain Underpants* and *Dog Man*, draws his beloved characters live in an event filled with hilarious onstage antics.

### **2026 ESSENTIAL FESTIVAL EVENTS**

In the aftermath of tragedy, writers **Jessica Chapnik Kahn**, **Lee Kofman**, **Simon Tedeschi** and **Michael Visontay** reflect on grief, solidarity and resilience with **Michaela Kalowski** in *After Bondi* (17 May), responding to the 2025 Bondi terrorist attack and exploring how communities reckon with violence.

In *The Story That Changed My Life* (19 May), journalists **Lorena Allam**, **Avani Dias**, **Lyse Doucet**, **Anton Enus**, **Kate McClymont** and **Patrick Radden Keefe** reflect on the moments and stories that transformed them, splitting their careers into the 'before' and the 'after'.

*Brave Conversations: When Words Offend* (21 May) explores how we can talk about difficult questions, and how having better disagreements can strengthen Australian society and democracy. Drawing on diverse lived experiences and perspectives, panellists **Waleed Aly**, **Cordelia Fine**, **Antoinette Lattouf**, **Greg Sheridan** and **Amy Thunig-McGregor** and hosts **Daniel Heller** and **Farid Zaid**, explore questions at the heart of democratic life and our relationships with one another.

Festival favourite, the *SWF Great Debate* (21 May), returns to Sydney Town Hall with the topic *We Can't Handle the Truth*. **Annabel Crabb** and writer **David Marr** lead opposing teams in a saucy and suggestive

comedy debate to find out whether the truth is in fact too hot to handle. **Matilda Boseley, Reuben Kaye, Rhys Nicholson** and **Jennifer Wong** battle it out under the adjudication of **Yumi Stynes**.

In ***Holding Up the Mirror*** (21 May), hear Jewish writers **Lee Kofman, Jon Sopel** and **Michael Visontay** discuss antisemitism in Australia and around the world, with host **Avril Alba**.

Looking to history to understand the present, ***Big Histories*** (22 May) brings together **Amitav Ghosh, Luke Kemp** (*Goliath's Curse*, 2025) and **Clare Wright** to re-examine the grand narratives that shape our world. From empire to climate change, they consider how the stories we inherit influence the futures we imagine.

***Great Adaptations*** (22 May) shares behind-the-scenes insight into what happens when compelling stories travel from page and stage to screen with writers **Mick Herron** (*Slow Horses*) and **Suzie Miller** (*Prima Facie*) in conversation with **Benjamin Law**.

***State of the Art*** (22 May) returns with a special Booker Prize-focused edition featuring **Susan Choi, Roddy Doyle, Yann Martel, David Szalay** and **Charlotte Wood**, reflecting on their work and its journey to recognition.

Beloved storytelling event ***Queerstories*** (22 May) returns to celebrate the culture and creativity of the LGBTQIA+ community one true story at a time. Featuring **Raewyn Connell, Victoria Falconer, George Kemp, Steve MinOn**, and **Sofi Oksanen**, with host **Maeve Marsden**.

Australian political heavyweights **Waleed Aly, Sean Kelly, Amy Remeikis** and **Niki Savva** join **Barrie Cassidy and Friends: State of the Nation** (23 May) to dissect a year of upheaval and policy change. Hosted by **Barrie Cassidy**, this Festival cornerstone offers sharp analysis of the forces shaping Australia's political future.

**Randa Abdel-Fattah, Michael Mohammed Ahmad** and **Antoinette Lattouf**, in conversation with **Jan Fran**, unpack the hard truths at the core of their latest works in ***Silenced*** (23 May).

As misinformation, AI and digital disruption reshape public discourse, hear from **Barbara Demick, A.C. Grayling, Jimmy Wales** and **Toby Walsh** in ***The Future of Truth*** (24 May) to consider how trust can be rebuilt in an age of manipulation and information overload.

