



Age
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EDITED BY CINDY MacDONALD

upfront

My earliest memory is... sitting in the pub with my dad drinking sarsaparilla, and shelling peas with him for the Sunday roast.

At school I... used to wag maths class by hiding in a broom closet with two of my friends.

My first relationship was... with a freckle-faced boy called Tony in grade 2, although I don't think he knew we were having a relationship.

I don't like talking about... my childhood.

My most treasured possessions are... my photo albums and my antique ruby ring.

My mother always told me... to get a job in the public service.

In the movie of my life, I'd be played by... Angelina Jolie. (Yeah, right.)

I wish I had... more children.

I wish I hadn't... bitten the head off my little brother's lolly snake every Sunday after church.

My most humiliating moment was... when a Melbourne *Herald* editor asked me at my first job interview who wrote *One Day in the Life of Ivan Denisovich* and I didn't know. I didn't get the job.

My happiest moment was... the birth of my son.

My guiltiest pleasure is... French champagne.

My last meal would be... a bag of chocolate-covered orange peel and a bottle of red wine.

If I could change one moment of my life, it would be... the moment my dad committed suicide when I was eight.

When I was a child I wanted to... be an oceanographer and spend every day at the beach.

The book that changed my life is... *All the President's Men*. It made me realise that there were better things to do than spend every day at the beach.

It's not fashionable, but I love... my trackie daks.

If I could live anywhere, I'd choose... Tamarama [in Sydney], where I live.

My best trait is... lots of energy.

My worst trait is... doing 10 things at once.

If only I could... meditate every day, like I keep saying I'm going to.

The hardest thing I've ever done was... IVF.

I relax by... going for a daily swim.

What I don't find amusing is... people singing the *Neighbours* theme song at me.

If I wasn't me I'd like to be... travel writer Susan Kurosawa. Or at least have her job.

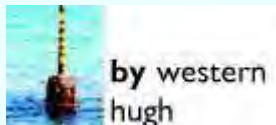
My worst job was... working as a secretary for a ships' provedore in Port Melbourne after I didn't get the *Herald* cadetship because I didn't know who wrote *One Day in the Life of Ivan Denisovich*.

I often wonder... what Osama bin Laden is doing.

Sally Neighbour's latest book is *The Mother of Mohammed: An Australian Woman's Extraordinary Journey into Jihad*.



Bathing boxes go the way of all flesh



"AMONG those who pick-nicked beneath the flimsy beach shelters were some ladies who, although eager to swim, had no wish to flaunt themselves before a staring, grinning crowd.

"Their desire for semi-privacy was catered for by Page's bathing boxes. Slender wooden contraptions mounted on high wheels and covered in advertisements, they were lined up soldier-like along the northern half of the beach. Hired could change inside, then have their machine hauled by a donkey down to the water's edge.

"Once in position they skipped demurely down a small flight of steps and into the surf."

Besides highlighting Page's entrepreneurial flair, this scene from 1910 at Cottesloe Beach, as depicted in *The Premier Club: Cottesloe Surf Life Saving Club* by Edwin Jaggard, shows how modesty has 'developed' over the last century.

The Weekend Australian Magazine cover of May 2-3 showed

an Australian 'surfie chick' on the cover, Robyn Mary Hutchinson. But she is no ordinary beach bum. Her whole upper body is covered in a black gown, with face masked and hands gloved; no skin in sight.

Now Rabiah Hutchinson, the former surfer girl, is a Muslim convert who many years ago chose to take her five children to the desert town of Pabbi in Pakistan's North-West Frontier Province. She lent her support to the mujahideen fighting to oust the Soviet-installed government in neigh-

**Rachel Kohn... (suggested)
the beach was the most
potent symbol of the clash
between the East and West.**

bouring Afghanistan, as was described in Sally Neighbour's book *The Mother of Mohammed: An Australian woman's Extraordinary Journey into Jihad*.

"It might be seen as oppressive but for us that's one way that you honour somebody and you show you hold this woman in the highest regard," Rabiah says of her robes.

On the spirituality program *The Spirit of Things* on Radio National on May 3, presenter

Rachel Kohn introduced Bondi photographic artist Phillip George by suggesting the beach was the most potent symbol of the clash between the East and the West. It's where men and women "expose their bodies to the warmth of the sun and the cool of the sea".

George, a non-Muslim with a fascination for the Middle East, produces exquisite surfboards covered in Islamic art.

Yet when he showed the board to one famous surfer, her immediate response was awe.

"This is what happens when I'm deep inside a wave," she exclaimed.

The photographer, of Greek heritage, was deeply affected by the Cronulla riots when he was regularly stopped by police because of his swarthy looks.

"I don't think the 1788 boat people should be worried about the 2009 boat people," he said.

Modern Australian women can wear next to nothing at Cottesloe or cover up as much as their skin cancer tolerance prescribes.

