

SYDNEY WRITERS' FESTIVAL



LIVE & LOCAL

LIVE STREAM SCHEDULE 23-26 MAY



THURSDAY 23 MAY

All times are AEST*

10-11AM	JULIA BAIRD: <i>BRIGHT SHINING</i>
12-1PM	VIET THANH NGUYEN: <i>A MAN OF TWO FACES</i>
2-3PM	SUZIE MILLER: <i>PRIMA FACIE</i>
4-5PM	JULIAN BORGER: <i>I SEEK A KIND PERSON</i>
6-7PM	FANTASTICAL WORLDS
7.30-8.30PM	LOVE AND LONGING

FRIDAY 24 MAY

10-11AM	A.C. GRAYLING: <i>THE MEANING OF LIFE IN A TECHNOLOGICAL AGE</i>
12-1PM	THE WAR ON JOURNALISTS
2-3PM	ABDULRAZAK GURNAH: <i>AFTERLIVES</i>
4-5PM	FEMINIST FIREBRANDS
6-7PM	5KM FROM THE FRONTLINE
7.30-9PM	QUEERSTORIES

SATURDAY 25 MAY

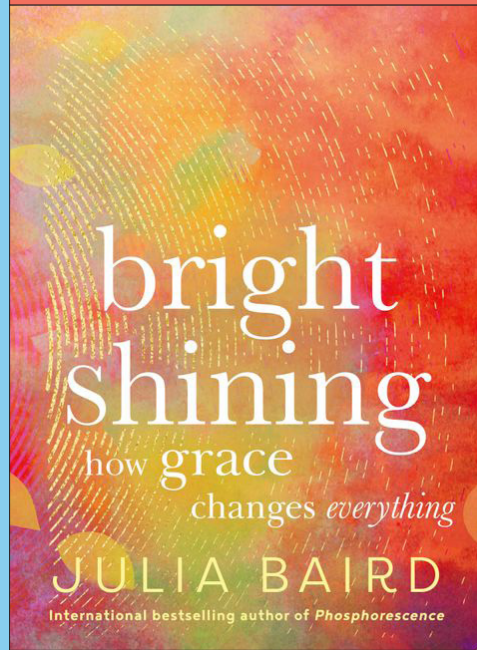
10-11AM	CELESTE NG: <i>OUR MISSING HEARTS</i>
12-1PM	TRENT DALTON: <i>FROM ELI TO LOLA</i>
2-3PM	STORYTELLERS: LEIGH SALES AND LISA MILLAR
4-5PM	BRINGING THE PAST TO LIFE
5.30-6.30PM	SAD GIRL? MAD GIRL? BAD GIRL?
7.30-8.30PM	SEBASTIAN BARRY: <i>OLD GOD'S TIME</i>

SUNDAY 26 MAY

10-11AM	BARRIE CASSIDY AND FRIENDS: <i>STATE OF THE NATION</i>
11.30AM-12.30PM	PLAY LIKE A GIRL
1.30-2.30PM	DAVID WENGROW: <i>THE DAWN OF EVERYTHING</i>
3.30-4.30PM	DARK TECHNOLOGIES
5.30-6.30PM	CLOSING ADDRESS: KATE MANNE ON THE FUTURE OF MISOGYNY

SYDNEY WRITERS' FESTIVAL

10-11AM



JULIA BAIRD: *BRIGHT SHINING*

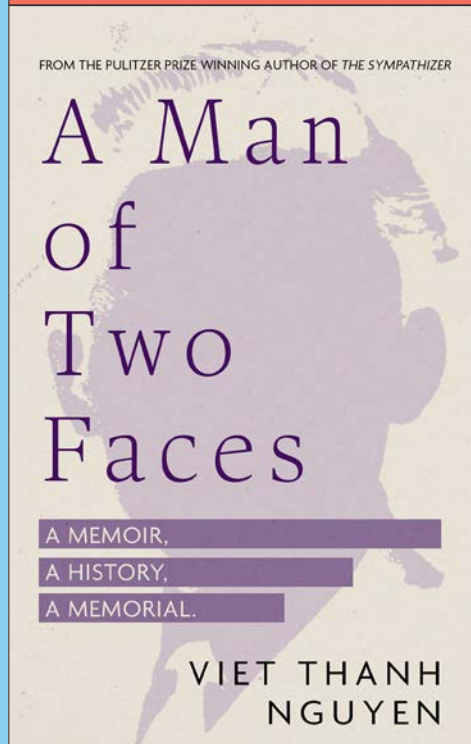
Nurturing grace, even in the darkest of times

Following broadcaster and author Julia Baird's multi-award-winning international bestseller, *Phosphorescence*, comes a beautiful and timely exploration of that most mysterious but necessary human quality: grace.