### **OPENING AND CLOSING NIGHTS**

The 29<sup>th</sup> Sydney Writers' Festival opens on 19 May with a joyful evening of performance and reflection in the ***Show Me the Truth Gala***. The event stars dynamic Irish-Indian poet, **Nikita Gill**, bestselling American novelist, **Lily King**, award-winning Scottish poet, **Michael Pedersen**, Gunai multidisciplinary artist, **Kirli Saunders**, with her band **Cooee**, and beloved fiction-writer **Robbie Arnott**, reflecting on the power of language, truth and fiction.

The Festival closes on 24 May with an exploration of ***A Braver Australia*** and the courage needed to make change. Hear from writer and activist **Tony Birch**, novelist **Shankari Chandran**, artist **Ben Quilty**,

Chief Political Analyst at The Australia Institute **Amy Remeikis**, researcher and writer **Amy Thunig-McGregor**, alongside activist and author of *Better Things Are Possible* **Jack Toohey**.

### **OTHER INTERNATIONAL GUESTS – FICTION**

Novelists who took the world by storm with their bestselling 2025 releases join the program. **Lily King** (*Heart the Lover*, 2025) shares her unforgettable story of love, desire, friendship and loss. **Florence Knapp** (*The Names*, 2025) explores family and the life-defining decisions that make her debut resonate so strongly with readers.

International cultures are explored in distinct and profound ways. **Maria Reva** (*Endling*, 2025) examines extinction, nationalism and cultural inheritance in Ukraine. **Michael Bennett** (*Carved in Blood*, 2025) discusses writing crime novels from a Māori perspective. Scottish poet **Michael Pedersen's** fiction debut (*Muckle Flugga*, 2025) explores identity, belonging and emotional resilience. Much-beloved Irish writer **Niall Williams** (*Time of the Child*, 2024) reflects on his writing life, career and the country home that inspired his acclaimed novels.

Fantasy writing envelops SWF with vampires, dragons and folktales. International bestseller **Lev Grossman** (*The Bright Sword*, 2024) discusses all things myths and magic alongside **R.F Kuang** and **Garth Nix**. Rising star **Tigest Girma** (*Eternal Ruin*, 2025) shares how she merges real and imagined worlds in her writing.

Poetry lovers can look forward to **Nikita Gill** (*Hekate*, 2025) performing readings of her bestselling body of work. Pulitzer Prize winner **Mosab Abu Toha** (*Forest of Noise*, 2024) speaks to the land and culture that influence his writing.

**Tony Tulathimutte** (*Rejection*, 2024) captures the modern millennial malaise of anxiety, rejection, resentment and delusion. **Josh Silver** (*Fruit Fly*, 2026) shares how digital media and internet culture inform his adult debut.

### **OTHER INTERNATIONAL GUESTS – NON-FICTION**

The 2026 Festival's international non-fiction lineup explores the future of democracy, important political trends and events and global conflicts, as well as rich personal accounts of culture and heritage

Pulitzer Prize finalist **Deborah Baker** (*Charlottesville: An American Story*, 2025) illuminates America's history of political radicalisation. Award-winning foreign correspondent **Barbara Demick** (*Daughters of the Bamboo Grove*, 2025) shares the true story of twins separated by China's one-child policy. Finnish Estonian author **Sofi Oksanen** (*Same River, Twice*, 2026) examines Vladimir Putin's war on women, and award-winning BBC correspondent **Lyse Doucet** (*The Finest Hotel in Kabul*, 2025) talks about Afghanistan and brings frontline reporting from global conflict zones.

**Jon Sopel** (*Strangeland*, 2024) reflects on democracy, antisemitism and Trump's America. **A.C Grayling** (*For the People*, 2026) outlines the fragility of contemporary society in the face of authoritarianism. **Luke Kemp** (*Goliath's Curse*, 2025) draws on centuries of historical evidence to examine why complex

societies collapse. **David Moscrop** (*Too Dumb for Democracy*, 2019) takes a look under the hood of 21<sup>st</sup> century nationalism.