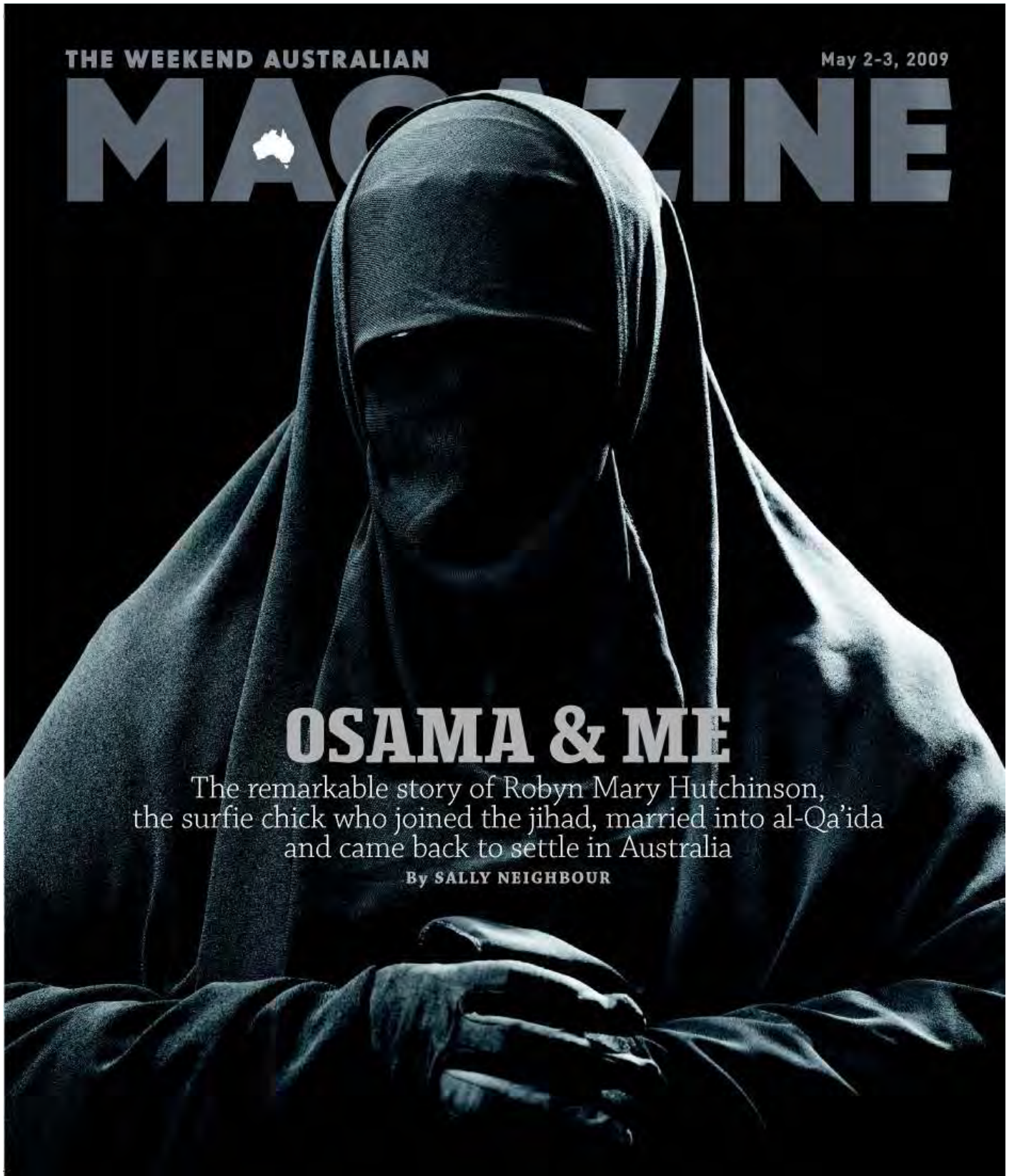
They can even wear a whole lot of nothing down the road at Swanbourne.

The fluidity of our relationship with the beach shows it's hard to keep bathing in a box.



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JOURNEY TO THE JIHAD

She was the all-Australian girl who embraced radical Islam – and took her children to live in the heartland of the global jihad movement. In this exclusive extract from her new book, *Sally Neighbour* examines the extraordinary transformation of Robyn Mary Hutchinson.

/// PORTRAIT VANESSA HUNTER

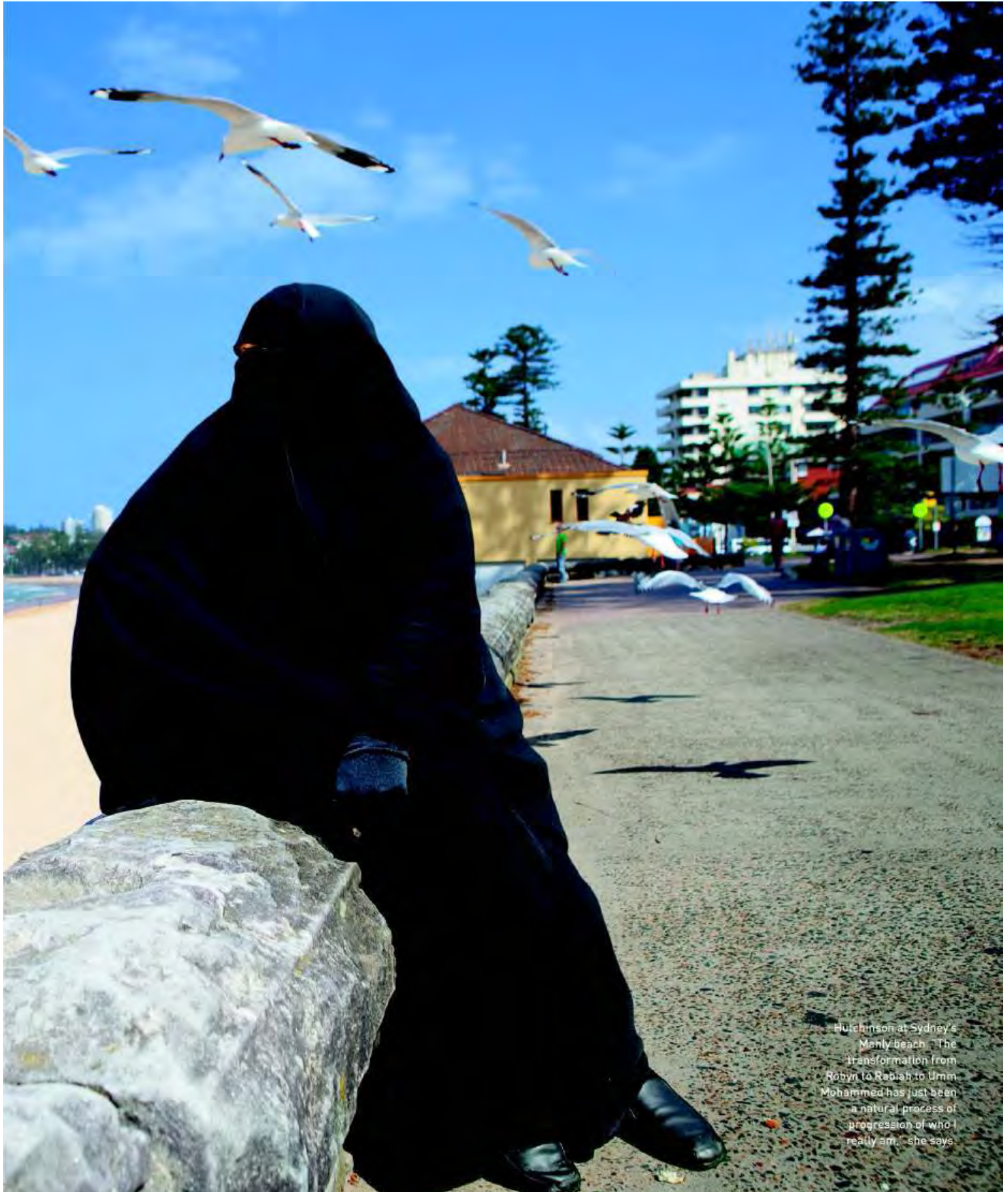
In 1990 Australian Muslim convert Rabiah Hutchinson packed up five of her six children – the youngest still in nappies – and headed off from Sydney to join the jihad (her eldest daughter remained in Malaysia, where she was studying). Her destination was Pakistan's North-West Frontier Province, which was the main base for the mujahidin fighting to oust the Soviet-installed government in neighbouring Afghanistan.