Bright Shining: How grace changes everything asks what grace looks like today, how we recognise it, nurture it within ourselves and express it. For Julia, grace can be found by being kinder, bigger and better with each other.

Sit down with Julia to discuss this luminous work, which *The Guardian* described as "a book the world needs now". In conversation with journalist Jacqueline Maley.

12-1PM



VIET THANH NGUYEN: *A MAN OF TWO FACES*

Tragicomic memoir from Pulitzer Prize-winning author of *The Sympathizer*

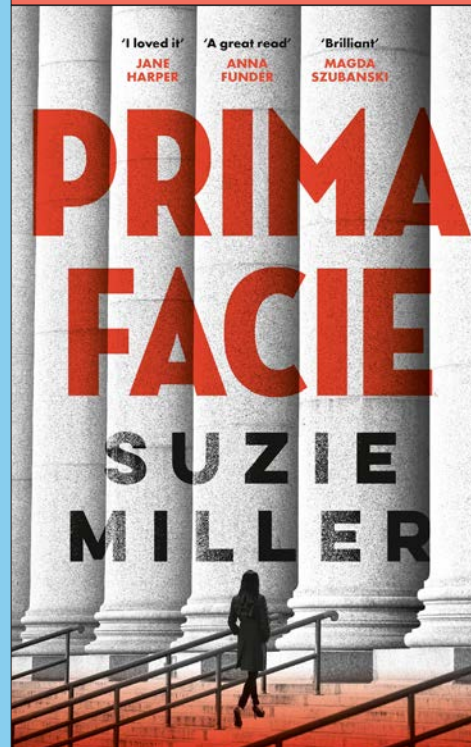
"I am a spy, a sleeper, a spook, a man of two faces", begins Viet Thanh Nguyen's debut novel, *The Sympathizer*, the internationally acclaimed bestseller that was recently adapted into an HBO series starring Sandra Oh and Robert Downey Jr.

This duality is also at the heart of Viet's highly original memoir, *A Man of Two Faces*, which details with sardonic wit and incisive analysis the double consciousness of a Vietnamese refugee growing up in North America.

Listen to the celebrated author, hailed as "a conscience of American literature" (*The New Yorker*), in conversation with Benjamin Law.

Viet Thanh Nguyen appears thanks to the support of Fiona and Matthew Playfair.

2-3PM



SUZIE MILLER: *PRIMA FACIE*

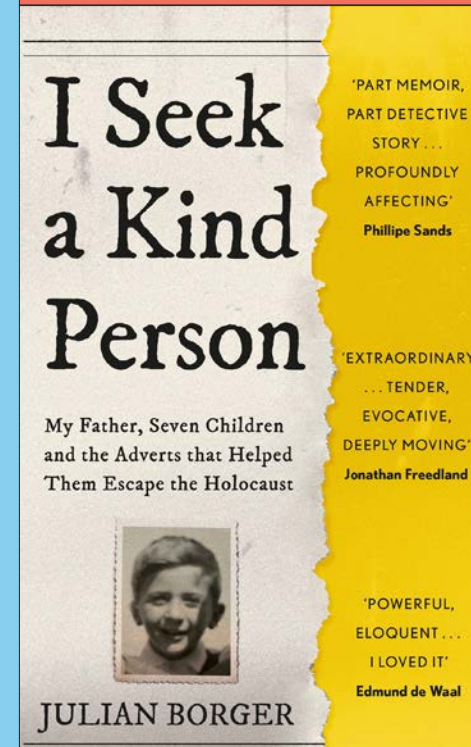
Suzie Miller's disturbingly prescient play, *Prima Facie*, dramatises the price sexual assault victims pay for speaking out.

This blistering one-woman show wowed audiences on Broadway and the West End, winning Suzie an Olivier Award and *Killing Eve* favourite Jodie Comer a Tony for her performance as the brilliant young barrister who, one sickening night, finds herself thrust into the flawed justice system.

Put the courts on trial with Suzie and writer and podcaster Nicole Abadee, as they discuss *Prima Facie*'s adaptation into a gripping novel and screenplay set to star Cynthia Erivo.

Supported by UNSW Sydney.