**Hiroko Yoda** (*Eight Million Ways to Happiness*, 2025) inspires audiences with the ancient spiritual wisdom of Japan. Translator and Shakespeare scholar **Daniel Hahn** (*If This Be Magic*, 2026) explores how the legendary playwright has been translated into different languages around the world. **Matt Alt** (*Pure Invention*, 2020) uncovers how Japan's culture influences the rest of the world.

For fans of memoir, **Tareq Baconi** (*Fire in Every Direction*, 2026) delves into his queer coming-of-age story set against the backdrop of his middle eastern heritage. **Mariana Enriquez** (*Somebody is Walking on Your Grave*, 2025) takes audiences to cemeteries across the globe to explore local histories of violence, religion and social class.

### **AUSTRALIAN GUESTS – FICTION**

Some of Australia's most celebrated contemporary novelists lead the 2026 program. **Trent Dalton** (*Gravity Let Me Go*, 2025) returns with his highly anticipated new novel. Booker Prize-shortlisted author **Steve Toltz** (*A Rising of the Lights*, 2026) discusses arts and culture in the age of AI. Stella Prize winner **Heather Rose** (*A Great Act of Love*, 2025) shares her latest tale of enduring love. **Siang Lu** (*Ghost Cities*, 2024) shares his 2025 Miles Franklin Award winner.

LGBTQIA+ voices light up Festival stages with bold, bright energy. Rising film star **Zoe Terakes** (*Eros*, 2025) shares their literary debut, reimagining Greek myths through a queer lens. **Madeleine Gray** (*Chosen Family*, 2025) sets the scene for a lifelong love story built on friendship. **Fiona Kelly McGregor** (*The Trap*, 2026) reflects on the homes and haunts of Sydney's queer past.

Crime and psychological suspense linger in the Festival halls. **Chris Hammer** (*Legacy*, 2025) expands his bestselling rural noir universe with a story steeped in high-stakes and small-town reckonings. **Dervla McTiernan** (*Three Reasons for Revenge*, 2026) confronts the lengths family go to protect the ones they love. **Shaun Micallef** (*De'Ath Takes a Holiday*, 2025) shares his satirical take on the age-old vampire story.

First Nations voices remain at the heart of the Festival. **Evelyn Araluen** (*The Rot*, 2025) shares her new book, winner of the 2026 Victorian Prize for Literature, with readers. **Tony Birch's** latest book, *Pictures of You* (2025), collects his short fiction from the past two decades. **Jazz Money** (*mark the dawn*, 2024) shares poetry in motion. **Bruce Pascoe** (*No Hiding from the Woman in the Moon and Big Sky*, 2026) calls for urgency on the climate crisis through poetry. **Kirli Saunders** (*Eclipse*, 2025) reflects on the power of language to connect us.

**Melanie Saward** (*Making Trouble*, 2026) is the guest curator of three events, including *My Writing Soundtrack*, *Dreaming Big: Voices from the Brisbane Youth Detention Centre* and *Past, Present and Emerging*.

**Jacinta Daniher** and **Taylor Hampton** (*My Dreamtime Match*, 2026) frame the famous AFL match as more than a game. **Gary Lonesborough** (*Good Young Men*, 2026) tells the coming-of-age story of three Aboriginal boys. **Lay Maloney** (*Weaving Us Together*, 2025) shares their debut coming-of-age YA novel. **Ellen van Neerven's** (*Ruby's Web*, 2026) latest novel presents contemporary First Nations life through the perspective of a child.

Authors grapple with questions of identity and belonging in their latest works. **Yumna Kassab** (*My Love*, 2026) traces the rise and collapse of a marriage within an Arab community. **Randa Abdel-Fattah** (*Discipline*, 2025) unpacks the complex social, cultural and political forces at play in her new novel. **Michael Mohammed Ahmad** (*Bugger*, 2024) offers a candid portrayal of masculinity, abuse and class expectations.