Rabiah must have seemed an unlikely jihadist. She grew up as Robyn Mary Hutchinson in a poor family in Mudgee, New South Wales, and spent her teen years as a surfer chick on Sydney's northern beaches, before backpacking to Bali.

In Indonesia she'd married a Muslim and converted to Islam, and later joined the student Islamist uprising against Suharto. Through her student friends she met a dissident cleric, Abu Bakar Bashir, who invited her to come and work as an English teacher at his Islamic boarding school in central Java, where she became the only Westerner to join Bashir's inner sanctum.

When Suharto cracked down on the Islamist movement, Rabiah returned to Australia with her (third) Indonesian husband, who was later appointed emir (leader) of the Australian branch of Bashir's new organisation, Jemaah Islamiah (JI).

After five years in Australia, their marriage came to an end, and Rabiah took off to join the mujahidin.



Hutchinson at Sydney's Manly beach. The transformation from Robyn to Rabiya to Umm Mohammed has just seen a natural process of progression of who I really am," she says.



THE ARRIVAL OF A THIRTYSOMETHING, unmarried Australian woman accompanied by five children in the desert town of Pabbi, in Pakistan's North-West Frontier Province, created something of a stir, by Rabiah's account. "People couldn't comprehend how a woman had just turned up, because the other women there came with their husbands. For a woman to just turn up with that many children saying, 'I'm here for the jihad, just like you', it was a concept they just couldn't get their heads around."

Rabiah and the children were allocated half of a traditional Pashtun mud-brick house, with a kitchen, sitting room and one bedroom, which the six of them shared. The electric blankets she had brought after being warned of the severe winter cold were never unpacked. Pabbi had no electricity, just a communal generator that provided power for about two hours in the morning and two hours at night. In any event it was so hot that when they walked along the road clumps of melted bitumen stuck to their shoes, which then became caked in dirt. They used kerosene lamps for lighting and gas cylinders, called *ambooba*, for cooking. There were no telephones or televisions and virtually no communication with the outside world.

"Pabbi was hardcore," Rabiah remembers. "Even by Afghanistan standards. The living conditions were shocking. The scorpions used to crawl out of the roof and the cockroaches would climb on you and the mosquitoes were so big you had to tie yourself to the mattress or they'd carry you off in the night. In summer it was 50 to 52 degrees, and in winter it got so cold the water would ice up and wouldn't come out of the taps. There was cholera and typhoid – and the dust!"

In spite of – perhaps in part because of – its privations, Rabiah remembers Pabbi as "the best place in the world". "It's hard to believe you could be so happy," she says. The harsh simplicity of their existence evoked memories of her childhood in Mudgee and Wollar, except that the socio-economic tables were turned. Here poverty, frugality and sacrifice were virtues that would surely be rewarded. "It didn't matter, because we thought after all this hardship Afghanistan will become an Islamic country and we'll all go and live there happy ever after."

Rabiah was put to work in the al Jihad hospital, where inmates of Pabbi's rambling refugee camp came for medical treatment. The hospital was run by Abdul Rab Rasul Sayyaf, a principal protagonist in the Afghan jihad.

Like everything else the hospital was made of mud-brick, with upper walls fashioned from plywood frames and mosquito wire to allow the air to circulate. The women's hospital where

Rabiah worked had four wards: maternity, surgical, infectious disease and children's. There were ten or 12 beds in each ward, and often two patients to a bed. Hundreds more lined up for outpatient treatment each day, and the crowd waiting for treatment sometimes got so unruly that the hospital employed an orderly armed with

a stick to whack them into line. Rabiah was trained on the job. Her superiors were an assorted collection of mostly foreign volunteers, including an Algerian vet and a Pakistani gynaecologist trained in the US, who told Rabiah, "I'll teach you everything I know." She became a proficient midwife and learned to diagnose and treat common ailments such as cholera, typhoid and hepatitis, and injuries caused by mines, which were treated with Yemeni honey, renowned for its healing properties.

The conditions were primitive, to say the least. "We used to use and re-use disposable syringes until you could literally no longer push them through the patients' skin. There was no such thing as cleaning the tables where the women gave birth. If the patients died we simply pushed them aside." Within a few months of their arrival, Rabiah's youngest boy, three-year-old Ilyas, contracted cholera. He grew so thin

that his ribcage protruded beneath his waxy skin like an African famine baby. After a few weeks in hospital, the doctors told Rabiah to take him home. "They sent him home to die. They said, 'There's nothing more we can do. Just take him home and whatever Allah has written for him will happen.'" Despite her own faith, she railed against their fatalism. "We were living a life where you realise your limitations. You become very resigned to death – but I wasn't yet." The boy was gravely ill for three months but finally made a full recovery.

Like all the so-called "Afghan-Arabs" (foreigners who'd joined the mujahidin), Rabiah was known by her *kuniya*, an Islamic nickname derived from the name of the individual's eldest child, which is at once a term of endearment and respect. Men are known as Abu – which means "the father of" – followed usually by the name of their eldest son, while women are referred to as Umm (pronounced "Oom"), which means "the mother of". Rabiah was known as Umm Mohammed, "the mother of Mohammed". Because there were so many women whose first sons were named after the Prophet, she was



“PABBI WAS THE BEST PLACE I’VE EVER BEEN IN MY LIFE. IT WAS THE CLOSEST THING TO THE IMPLEMENTATION OF ISLAM TO THE FULLEST EXTENT.”