4-5PM



JULIAN BORGER: *I SEEK A KIND PERSON*

An enthralling memoir of family history and the Holocaust's resonance through generations

"I seek a kind person who will educate my intelligent boy, aged 11."

This extraordinary 1938 personal advertisement is the starting point for Julian Borger's quest to understand his father's past.

An enthralling memoir, family history and detective story all in one, Borger brings to life in vivid detail the Holocaust escape stories of a handful of children and families, and traces the resonance of these events through generations.

Supported by ARA.

6-7PM

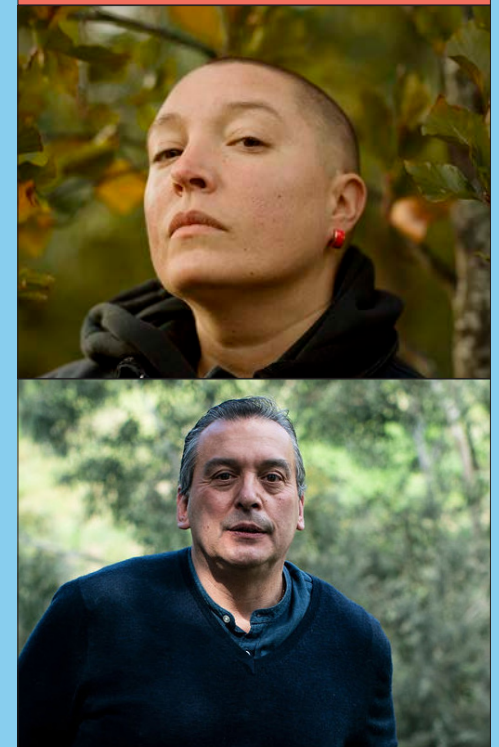


FANTASTICAL WORLDS

Forging new frontiers in fantasy

Imagine another world with the fantasy writers who are redefining the wildly popular genre. Australian fantasy heavyweight Garth Nix (*The Old Kingdom* series) takes to the stage with ascending local star Shelley Parker-Chan (*The Radiant Emperor* duology) and global sensation Samantha Shannon (*The Roots of Chaos* series) to explain how they create expansive universes for their epic stories, heroes and heroines. Don't miss this must-see event for YA and fantasy fans alike! Hosted by Aimée Lindorff.

7.30-8.30PM



LOVE AND LONGING

K Patrick and Christos Tsiolkas reveal their sentimental sides

Love is indeed a many splendoured thing in the work of K Patrick and Christos Tsiolkas, who know firsthand the pleasures of writing queer love stories.

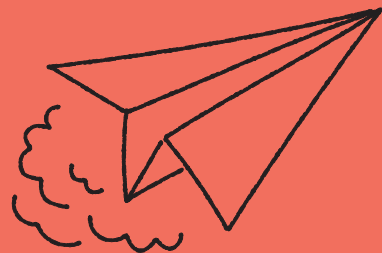
Hosted by Madeleine Gray, this beautiful conversation brings together two authors to discuss their sensual new novels. K's *Mrs S* pulses with lust and longing at an elite boarding school, while Christos' critically acclaimed *The In-Between* follows a fledgling relationship between two middle-aged men.

Swoon with K and Christos in this heartfelt discussion of romance, regret, desire and hope.

THURSDAY 23 MAY

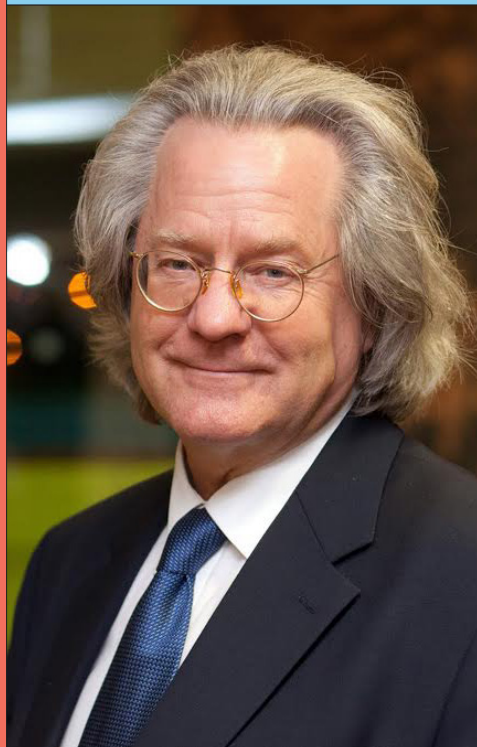
LIVE & LOCAL

SYDNEY



WRITERS' FESTIVAL

10-11AM



A.C. GRAYLING: THE MEANING OF LIFE IN A TECHNOLOGICAL AGE

Finding answers in changing times

"It shouldn't be the business of a philosopher today to tell people what to think", says A. C. Grayling, but rather "how to think".