**Jumaana Abdu** (*Translations*, 2024) and **Winnie Dunn** (*Dirt Poor Islanders*, 2024) reflect on the authors and libraries that shaped their love of writing. **Steve MinOn** (*First Name Second Name*, 2025) discusses his debut novel and pathways to publication. **Omar Musa** (*Fierceland*, 2025) weaves the past and the present into an emotionally powerful family saga, discussed alongside poet **Sara M. Saleh** (*Ritual*, 2025). **Natalia Figueroa Barroso** (*Hailstones Fell Without Rain*, 2025) and **Shirley Le** (*Love*, 2026) celebrate the launch of a mesmerising new anthology of stories, poems and essays.

**Kathryn Heyman** (*Circle of Wonders*, 2026) grapples with the intimacies of loss, love and grief. **Brigid Delaney** (*The Seeker and the Sage*, 2025) uniquely blends Stoic philosophy with narrative fiction. **David Stavanger** (*The Drop Off*, 2025) centres on fatherhood, vulnerability and care in his latest poetry collection. **Brandon Jack** (*Pissants*, 2025) exposes the absurd rituals, toxic hierarchies and unspoken pressures inside elite sport.

The Festival curtain rises on acclaimed playwrights. **Lally Katz** (*My Cursed Vagina*, 2026) discusses her successful stage career alongside her darkly comic memoir. **George Kemp** (*Soft Serve*, 2026) shares how his theatre career shaped his debut novel. And **Suzie Miller** (*Prima Facie*, 2024) talks about her new work.

Australian fiction continues to push form and genre. **Robbie Arnott** (*Dusk*, 2024) brings his signature nature-infused storytelling to a richly atmospheric tale set in Tasmania. **Tasma Walton** (*I Am Nannertgarrook*, 2025) delivers a powerful historical novel based on the true story of her ancestor. **Maxine Beneba Clarke** (*beautiful changelings*, 2025) continues to challenge poetic and narrative conventions with lyrical experimentation. **Garth Nix** (*We Do Not Welcome Our Ten-Year-Old Overlord*, 2026) brings his trademark wit and world-building mastery to a conversation about writing fantasy.

#### **AUSTRALIAN GUESTS – YOUNG ADULT FICTION**

Young adult fiction transports audiences to settings filled with heart, heat and seriously high stakes. **Tristan Bancks** (*Raised by Wolves*, 2025) delivers gripping, edge-of-your-seat suspense as young protagonists confront danger and isolation. **Adam Cece** (*The Locked Room*, 2025) blends puzzles, peril and sharp humour in a tightly plotted mystery. **Alexandra Moody** (*Wild Darling*, 2026) explores ambition, romance and self-discovery in a high-energy romance.

**Ruby Jean Cottle** (*Black River*, 2026) and **Zoe Gaetjens** (*Drawing Nudes While Making Other Plans*, 2025) examine vulnerability, reinvention and the messy intensity of adolescence. **Amy Doak** (*What Have They Done to Liza McLean?*, 2025) sets her latest crime thriller in an elite boarding school.

Verse novelists **Robbie Coburn** (*The Fowl in the Wire*, 2025), **Pip Harry** (*Drift*, 2025) and **Karen Comer** (*Once Upon Tomorrow*, 2026) discuss their writing process. **Allayne L Webster** (*Maisy Hayes Is Not for Sale*, 2026) champions resilience and courage in the face of adversity.

**Jason Gent** (*This Season's Draft*, 2025) captures the pressure and promise of the AFL draft system, **Scott Woodard** (*Poster Boys*, 2026) interrogates masculinity and reputation in competitive environments.

### **AUSTRALIAN GUESTS – CHILDREN'S FICTION**

Children's fiction runs wild with humour, heart and high adventure. **Matt Stanton** (*Duck: Look Who's Talking!*, 2026) delivers laugh-out-loud antics packed with playful energy. **Mick Elliott** (*URANUS FC*, 2026) and **Serena Geddes** (*School Rivals: Ella Forever #1*, 2026) kick goals with their debut graphic novels.