Right: Pabbi, a town of cholera, typhoid and dust.



widely known as “Umm Mohammed Australie”. She says the patients called her Doctor Jan, which translates roughly as “dear doctor”.

Pabbi became home for Rabiah and her children for the next three years. Her rare provenance ensured everyone knew who she was. “People knew me because I was unusual, I was weird – an Australian with no husband and six kids who came and gave up *dunya* [worldly comfort] for the sake of Allah.” For Rabiah, her new moniker signified another milestone in her personal journey, marking her transition from a Muslim who has merely “submitted” to Islam, to a true believer. “The transformation from Robyn to Rabiah to Umm Mohammed has just been a natural process of progression of who I really am,” she says. “The difference between Rabiah and Umm Mohammed is that Rabiah became Umm Mohammed with knowledge and understanding of what true Islam is.”

It was a spartan life. They rose each morning at 4am as the *azan* [call to prayer] resounded across the flat mud rooftops. After dawn prayers, the boys would run to the bakery down the street, a lean-to shack where the Afghan baker used a stick with a nail in it to flick steaming rounds of flat naan bread from a wood-fired tandoor set in the dirt. At home they would eat the warm naan for breakfast with jam or honey and cream made from buffalo milk. At 5am the children boarded a bus that took them to school in Peshawar, an hour-and-a-half journey along a potholed road prowled by *khatta aturk* [bandits] who mercifully let the school bus pass unmolested.

The legendary jihadist Abdullah Azzam, founder of Makhtab al-Khidmat (MAK), the forerunner of al-Qa’ida, had established the school they attended. Azzam’s military motto was “Jihad and the rifle alone; no negotiations, no conferences, no dialogues”. Yet he also believed the children of the jihad needed a solid education, and had founded the Al Ansar school in Peshawar for the offspring of the Afghan-Arabs.

Despite the war dragging on across the border in Afghanistan – and notwithstanding the



sense that they were part of an exclusive elite, united by their unyielding faith, their disdain for material wealth and their righteous sense of mission. And unlike in Indonesia, where she had always felt a foreigner, here it also didn't matter where you were from. It was like a little United Nations of Muslim fundamentalists.

"It didn't matter what colour, size or shape you were, you were judged on your piety and knowledge," Rabiah says. "I had American friends, French, German, Chinese, Indonesian, Malays, Filipinos. The majority of the sisters were very well educated; there were vets and an engineer; one was a professor of maths, another was a biochemist; there were numerous graduates from Islamic faculties. Most were bi-or tri-lingual, many spoke French or English. The idea that Muslim radicals are poor, downtrodden and uneducated is a myth. They were exceptionally intelligent women."

The men and women of Pabbi modelled their behaviour on the first generations of Muslims known as the *Salaf al-Salih*. "Pabbi was like a little Islamic state in Pakistan," says Rabiah. The men wore the trousers of their *shalwar kameez*

above their ankles and their beards at least the length of a man's fist. The women wore flowing black gowns like the Prophet's wives and covered their faces in the company of men who were unrelated to them. There was no music, because music was regarded as the *azan* of *Shaytan* (Satan). There were no two-storey houses, so no-one could look down on unveiled women in the courtyards of their homes.

The social regime precisely prescribed the roles of males and females, and enforced a respectful distance between the two. For Rabiah it was a welcome alternative to the chaotic domestic life she'd known as a child and teenager. The role of women was strictly circumscribed, in a way that both tightly defined their activities and ensured their honour was sacrosanct.

"It might be seen by non-Muslims as oppressive but for us that's one way that you honour somebody and you show you hold this

woman in the highest regard," says Rabiah. "In Islam jealousy is a positive – protecting your women means you're jealous over their honour."

RABIAH WAS IN HER ELEMENT. "PABBI was the best place I've ever been in my life. It was the closest thing to the implementation of Islam to the fullest extent, and it was a place that consisted only of people who had all gone there for the same reason. They were people who'd given up everything because they wanted to live under Islamic law. There were doctors, teachers, engineers, nurses, people from all over the world – every Arab country, Somalia, China, Tajikistan, Uzbekistan, some Sunnis from Iran, there was even a Japanese, French, Germans, Americans, any country you can think of."

The only other Australian she encountered in Pabbi was her friend Aisha, the Aboriginal convert whose husband had arranged Rabiah's entrée into Pakistan. By now the couple were living in Peshawar and Aisha came to visit, bringing a jar of Vegemite. "What's that you're eating?" asked an American friend who found her tucking into a piece of naan toast daubed with the spread. "It's called Vegemite. It's an Australian food. Would you like to try some?" The visitor screwed up her face in disgust at the taste of it. "Are you sure this is halal? I can't believe something can taste so bad and be halal."

A FAMILIAR FIGURE IN PABBI WAS A TALL, aristocratic-looking Saudi in his early thirties, who was fast becoming an icon among the Afghan-Arabs. Osama bin Laden had left his homeland of Saudi Arabia to join the jihad against the Russians in Afghanistan. The devoutly religious 17th son of a billionaire construction tycoon, bin Laden had been eager to make his mark by volunteering his services and wealth to support the Afghan cause.

Arriving in Peshawar he teamed up with Abdullah Azzam, who'd been a professor at the Jeddah University where bin Laden studied





business administration. By this time Azzam was heading up the Islamic Co-ordination Council in Peshawar, which united 20 organisations there to support the Afghan struggle. It was Azzam who established MAK to co-ordinate the influx of foreign fighters, and bin Laden who provided the funds to cover accommodation, living expenses and a monthly *khafalla*, or stipend, for every foreign volunteer. Together in 1988 they formed a new organisation to keep the jihad alive after the Russians had gone, which they called simply "The base" – in Arabic, al-Qa'ida.

After Azzam's assassination in 1989, bin Laden had taken over the mantle of emir of the Afghan-Arabs and al-Qa'ida. He worked closely with Pabbi's supremo, Abdul Rab Rasul Sayyaf, who shared his Wahhabi creed. Bin Laden provided the funding for Sayyaf's military academy and for his University of Dawah and Jihad in Pabbi. In return Sayyaf provided training for most of the foreign volunteers, until bin Laden began to set up his own network of training camps under Sayyaf's protection and in his territory.