The quest for a life worth living has been the business of philosophers for millennia. How can we pursue answers to life's big questions in a world that feels increasingly dangerous and unstable thanks to big tech and AI?

Unpack the 'how' in this unmissable talk from the pre-eminent philosopher, who returns to Australia following his sell-out public lectures last year.

12-1PM



THE WAR ON JOURNALISTS

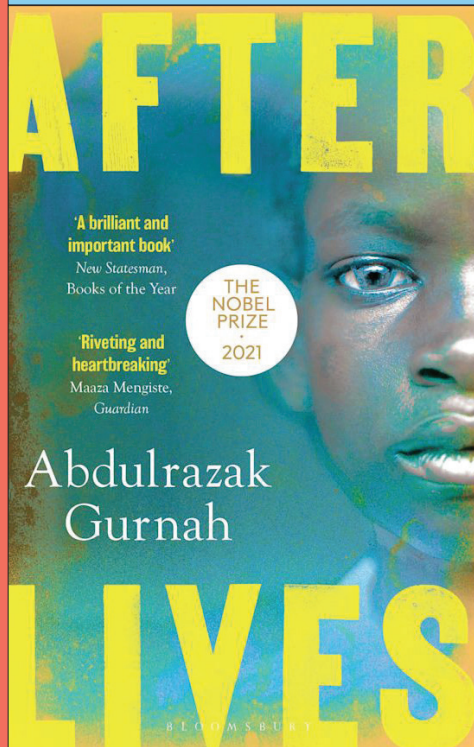
News from the frontlines

War correspondent Marie Colvin stated: "It has always seemed to me that what I write about is humanity in extremis, pushed to the unendurable, and that it is important to tell people what really happens in wars."

With conflict continuing in Ukraine, and the death toll of journalists in the Gaza conflict reaching alarming proportions, we look at the role of journalists in war – on and off the frontlines – and how vital the protection of journalists is to news we can trust about the realities of war.

Join us to hear from those with firsthand experience from the most conflict-ridden parts of the world: Global Affairs Editor for the ABC, John Lyons, *The Guardian* World Affairs Editor, Julian Borger and Ukrainian journalist Alisa Sopova of the 5km From the Frontline project. In conversation with journalist and broadcaster Hamish Macdonald.

2-3PM



ABDULRAZAK GURNAH: AFTERLIVES

Nobel Prize winner's saga of colonialism in Africa

At 18, Abdulrazak Gurnah arrived in England as a refugee from the *Zanzibar Revolution*. Receiving the Nobel Prize more than 50 years later, he reflected that the "prolonged period of poverty and alienation" he experienced made him a writer.

From the contemporary immigrant experience in his debut, *Memory of Departure*, to colonial wartime conscription in Booker Prize shortlisted *Paradise*, Abdulrazak's unflinching yet humane oeuvre interrogates the legacies of empire, centring that which is often too marginalised.

Listen as he and writer Sisonke Msimang discuss his tenth novel, *Afterlives* – an intergenerational portrait of love and loss under German occupation in East Africa.

4-5PM



FEMINIST FIREBRANDS

Plot the pathways forward with these incendiary feminist voices

Four waves in, the feminist fight for gender equality is far from over. This panel brings together the powerful and incendiary feminist voices of Hannah Ferguson, Sisonke Msimang and Jennifer Robinson. Hear from these leading writers and activists who between them offer daring feminist opinions on topics ranging from freedom of speech, right-wing politics, racism, xenophobia, belonging and identity, taboos around sex and pleasure, as well as the legal judgements that continue to silence and disadvantage women.

Be inspired by the feminist firebrands who are fighting for meaningful social change. Hosted by the inimitable Jo Dyer, this is an important examination of the most pressing issues facing women today.

Supported by UNSW Sydney.

6-7PM



5KM FROM THE FRONTLINE

The human face of the war in Ukraine

A few kilometres from the battlefield, Ukrainian civilians are attempting to lead 'normal' lives.

Since 2018, journalist Alisa Sopova and photographer Anastasia Taylor-Lind's collaborative project, 5km From the Frontline, has captured everyday existence near the conflict zone, documenting the lives lost or interrupted as the war escalates.