For the first time ever, all creators of the *Ella* book series – **Laura Sieveking** (*Ella at Eden: Paris Adventure*, 2026), **Meredith Costain** (*Ella Diaries Super Special #4*, 2025), **Danielle McDonald** (*Ella and Olivia: Sporty Stories*, 2026), **Yvette Poshoglian** (*Party Pups*, 2026) and **Rebecca McRitchie** (*Meet Ella: Swim Class*, 2026) – join each on the same stage.

**Tanya Hennessy** (*Sunny and Storm*, 2025) brings warmth and resilience to a story of friendship and finding your voice. **Cheryl Orsini** (*Baby's First Mother's Day*, 2026) celebrates the bond between parent and child. **Suzanne Leal** (*The Year We Escaped*, 2025) transports readers to 1942 Darwin in her latest coming-of-age story. **Sue Whiting** (*Promises and Other Lies*, 2026) delivers a compelling story of secrets and shifting friendships

### **AUSTRALIAN GUESTS – NON-FICTION**

Big questions about how Australia understands itself shape a powerful strand of the 2026 Festival. **Tony Abbott** (*Australia: A History*, 2025) revisits the nation's political and cultural evolution, while **Troy Bramston** (*Gough Whitlam: The Vista of the New*, 2025) examines one of the country's most transformative prime ministers.

**Melissa Lucashenko** (*Not Quite White in the Head*, 2025) interrogates race and the politics of belonging in this searing collection of her essays and journalism. **Rachel Perkins** (*The Australian Wars*, 2025) discusses truth-telling and colonisation with **Henry Reynolds** (*Looking from the North*, 2025), **Stephen Gapps** (*Uprising*, 2025) and **Clare Wright** (*The Bark Petitions*, 2024). **Paul Callaghan** (*Leading from the Dreaming*, 2026) joins a conversation on the contemporary value of traditional wisdom.

**Rosalind Dixon**, **William Partlett** (*The People's Guide to the Australian Constitution*, 2026) and **Annabel Crabb** (*There's a Prawn in Parliament House*, 2025) demystify the foundations of Australian democracy, while **Amy Remeikis** (*Where It All Went Wrong*, 2026) and **Niki Savva** (*Earthquake: The Election That Shook Australia*, 2025) analyse turning points in contemporary political life.

**Sean Kelly** (*The Good Fight*, 2025) brings his perspective on the Albanese Government to the Festival and **Barrie Cassidy** brings decades of expertise on Australian politics to multiple sessions in the program.

US politics expert **Nick Bryant** (*The Forever War*, 2024) contributes to *The World according to Trump* and **Antony Loewenstein** (*The Palestine Laboratory*, 2024) joins a conversation about Gaza. **Debbie Whitmont**, author of *The Man Who Couldn't Wait* (2026), a gripping account of Australia's first political assassination, joins **Sarah Krasnostein** (*The Mushroom Tapes*, 2025) to talk about how we write about crime.

Questions of technology, sustainability and survival loom large. **Richard King** (*Brave New Wild: Can Technology Really Save the Planet?*, 2025) interrogates technological optimism in the face of climate collapse, while **Natalie Kyriacou** (*Nature's Last Dance*, 2025) examines extinction and biodiversity loss. **Sarah Wilson** (*I Eat the Stars*, 2026) lays out a path for living fully, meaningfully and beautifully through an era of tumultuous change. **Ray Norris** (*Big Sky*, 2026) explores astronomy alongside Indigenous knowledge systems with **Bruce Pascoe**, and **Sami Bayly** (*The Illustrated Encyclopaedia of Fast and Slow Animals*, 2025) brings natural history vividly to life for younger audiences.

Writers interrogate art, authorship and cultural legacy across multiple sessions. **Susan Wyndham** (*Elizabeth Harrower: The woman in the watch tower*, 2025) reflects on one of Australia's most enigmatic literary figures, while **Drusilla Modjeska** (*A Woman's Eye, Her Art*, 2025) explores women artists and the politics of representation. **Anna Goldsworthy** (*On AI, Self and Culture*, 2026) questions creativity and authorship in an age of artificial intelligence.