IT DIDN'T TAKE LONG AFTER Rabiah's arrival in Pabbi for bin Laden to learn of the presence of the foreign mujahidah known as Umm Mohammed Australie. As Rabiah tells it, bin Laden was walking down the street past her house with a companion, an Algerian known as Abu Abdul, when he spotted her children playing in the street. Their conversation was related to her afterwards by Abu Abdul's wife, Rabiah's best friend in Pabbi.

"I bet you can't guess where those children are from," Abu Abdul remarked.

"They look sort of Arab," bin Laden replied, noticing the children's olive complexions inherited from their Indonesian fathers.

"No, they're Australian."

"*Subhan Allah* [Praise Allah!]" bin Laden exclaimed. "Australian – that must be a first!"

"It's a woman on her own," Abu Abdul continued. "She came with her children, she works in the hospital, she doesn't have anything, they don't even have air-conditioning."

"Well they do now," bin Laden replied.

A few days later, his emissary delivered a new air-conditioner to her home.

The encounter with the Australian children who spoke fluent Arabic piqued bin Laden's curiosity, according to the account related by Rabiah's friend. "It fascinates me, I like to hear those kids talk," bin Laden said. "If you hadn't told me they were from Australia and their parents were not Arabs I wouldn't believe it. They speak such good Arabic."

Not long after, bin Laden ran into Rabiah's

children in the street again while walking with Abu Abdul. Eight-year-old Rahmah would remember the occasion vividly many years later, although at the time she didn't know who the bearded stranger was. "All I remember was I was walking with my brother to the bakery and we came across two uncles. One I knew as he was the husband of my mother's friend and the other I had not seen before and did not know his name." The two men called the children over.

"Rahmah, do you know who this is?" asked Abu Abdul.

"No," she replied.

"This is the uncle that bought your air-conditioner for you."

Bin Laden knelt down and put his hand on Mustafa's shoulder, gave them some Afghani coins, then spoke to them in Arabic.

"What are your names?"

"My name is Rahmah, and this is my brother, Mustafa."

"And where are you going?"

"To the bakery."

"We shall accompany you then."

Rahmah recounts that bin Laden walked with them to the bakery, where dozens of families from the refugee camp were queuing for naan. "Why are these people lined up here?" bin Laden asked. Abu Abdul was about to explain but bin Laden interjected, "Let the children answer."

"It's for the poor families, because they can't afford to pay for their bread," Rahmah explained. The baker had a credit system under which each family was given a stick; he would carve a notch in the stick for every naan he gave them; later, when they received their *khafalla*, they would bring their sticks to the bakery and pay what they owed. Bin Laden's reaction was to hand the baker enough money for a year's supply of bread: "Ten loaves for the morning and ten for the afternoon for everybody that stood in the line."



Bin Laden's gesture caused quite a scene at the bakery, by Rahmah's account. Women began chanting "*Allahu Akbar!*" and uttering prayers of thanks while young boys mobbed him, trying to kiss his hands. Rahmah says bin Laden was so embarrassed that he raised his hands above his shoulders so they couldn't be grabbed and kissed, while he retreated from the crowd.

Stories like this about bin Laden's generosity and self-effacing manner abounded among the Afghan-Arabs. "ASIO asked me, 'Did Osama bin Laden ever give you money?'" says Rabiah. "And I laughed – he probably did. Maybe it [MAK] is where the *khafallas* came from, I don't know. We never asked questions, especially the women, because we didn't need to know. Women didn't know these things."

Soon after the incident at the bakery, Rabiah received an intriguing proposal. Her marital status had been an ongoing issue since her arrival, with "the brothers" insisting that if she wanted to stay in Pakistan she would have to get married. The proposition was relayed to her by bin Laden's friend in Pabbi, Abu Abdul: "Umm Mohammed, there is a Saudi man who has inquired about you. He has other wives but they are in Saudi Arabia. He travels backwards and forwards, he is very well off, and he is interested in marrying you."

Rabiah says she didn't ask the Saudi's name but agreed to consider his proposal. This was passed on to her suitor, who was due to return to Saudi Arabia shortly and reportedly replied, "*Inshallah* [God willing], if it's my fortune, good." However, the anonymous propositioner never came back to press his offer. This was around the time that bin Laden's passport was seized by the Saudi authorities and, after a final trip to Pakistan, he fled into exile in Sudan. While it was rumoured that the mysterious Saudi who had proposed to Rabiah was indeed Osama bin Laden, she says she never found out for sure.

Postscript: In 2000, Rabiah and her family travelled to Taliban-ruled Afghanistan where she set up a medical clinic and married a senior al-Qa'ida figure, Mustafa Hamid. When the US attacked Afghanistan after 9/11 they spent three months on the run, before crossing into Iran where they were detained under house arrest until their return to Australia in 2003. Rabiah

now lives in southwestern Sydney and is deemed a threat to national security because of her links to al-Qa'ida, the Taliban and JI.

This is an edited extract from The Mother of Mohammed: An Australian woman's Extraordinary Journey into Jihad by Sally Neighbour, (MUP), RRP \$34.99.



JUST LIKE IN MUDGEES, EVERYONE
KNEW EVERYONE ELSE ... BUT HERE
THERE WERE NO "HAVES" AND
"HAVE-NOTS"

Above: The house in
Mudgee where Hutchinson
grew up.