Get dispatches from this extraordinary documentary photography series, which offers a unique, personal and deeply affecting look at the war in Ukraine and its devastating impact on those closest to it.

Hosted by ABC RN's Hamish Macdonald.

Anastasia Taylor-Lind and Alisa Sopova appear thanks to the support of Phillip Keir and Sarah Benjamin.

7.30-9PM



QUEERSTORIES

Vulnerable and fierce, hilarious and heartbreaking

Queerstories celebrates the culture and creativity of the LGBTQI+ community one true story at a time.

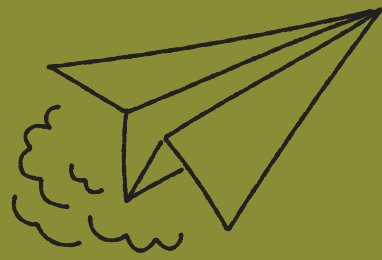
Featuring J.M Field, George Haddad, Bebe Oliver, K Patrick and Samantha Shannon, each guest is invited to share the story they want to tell, but are never asked to; unexpected tales of pride, prejudice, resilience and resistance.

An institution around the country, Queerstories has played to crowds big and small, from Mudgee to Murwillumbah, Albury to Adelaide, Brisbane and beyond, with an award-winning podcast featuring an archive of nearly 400 queer tales.

FRIDAY 24 MAY

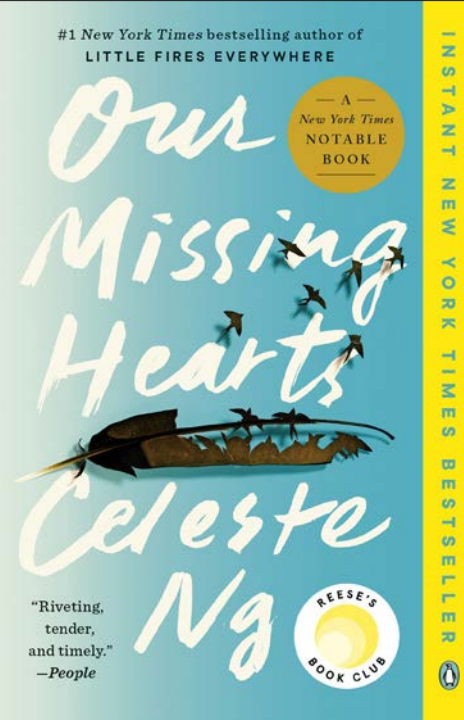
LIVE & LOCAL

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WRITERS' FESTIVAL

10–11AM



CELESTE NG: *OUR MISSING HEARTS*

The gripping, heart-rending follow-up to *Little Fires Everywhere*

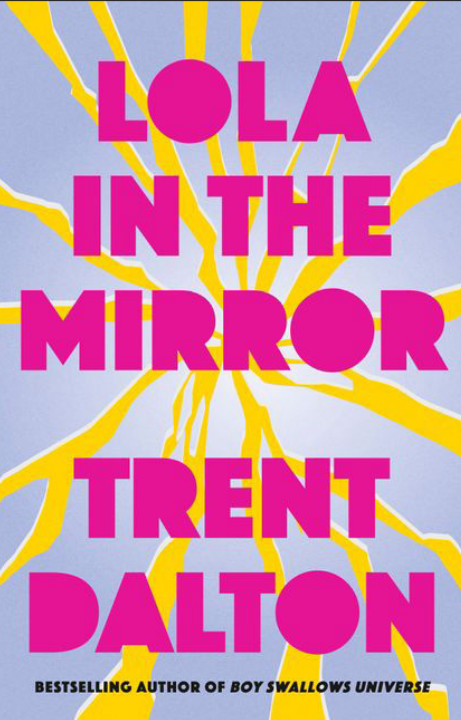
Banning books, waving flags and persecuting racial minorities. Sound familiar? Celeste Ng's third novel, *Our Missing Hearts*, is set in a marginally more dystopian version of Trump's America as a patriotic new law removes children from dissident parents.

After New York Times–bestselling novel *Little Fires Everywhere* – which was adapted into a popular miniseries starring Kerry Washington and Reese Witherspoon – comes a similarly moving tale about the unbreakable bond between a mother and son.

Sit down with Celeste and host Claire Nichols to discuss hope, hero librarians and the power of art to create change.

Celeste Ng appears thanks to the support of Sam Meers AO.