Memoir and reflective non-fiction offer intimate accounts of belonging, family, personal struggle and triumph. **Antoinette Lattouf** (*Women Who Win*, 2026) profiles women redefining leadership and public life. **S. Shakthidharan** (*Gather Up Your World In One Long Breath*, 2025) reflects on theatre, storytelling and diasporic identity. **Katia Ariel** (*Ferryman*, 2025) traces memory and migration, while **Jane Messer** uncovers complex family stories in *Raven Mother* (2026). **Greg Sheridan** (*How Christians Can Succeed Today*, 2025) explores the contemporary legacy of Christianity.

**Daniel Nour** (*How to Dodge Flying Sandals and Other Advice for Life*, 2025) offers a heartfelt and humorous look at growing up between cultures. **Tracey Lee Holmes** (*The Eye of the Dragonfly*, 2025) examines the spectacle of sport in her part memoir, part manifesto.

Explorations of how we think and connect form another strong programming theme. **Osher Günsberg** (*So What? Now What?*, 2025) shares lessons in resilience and reinvention and **Ahona Guha** (*How We Relate*, 2026) examines attachment, intimacy and the science of relationships.

**Jack Toohey** (*Better Things Are Possible*, 2025) charts pathways for social change grounded in collective action. **Belinda Castles** (*Walking Sydney*, 2025) uncovers the layered histories embedded in the city's streetscapes and how residents connect with them.

**Stephanie Alexander** celebrates the 30th anniversary edition of *The Cook's Companion* (2026), reflecting on its enduring influence on Australian kitchens.

### **FREE EVENTS**

SWF offers audiences over **55 FREE** events across Sydney. Here are a few:

The beloved **Family Day** returns on **Sunday, 24 May**, with a stacked program of talks, interactive workshops, performances, and of course, Russ the Story Bus. Families can join much-loved author and illustrator **Cheryl Orsini** for badgemaking. Story time events are hosted by **Sue Whiting, Gabriel Evans**, plus brother and sister team **Victor** and **Sandra Steffensen**. Australian illustrators battle it out to see who reigns supreme, families bust 42 common myths with **Dan Marshall**, and audiences choose how a story unfolds with **Nathan Luff** and **Andrew Cranna**.

**Jennifer Wong** brings her Festival favourite event back for **FEAST: Food Fights** (23 May), with **Durkhanai Ayubi, Natalia Figueroa Barroso, Shirley Le, Debra Oswald, Michael Shaikh** and others sharing mouth-watering tales of dinner disasters and festive frivolities.

**Secrets of the Lodge** (21 May) sees **Troy Bramston, Sean Kelly, Amy Remeikis** and **Niki Savva** share their expert insights into Australian democracy and some of our larger-than-life prime ministers.

**Fireside** takes over the Blacksmith's Workshop at Carriageworks for two stellar events. Writer **Bruce Pascoe** and Professor of Astrophysics **Ray Norris** share stories about the stars above and secrets of the universe in **Fireside: Sky Stories** (23 May). Meanwhile, **Shaun Micallef, Bora Chung, Mariana Enriquez** and **Maeve Marsden** gather round the campfire for an evening of horrors and delights in **Fireside: Spooky Stories** (23 May).

**Osher Günsberg, Ahona Guha** and **Josh Silver**, with host **Sana Qadar**, share strategies and insights on how to navigate life's roadblocks in **Stop Being Stuck** (22 May).

The full Sydney Writers' Festival 2026 program can be found online at [swf.org.au](http://swf.org.au).

Sydney Writers' Festival runs from 17–24 May 2026. Tickets are on sale from 10am Saturday 14 March. Please call 02 9256 4200 or visit [swf.org.au](http://swf.org.au) for more information or to book.

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

## **EDITOR'S NOTES**

### **ABOUT SYDNEY WRITERS' FESTIVAL**

From Sunday 17 to Sunday 24 May 2026, the 29<sup>th</sup> 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](http://swf.org.au).