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TOP READS

ANGUS & ROBERTSON

1. Body Trim by Geoff Jowett & Dr Vicky Hillier
2. Twilight Saga Box Set
3. New Moon by Stephenie Meyer
4. Twilight by Stephenie Meyer
5. Eclipse by Stephenie Meyer

DYMOCKS

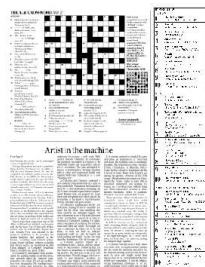
1. Eclipse by Stephenie Meyer
2. New Moon by Stephenie Meyer
3. Twilight by Stephenie Meyer
4. Breaking Dawn by Stephenie Meyer
5. Host by Stephenie Meyer

BUMBLEBEE BOOKS

1. Assegai by Wilbur Smith
2. Breaking Dawn by Stephenie Meyer
3. Legend of Sigurd & Gudrun by J.R.R. Tolkien
4. Mother of Mohammed by Sally Neighbour
5. My Booky Wook by Russell Brand

MARY WHO? BOOKSHOP

1. 1. Ransom by David Malouf
2. Heaven & Earth Global Warming : The Missing Science by Ian Plimer
3. Alex & Me by Irene M. Pepperberg
4. Breath by Tim Winton
5. The Pleasures and Sorrows of Work by Alain de Botton



BESTSELLERS

FICTION

- 1** | **Handle with Care**
Jodi Picoult, Allen & Unwin, \$32.99
- 2** | **Assegai**
Wilbur Smith, Macmillan, \$49.99
- 3** | **Angels & Demons**
Dan Brown, Corgi, \$21.95
- 4** | **8th Confession**
James Patterson, Century, \$32.95
- 5** | **The Best of Times**
Penny Vincenzi, Hachette, \$32.99
- 6** | **Breath**
Tim Winton, Penguin, \$24.95
- 7** | **Gone Tomorrow**
Lee Child, Bantam, \$32.95
- 8** | **The Host**
Stephenie Meyer, Hachette, \$32.99
- 9** | **One Day at a Time**
Danielle Steele, Bantam, \$32.95
- 10** | **Long Lost**
Harlan Coben, Hachette, \$32.99

NONFICTION

- 1** | **Always Looking Up**
Michael J. Fox, Ebury, \$35
- 2** | **True Colours**
Lisa Davies, HarperCollins, \$32.99
- 3** | **The Country Women's Association Cookbook**
Murdoch, \$29.95
- 4** | **Spotless 2**
Shannon Lush and Jennifer Fleming, ABC Books, \$19.95
- 5** | **Feed Me Now!**
Bill Granger, HarperCollins, \$49.99
- 6** | **A Lion Called Christian**

- 6** | **Anthony Bourke and John Rendall**
Bantam, \$35
- 7** | **Black Saturday**
Edited by John McGourty, HarperCollins, \$24.99
- 8** | **Heaven and Earth**
Ian Plimer, Connor Court, \$39.95
- 9** | **4 Ingredients**
Kim McCosker and Rachael Bermingham, 4 Ingredients, \$17.95
- 10** | **Dreams from My Father**
Barack Obama, Text Publishing, \$24.95

POLITICS AND GOVERNMENT

- 1** | **Dreams from My Father**
Barack Obama, Text Publishing, \$24.95
- 2** | **The Audacity of Hope**
Barack Obama, Text Publishing, \$24.95
- 3** | **To the Bitter End**
Peter Hartcher, Allen & Unwin, \$35
- 4** | **Michelle Obama**
Liza Mundy, Pocket, \$24.95
- 5** | **The Statute of Liberty**
Geoffrey Robertson, Vintage, \$19.95
- 6** | **The Mother of Mohammed**
Sally Neighbour, Melbourne University Press, \$34.99
- 7** | **And So it Went**
Bob Ellis, Viking, \$35
- 8** | **Crimes Against Humanity**
Geoffrey Robertson, Penguin, \$9.95
- 9** | **The Next 100 Years**
George Friedman, Black Inc, \$29.95
- 10** | **Infidel**
Ayaan Hirsi Ali, Pocket, \$24.95

Nielsen BookScan 2009 for the four weeks ending May 16.



upfront

My earliest memory is... sitting in the pub with my dad drinking sarsaparilla, and shelling peas with him for the Sunday roast.

At school I... used to wag maths class by hiding in a broom closet with two of my friends.

My first relationship was... with a freckle-faced boy called Tony in grade 2, although I don't think he knew we were having a relationship.

I don't like talking about... my childhood.

My most treasured possessions are... my photo albums and my antique ruby ring.

My mother always told me... to get a job in the public service.

In the movie of my life, I'd be played by... Angelina Jolie. (Yeah, right.)

I wish I had... more children.

I wish I hadn't... bitten the head off my little brother's lolly snake every Sunday after church.

My most humiliating moment was... when a Melbourne Herald editor asked me at my first job interview who wrote *One Day in the Life of Ivan Denisovich* and I didn't know. I didn't get the job.

My happiest moment was... the birth of my son.

My guiltiest pleasure is... French champagne.

My last meal would be... a bag of chocolate-covered orange peel and a bottle of red wine.

If I could change one moment of my life, it would be... the moment my dad committed suicide when I was eight.

When I was a child I wanted to... be an oceanographer and spend every day at the beach.

The book that changed my life is... *All the President's Men*. It made me realise that there were better things to do than spend every day at the beach.

It's not fashionable, but I love... my trackie daks.

If I could live anywhere, I'd choose... Tamarama [in Sydney], where I live.

My best trait is... lots of energy.

My worst trait is... doing 10 things at once.

If only I could... meditate every day, like I keep saying I'm going to.

The hardest thing I've ever done was... IVF.

I relax by... going for a daily swim.

What I don't find amusing is... people singing the *Neighbours* theme song at me.

If I wasn't me I'd like to be... travel writer Susan Kurosawa. Or at least have her job.

My worst job was... working as a secretary for a ships' provedore in Port Melbourne after I didn't get the *Herald* cadetship because I didn't know who wrote *One Day in the Life of Ivan Denisovich*.

I often wonder... what Osama bin Laden is doing.

Sally Neighbour's latest book is *The Mother of Mohammed: An Australian Woman's Extraordinary Journey into Jihad*.





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Program



Christine Manfield - 1



Christian Lander - 42, 133, 225, 280



Alice McCormick - 20, 330



Catherine Bateson - 15, 32, 51

345 The Big Read

The Big Read invites everyone throughout NSW to come together over one book. Held in partnership with the Cheltenham Literature Festival, there are many ways to participate, from local bookclubs, library events, online book clubs and special events. The Big Read title for 2009 is F. Scott Fitzgerald's *The Great Gatsby*. Visit www.swf.org.au for updates of Big Read events taking place around NSW.