12–1PM



TRENT DALTON: FROM ELI TO LOLA

Beloved author returns to SWF in this career-spanning conversation

Trent Dalton has captured readers with books like *Boy Swallows Universe* and *All Our Shimmering Skies*. His storytelling voice and compelling characters cement him as a mainstay of Australian literature. His new novel, *Lola in the Mirror* is a darkly funny, and beautiful story of life, death and a country neck-deep in a national housing crisis.

Join Trent as he discusses his process of writing the intricacies of the real world, and real people, onto the page. A supremely compelling and entertaining speaker, Trent will be in conversation with Cassie McCullagh.

Supported by ARA.

2–3PM



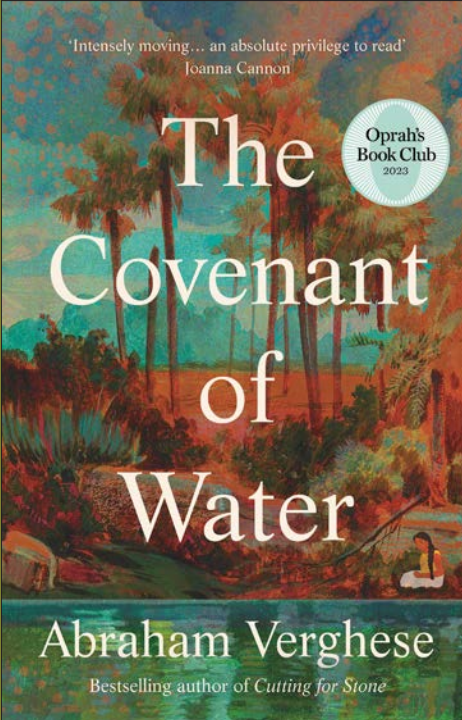
STORYTELLERS: LEIGH SALES AND LISA MILLAR

Veteran journalists shine a spotlight on the craft of non-fiction

ABC legend Leigh Sales turns the spotlight on the best in the business in *Storytellers: Questions, Answers and the Craft of Journalism*, revealing coveted trade secrets in the process. Leigh is joined in conversation by fellow legend Lisa Millar, whose own book *Muster Dogs*, provides an insight into the craft of non-fiction writing. With a combined 65 years in journalism, the co-hosts of last year's hit *Newsreader* companion podcast, unpack the craft of non-fiction writing and discuss the fine art of turning real life events into a compelling narrative. This session is for anyone who's ever wanted to be a journalist or even just wondered how the news gets made.

Supported by ARA.

4–5PM



BRINGING THE PAST TO LIFE

Take a step back in time

"The past is a foreign country", L.P. Hartley famously wrote. It is also a place readers can visit via masterful historical fiction.

Be transported by esteemed panellists Francesca de Tores (*Saltblood*), Mirandi Riwoe (*Sunbirds*) and Abraham Verghese (*The Covenant of Water*) as they discuss the magic of bringing history to life for contemporary audiences.

Learn how these authors conjure the past to make sense of the present and convincingly intertwine fact and fiction in their prose. Hosted by Kate Evans (ABC RN's *The Bookshelf*).

Supported by ARA.

5.30–6.30PM



SAD GIRL? MAD GIRL? BAD GIRL?

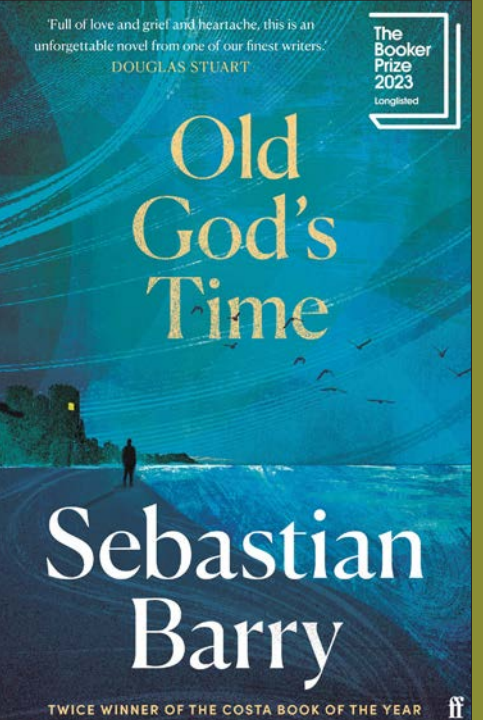
Pour one out for the girlies of contemporary fiction

She may be self-absorbed, adrift or unhinged, but the 'sad girl' is taking the publishing industry by storm.

