

PERTH WRITERS FESTIVAL SCHOOLS DAY :: THUR 21 FEB

Kick-start the school year by bringing your classes to a day of inspiring author talks and current affairs discussions designed especially for students.

This year's Schools Day offers an exciting mix of acclaimed authors, illustrators and journalists who will be discussing the writing process, graphic novels, multiculturalism, current affairs, the environment, politics and much more. This offers an excellent chance for cross-curricula opportunities between English, Media and Society and Environment learning areas.

Sessions for lower and upper secondary students run concurrently in the Dolphin and Octagon theatres. School groups are encouraged to attend for the whole day but if required single session tickets are available. Classes can bring their lunch and picnic in the University grounds.

An education resource kit is also available for teachers. This kit contains ideas for classroom activities that can be completed before and after the Schools Day. The kit is linked to the learning outcomes of the Curriculum Framework. Classes also have the opportunity to prepare questions for the presenters.

Festival Tent (Yr 7/Lower secondary)	Octagon Theatre (Upper secondary)
9.30–10.10	9.30–10.10
Kate Forsyth	Nicki Greenberg
Grades 7–9	Grades 10–12
10.30–11.10	10.30–11.10
Sally Heinrich	Alexis Wright
Grades 7–9	Grades 10–12
11.30–12.10	11.30–12.10
Dave Hackett	Shaun Tan
Grades 7–9	Grades 10–12
12.10–12.50	12.10–12.50
Lunch Break	Lunch Break
12.50–1.30	12.50–1.30
Meredith Hooper	Maureen McCarthy
Grades 8–10	Grades 10–12
1.50–2.30	1.50–2.30
Randa Abdel - Fattah	Paul Ham
Grades 8–10	Grades 9–12

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Lower Secondary Stream

Kate Forsyth – Fantastical Worlds

Fantasy fiction is one of the most popular genres in the world and has a particularly strong audience in children and young adults. Kate Forsyth is a best selling Australian author who has become popular with young audiences for her *Chain of Charms* and *Witches of Eileanan* series and novel *The Starthorn Tree*.

Her recent book *The Butterfly in Amber* (part of the *Chain of Charms* series) takes readers on adventures through 17th century England with Luka and Emilia as they travel to London to find the last of the Graylings tribe.

Kate is a master storyteller and will give your students a first-hand insight into the world of fantasy fiction, discussing how she creates new worlds, the use of historical sources and the inspiration behind her characters and novels.

Sally Heinrich – Hungry Ghosts

Sally Heinrich was born in Adelaide. She is an author and an illustrator who spends half her time drawing and the other half writing. Sally has traveled extensively in Asia and spent time living there, which has influenced her recent work.

In her most recent novel *Hungry Ghosts*, Sarah's family has recently moved from Singapore to Australia. The reader follows Sarah's experiences in a new country as she tries to adapt to a different way of life. Her father wants her to become a true-blue Aussie, while her mother is keen for the family to still hold on to some old traditions, such as the Festival of the Hungry Ghosts. As if Sarah didn't have enough problems the ghost of a young girl appears in her life needing her help.

In this session Sally will discuss some of the themes of her novel including contemporary Australian life, Asian customs, immigration and cultural identity.

Dave Hackett – Cartoon Dave

Dave Hackett is the author of four cartooning books, *Cartoon Your Head Off*, *Cartoon Your Big Slimy Brains Out*, *Cartoon Dave's No-Rules Cartooning* (a 2005 Children's Book Council of Australia Notable Book) and *Fab Face Freak-Out*. His cartooning has also led him to appear on the TV shows *It's Academic*, *Totally Wild* and he regularly shares his cartooning tips with the kids of Australia on Saturday Disney.

He has also written and illustrated two novels, *UFO: Unavoidable Family Outing* (a hilarious whodunit road trip adventure for all ages) and *UFO in the USA* (his even sillier follow up). Both books are entertaining explorations of families and those sometimes painful family journeys that you can't avoid!

Dave is an engaging performer and will discuss his recent novels along with all aspects of cartooning. This is guaranteed to be a laugh out loud session for kids and teachers alike!

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Meredith Hooper – The Ferocious Summer

Meredith Hooper is a lecturer, historian, Antarctic expert and full-time writer of non-fiction and fiction for children and adults. She grew up in Australia and after graduating in history from the University of Adelaide she came to the UK to do a post-graduate history degree at Oxford. During the last fifteen years she has specialised in writing about the history, geology and wildlife of Antarctica. As well as being short-listed for the Carnegie Medal, her work has appeared on TES Information Book and Australian Children's Book of the Year shortlists.

Her book *The Ferocious Summer* tells the story of Antarctic warming, specifically through a study of the changing lives and habits of a group of Adelie penguins. Through her study of these penguins we can begin to understand the full and frightening impact of global warming.

This remarkable book shows how scientists are piecing together the jigsaw of causes and impacts of Antarctic warming. Meredith is particularly skilled at bringing the doing of science and the reality of climate change to a general audience and this will be an enlightening session for students that will illustrate the application of science. Meredith will discuss issues such as how scientists study and research animals, how they collect the data and how they can use long term data sets to gain understanding of climate change. She will illustrate this particular experience of rapid warming, and some of the ways in which scientists are trying to work out what is happening, and why.