1 Fire: A World of Flavour with Christine Manfield May 5, 7-10pm UR

Join Christine Manfield over dinner and enjoy recipes from *Fire*, a book which took her across the globe in search of inspiration.
\$140 Bookings 9250 1988
www.sydneytheatre.org.au

2 Gatz May 15-31 SOH-P

Gatz, the extraordinary stage version of *The Great Gatsby*, is not a reworking of Fitzgerald's novel but a reading of the entire book - brilliantly brought to life by New York's Elevator Repair Service. Presented with the Sydney Opera House.
Tickets from \$50
Information and bookings 9250 7777
www.sydneyoperahouse.com

9 Traditional Bookbinding Tools at Work

May 17, 10.30am-3.30pm
PHM

Wayne Stock of Australian Bookbinders Inc answers bookbinding questions, shows samples of work and tools, and explains techniques. Accompanied by a display by Australian Bookbinders Inc. Presented with the Powerhouse Museum.
Free with museum admission (\$10/\$6)

MONDAY, MAY 18

27 Advance Australia ... Where? Is it Beyond Our Control? May 18, 6.30-7.30pm PCC

Hugh Mackay discusses Australia's shifting engagement with big-picture political and social issues over the past decade and how we deal with big-picture threats - climate change, the global financial crisis - that seem beyond our control. Presented with the City of Sydney Library.
Free. Bookings essential 9265 9464, library@cityofsydney.nsw.gov.au

28 NSW Premier's Literary Awards Dinner May 18, 6.30-11pm AG

Prizes totalling \$320,000 will be presented by the Premier and Minister for the Arts.
\$145 Bookings at pla2009@dasr.nsw.gov.au

TUESDAY, MAY 19

20 The Artist's Lunch at Lucio's May 19, noon-3.30pm LIR

Join photographer Sarah Rhodes and writer Alice McCormick with artists Wendy Sharpe, Anne Zahalka, Jason Benjamin, Nell, Luke Sciberras and Gria Shead as they discuss over lunch what it is that fuels an artist's creativity.
\$140 Bookings 9250 1988
www.sydneytheatre.org.au

37 The Mint Project May 19, 1-2pm TM

An event to launch *The Mint Project*, a book examining the history of The Mint and the redevelopment that transformed the dilapidated building into an award-winning conservation design. Co-presented with the Historic Houses Trust as part of trustwards. **Free**

42 Writers Talk May 19, 5-6.30pm ST-RW

School teachers Karla Aspden, Eve Mayes and Donna McGufficke discuss using Writers Talk, a series of online interviews with authors, to bring the writing process to life.
Free. Bookings essential 9715 8271

46 Spoken Synergies May 19, 6.30-9.30pm TM

This performance is an exploration



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of electronica, voice and bass: a collaboration between Synergy Percussion's new ensemble Synergy PUSH and spoken-word artist Miles Merrill. Co-presented with the Historic Houses Trust as part of trustwords.

\$40/\$30 Bookings 8239 2211

47 Serendip. A Sri Lankan Journey

May 19, 6.30-10pm

FF

Join Flying Fish chef Peter Kuruvita as he shares his childhood memories of Sri Lanka and enjoy cuisine from his book, *Serendip*. Supported by Murdoch Books.

\$95 Bookings 9250 1988

www.sydneytheatre.org.au

WEDNESDAY, MAY 20

56 Talks After Noon. Book Conservation in Australia

May 20, 12.30-1.30pm

PHM

Hear the tales of conservator James Elwing, who works with books of great age, rarity and personal value. Presented with the Powerhouse Museum.

Free with museum admission (\$10/\$6)

57 Ross Gibson *The Summer Exercises*

May 20, 1-2pm

TM

Ross Gibson has captured the world of 1946 Sydney – sordid and bruised after decades of

depredations. *The Summer Exercises*, an artistic re-invention of history, draws on more than 170 photographs generated by NSW police. Co-presented with the Historic Houses Trust as part of trustwords. **Free**

61 Science Biography

May 20, 4-5pm

US-MM

How does a biographer wrestle with complex subject areas while informing readers about the subject's personality? In this Darwin-themed event, two scientists and two historians discuss their approaches.

Free. Bookings essential

9036 5253

macleaymuseum@usyd.edu.au

62 *Stuff White People Like* in Newtown

May 20, 6-7pm

NT

In just over a year, Christian Lander's blog *stuffwhitepeoplelike.com* has received 56 million hits and been made into a book. He charts his journey from blogging to quitting his job and writing a *New York Times* bestseller. Presented with the City of Sydney Library.

\$10 at door

Bookings essential, Newtown

Library, 8512 4250, library@cityofsydney.nsw.gov.au

64 Spoken Synergies

May 20, 6.30-9.30pm

TM

This performance is an

exploration of electronica, voice and bass: a collaboration between Synergy Percussion's new ensemble Synergy PUSH and spoken-word artist Miles Merrill. Co-presented with Historic Houses Trust as part of trustwords.

\$40/\$30 Bookings 8239 2211

65 Opening Address presented by Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie

May 20, 6.30-8pm

ST

One of the most applauded new voices in fiction, Nigerian writer and Orange Prize-winner Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie presents the 2009 opening address. A young writer already acquiring prodigious literary celebrity, Adichie illuminates the complexities of human experience inspired by events in her native Nigeria.

\$35/\$25 Bookings 9250 1988

www.sydneytheatre.org.au

67 Darlinghurst Nights

May 20, 8.30-10.30pm

LOW

A celebration of the work of Kenneth Slessor and of the area he wrote about. Dramatised performances with music by Ashley Chatto and friends, and visuals by J.D. Young. Presented by Wordjammin' and the Poets Union.