Debut novelists Nadine J. Cohen (*Everyone and Everything*), Madeleine Gray (*Green Dot*) and Jessie Stephens (*Something Bad is Going to Happen*) have all created unforgettable protagonists who are fallible, at times unlikeable and painfully relatable.

Hear from these exciting debut novelists as they discuss making and breaking this emerging genre's rules, and how they crafted compelling portraits of present-day womanhood. In conversation with *The Guardian's* Steph Harmon.

7.30–8.30PM



SEBASTIAN BARRY: *OLD GOD'S TIME*

Chronicler of Irish history and the human heart

When Sebastian Barry was named Ireland's Fiction Laureate, he promised to champion a "golden age of Irish prose". Decades before the likes of Sally Rooney and Eimear McBride returned Irish literature to the spotlight, Sebastian reckoned with forgotten chapters in Irish history through his plays, poetry and acclaimed novels.

His latest, the Booker Prize longlisted *Old God's Time*, is a portrait of a good man haunted by a traumatic past from a natural storyteller described as "the laureate of empathy" (*Sunday Independent*).

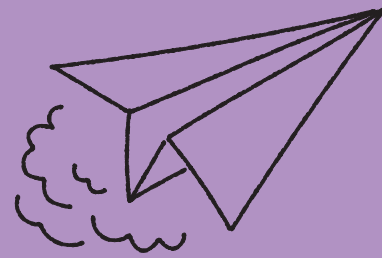
Sit down with Sebastian, appearing via video link, to discuss memory, family secrets and a rich writing life. With host Kate Evans.

Supported by the Consulate General of Ireland and Culture Ireland. Musicians appear thanks to the support of the Australian Chamber Orchestra.

SATURDAY 25 MAY

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WRITERS' FESTIVAL

10–11AM



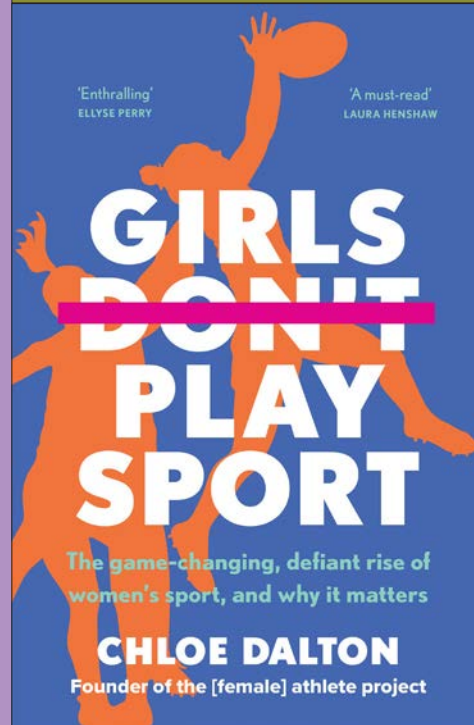
BARRIE CASSIDY AND FRIENDS: STATE OF THE NATION

Review the year in AusPol at this Festival favourite

Relive all the thrills and spills of the year in Australian politics with veteran journo Barrie Cassidy and his hand-picked squad of the country's sharpest pundits.

From the supermarket wars and cost of living crisis to the hottest year on record and unexpected (or expected) resignations, it's all up for dissection as they take the pulse of the nation. Barrie shares the stage with political journalists Bridget Brennan, Amy Remeikis, Niki Savva and Laura Tingle.

11.30AM–12.30PM



PLAY LIKE A GIRL

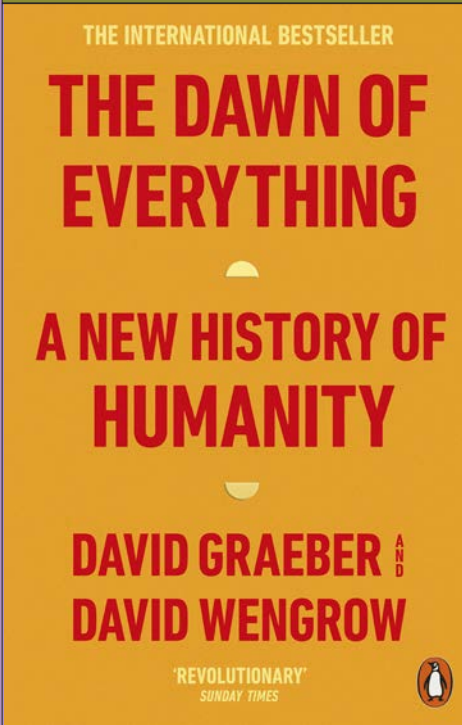
Keep Tillies fever burning in this celebration of women's sports

Matildas fever swept across Australia during the 2023 FIFA Women's World Cup, taking hold of new soccer fans and diehards alike. But where do we go next to tap into the potential of women's sport?