Randa Abdel-Fattah – The Politics of Identity

Randa Abdel is a 26-year-old lawyer, born in Australia of Palestinian and Egyptian parents. For years Randa has been active in the inter-faith community, regularly giving talks at high schools, and is one of the original members of a Melbourne-Palestinian/Jewish women's friendship group. Over the years Randa has been a member of a number of Palestinian human rights campaigns, the Australian Arabic council and various Australian Muslim women networks.

Her most recent novel, *Ten Things I Hate About Me*, explores life for a teenage Muslim girl who changes her name and tries to hide her Lebanese background in an attempt to be like everyone else. Things get complicated as relationships develop, and Jamie must decide whether or not to reveal her true identity.

Randa will speak about issues of stereotype and racism as well as sharing her firsthand experiences of being a young Muslim woman in Australia. She will explore the complex issues of life as a Muslim in a post-September 11 world, the politics of identity and the discourse of 'us' and 'them'.



Kate Forsyth



Sally Heinrich



Dave Hackett



Meredith Hooper



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Upper Secondary Stream

Nicki Greenberg – Graphic Novels

Nicki Greenberg is a writer and illustrator with a special interest in comic art. Nicki's first books, *The Digits* series, were published when she was fifteen years old and are a series of 12 books featuring her fingerprints as characters. Since then, she has devoted most of her work to comics, but has also written and illustrated fiction and non-fiction books for children. An active contributor to the Australian independent comic art scene, Nicki's comics have appeared in *Silent Army*, *Pure Evil*, *Tango* and other comic art anthologies in Australia, Canada and Spain.

The Great Gatsby was a book she read and fell in love with at the age of 17. Almost ten years later, she set out to pay tribute to F. Scott Fitzgerald's novel by interpreting it in comic art form, which took her more than six years to complete. It is a breathtaking homage, featuring the exquisitely realised setting of 1920's New York and a throng of fantastical creatures who play out the drama, the wry humour and the tragedy of the novel.

In this session Nicki will discuss life as a graphic novelist, talk through examples of her illustrations, how she explores complex ideas in a visual format and describe the long creation process of *The Great Gatsby*.

Alexis Wright – Carpentaria

Alexis Wright is a member of the Waanyi nation of the southern highlands of the Gulf of Carpentaria. Her books include *Grog War*, a study of alcohol abuse in the outback town of Tennant Creek, editor of *Take Power*, essays and stories celebrating the first 25 years of land rights in Central Australia, and the novel *Plains of Promise*, which was shortlisted for the Commonwealth Prize, the Age Book of the Year Award and the NSW Premier's Award for Fiction.

Her novel *Carpentaria* has won the 2007 Miles Franklin Award, the Australian Literature Society Gold Medal, the Australian Book Industry Award for Fiction, the Victorian Premier's Vance Palmer Award for Fiction and the Queensland Premier's Award for Fiction.

Shaun Tan – Stories Without Words

Shaun Tan grew up in Perth and developed a love of drawing from a very young age. He graduated from the University of Western Australia in 1995 with joint honours in Fine Arts and English Literature. He now works full time as a freelance artist and author, concentrating mostly on writing and illustrating picture books. He has recently worked for Blue Sky Studios and Pixar, providing concept artwork for forthcoming films.

His recent multi-award winning wordless graphic novel *The Arrival* is a story of a young husband and father who leaves his family to find a better place for them. It is a story of every migrant and displaced person who enters new and unfamiliar worlds.

In his session Shaun will be walking students through *The Arrival*, discussing his illustrations and how he creates stories without words. He will also discuss some of the themes of *The Arrival* from cultural diversity to refugees and immigration and how he has conveyed these complex ideas without using words.

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Maureen McCarthy – Family Dynamics

One of Australia's most popular authors for young adults, Maureen McCarthy's novels have been shortlisted for numerous awards and include the In Between Series (adapted from scripts Maureen co-wrote with Shane Brennan for SBS TV), *Ganglands*, *Cross My Heart*, *Chain of Hearts*, *Flash Jack* and *When You Wake and Find Me Gone*.

She is well known for her bestselling book *Queen Kat, Carmel and St Jude Get a Life*, which was adapted into a highly successful four part mini-series for ABC TV.

Maureen McCarthy's most recent book is *Rose by Any Other Name*, short listed for the ABIA Australian Book of the Year for Older Children in 2007. This is a warm and generous novel about family dynamics and dealing with life's big issues. Like Maureen's previous novels it is concerned with the life of emerging adults, from sixteen to the early twenties – a time when life is imbued with conflicting desires and emotions.

Maureen will discuss her highly engaging latest novel and her work in general, touching on the themes of her books, such as the complexity of relationships and the emotions of adolescence, and how she gets into the head of her characters.

Paul Ham – Vietnam

Paul Ham is the author of the highly acclaimed *Kokoda* (HarperCollins, 2004) and the Australia correspondent of the London Sunday Times. He was born and educated in Australia and lives in Sydney, having spent several years working in Britain as a journalist and publisher. His new book is *Vietnam: The Australian War*.

Workshops

This year the Perth Writers Festival is offering two special opportunities for highly motivated and talented students to learn first hand tips and skills from experts, Maureen McCarthy and Shaun Tan in two practical workshops. Places will be strictly limited and only available to students who are interested in learning and prepared to work.

To find out more information about these workshops please email schools@perthfestival.com.au



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