Hosted by *The Ticket* podcast's Tracey Holmes, this elite panel features Olympic rugby gold medalist Chloe Dalton (*Girls Don't Play Sport*), Australia's most decorated cycling Olympian Anna Meares, and world champion pro-athlete Jana Pittman (*Enough*).

Cheer on the sportswomen kicking goals for female athletes everywhere.

1.30–2.30PM



DAVID WENGROW: THE DAWN OF EVERYTHING

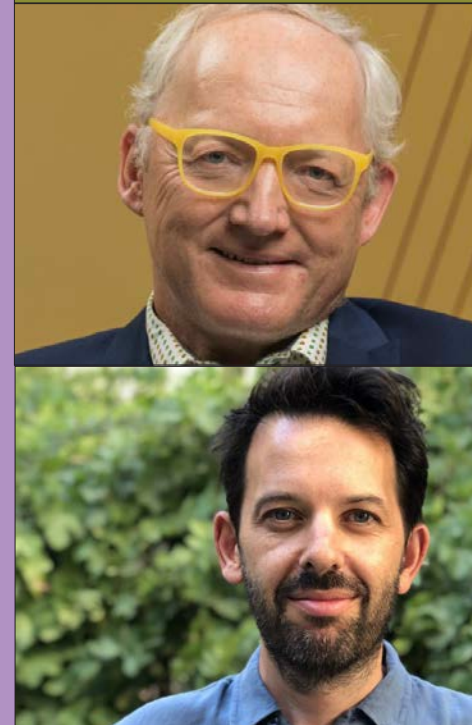
Change the course of history, starting with the past

What kind of world could we create if we stopped believing inequality is the price of progress?

Archaeology professor David Wengrow's groundbreaking book, *The Dawn of Everything: A New History of Humanity*, co-authored with the late David Graeber, overturns the theories of Yuval Noah Harari (*Sapiens*), Jared Diamond (*Guns, Germs, and Steel*) and Steven Pinker (*Enlightenment Now*). Challenging dominant narratives that the agricultural revolution meant abandoning an egalitarian Eden, the book unearths advanced early civilisations that weren't governed by kings, presidents or authoritarian rule.

Transform your understanding of human evolution with David, in conversation with ABC RN's Richard Fidler, and learn how rewriting history may provide political inspiration for today.

3.30–4.30PM



DARK TECHNOLOGIES

Exposing the technology of modern warfare

Machines lead the charge on today's battlefields, but what does this mean for the people caught in the crossfire?

Learn from journalist Antony Loewenstein, whose Walkley Award-winning investigation, *The Palestine Laboratory: How Israel Exports the Technology of Occupation Around the World*, uncovered the widespread commercialisation and global deployment of Israeli weaponry tested in Palestinian territories. Antony is joined by AI expert Toby Walsh, whose new book, *Faking It: Artificial Intelligence in a Human World*, explores how AI impersonates human intelligence.

Join them in this vital conversation with host Michael Richardson about the intersection of technology, conflict, occupation and surveillance.

Supported by UNSW Sydney.

5.30–6.30PM



CLOSING ADDRESS: KATE MANNE ON THE FUTURE OF MISOGYNY

Unpack the future of misogyny with Kate Manne, philosopher of the #MeToo era

When Kate Manne's first book *Down Girl*, a tightly argued analysis of misogyny, was published shortly after the full exposé of Harvey Weinstein, she became 'the philosopher of #MeToo' – someone who could explain in crisp and compelling terms what misogyny is and how it works.

With her trademark combination of philosophical rigor and vivid storytelling, her next book *Entitled* took aim at male privilege and how it hurts women. Her new book *Unshrinking: How to Fight Fatphobia* targets particularly prevalent and oppressive aspects of misogyny – fatphobia and diet culture – proposing a radical rethinking of our bodies and the world.

In her closing address, join Kate to build on this extraordinary body of work and consider what recent activism has changed, what has resolutely stayed the same and what has worsened. What might the future of misogyny look like?

Supported by UNSW Sydney.

SUNDAY 26 MAY

LIVE & LOCAL