\$25 Bookings 1300 438 849

www.moshtix.com.au

Twenty per cent off dinner for show guests



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Sarah Rhodes - 20, 330

THURSDAY, MAY 21

68 Poets Paint Words at the Wharf May 21-24, 10.30am-1.30pm HP-CS

Paintings from the Newcastle Region Art Gallery and the poems they inspired will be projected in the Heritage Pier Cafe. Runs Thursday 21 to Sunday 24. **Free**



Abbas El-Zein - 76, 130, 242

30 The Literary Life. Portraits by Juno Gemes May 21-24, 1.30-4.30pm HP-CS

Portraits of previous Sydney Writers' Festival guests by artist, photographer and filmmaker Juno Gemes. Runs Thursday 21 to Sunday 24. **Free**



Louis Nowra - 82, 197, 266

69 The Artist's Lunch Portraits by Sarah Rhodes May 21-24 HP-CS

An exhibition of images by photographer Sarah Rhodes, who journeyed into the homes of Australia's most prominent and distinguished artists to capture moments in their lives. Runs Thursday 21 to Sunday 24. **Free**



Judy Johnson - 75

70 George Friedman Business Breakfast May 21, 8-9.30am CS

Geopolitics expert George Friedman discusses what we can expect around the world during the 21st century, including where and why future wars will erupt,

which nations will gain and lose economic political power and how our way of life will alter.

\$95 Bookings 9250 1988
www.sydneytheatre.org.au

74 Richard Holloway on ABC Radio National's Book Show May 21, 10-11am HP-MS

One of the most outspoken figures in the modern church, Richard Holloway, recently stood down as the bishop of Edinburgh. The author of 23 books, he talks to Ramona Koval in a live broadcast of *The Book Show*. **\$15/\$10 Bookings 9250 1988**
www.sydneytheatre.org.au

75 The Sydney Poetry Reading I May 21, 10-11am BM

Outstanding contemporary Australian poetry with a variety of insights and perspectives. With readings from three prize-winning poets Judy Johnson, Stephen Edgar and J.S. Harry. Presented by the Poets Union. **Free**

76 Lived Lives May 21, 10-11am BT

Robert Gray's family memoir paints the landscape of his youth. Antigone Kefala's *Sydney Journals* displays her skill as a diarist. Abbas El-Zein's memoir tells his story of growing up in war-torn

Beirut. They share readings from their memoirs. **Free**

77 Australian Literary Lions May 21, 10-11am ST

Stella Miles Franklin, Elizabeth Jolley and Manning Clark all deeply influenced Australian literary culture. Their biographers, Jill Roe, Brian Dibble and Brian Matthews, discuss these extraordinary lives and their legacies. **\$15/\$10 Bookings 9250 1988**
www.sydneytheatre.org.au

78 Blind Conscience May 21, 10-11am SDC2/3

Using the direct experience of activists, psychiatrists, lawyers, politicians and prison guards to tell the broader story. Margot O'Neill examines how Australian society has been affected by the mandatory detention of asylum seekers. **Free**

79 Ochre And Rust May 21, 10-11am ST-RW

Philip Jones talks about his Prime Minister's Literary Award-winning non-fiction book *Ochre And Rust*, which takes Aboriginal artefacts from their museum shelves and traces their biographies, revealing charged and nuanced moments of encounter in Australia's history. **\$15/\$10 Bookings 9250 1988**
www.sydneytheatre.org.au



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80 Kirsty Gunn in Conversation

May 21, 10-11am
SPC

Kirsty Gunn is the author of several internationally acclaimed works of fiction. Her most recent book, *44 Things*, is a collection of personal reflections over the course of one year. She talks about her work. **Free**

81 From Hot Copy to Hard Cover

May 21, 10.30-11.30am
SDC4

The Walkley Non-Fiction Book Award recognises the growing contribution of journalists to the field of literature. Asa Wahlquist and Maureen Helen discuss topics of significance to Australia with Jenny Tabakoff. Presented by the Walkley Foundation for Journalism. **Free**

82 Suspending Belief

May 21, 10.30-11.30am
SDC1

Louis Nowra, Gary Bryson and Andrew Davidson's latest novels play with realism and our willingness to believe. They talk about their work. **Free**

83 Norman Doidge in Conversation with Caroline Baum

May 21, 11.30am-12.30pm
ST

The discovery of neuroplasticity, that our

thoughts can change the structure and function of our brains even into old age, is the most important breakthrough in our understanding of the brain in 400 years. Norman Doidge explores with Caroline Baum the profound implications of the changing brain.

\$15/\$10 Bookings 9250 1988
www.sydneytheatre.org.au

84 Writing "Popular" History
May 21, 11.30am-12.30pm
HP-MS

The divide between popular and academic history is perceived as a matter of professors versus amateurs. Academic history drowns in jargon and tends to the obscure, whereas popular history is dumbed down and, well, populist. James Palmer and David Hill explore the differences between popular and academic history.

\$15/\$10 Bookings 9250 1988
www.sydneytheatre.org.au

85 Birdsong and Poetry
May 21, 11.30am-12.30pm
BT

Focusing on American and Australian poets, as well as his firsthand experiences as a birder, Devin Johnston considers imagining avian life. In a time of ecological crisis, our imagination of the natural world becomes critical. Introduced by Bret Walker. **Free**

86 Directions in Indian Publishing

May 21, 11.30am-12.30pm
SPC

Visiting international publishers from India, Saugata Mukherjee and Chiki Sarkar, provide an overview of the Indian publishing scene and discuss their relationship with UK branches, including export versus local publishing. Chaired by Michael Moynahan. Presented by the Australia Council for the Arts Visiting International Publishers Program. **Free**

87 Facts and Suppositions
May 21, 11.30am-12.30pm
ST-RW

Non-fiction can often have the quality of a bald narrative of events. Kate Summerscale and Evelyn Juers talk about the strategies behind transforming the cold facts of research into hot topics.

\$15/\$10 Bookings 9250 1988
www.sydneytheatre.org.au

88 For Whom the Arts Serve
May 21, 11.30am-12.30pm
SDC2/3

Drawing on their long careers as artists and arts advocates, contributors to *Griffith REVIEW 23. Essentially Creative* – Frank Moorhouse, Robyn Archer, Helen O'Neil and Geoffrey Atherden – discuss the urgent need for new ways for the arts to connect with the



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Robert Drewe - 94, 313

community and secure stable funding. Presented with *Griffith REVIEW*. **Free**

89 Darwin in Verse
May 21, 11.30am-12.30pm
BM

Through her poems, Emily Ballou saves Charles Darwin's humanity from the legend, capturing the textures of his work and dreams, his inner doubts and questions. She talks to Johanna Featherstone. **Free**



Linda Jaivin - 111, 360, 263

90 Prose Writing v Screenwriting
May 21, noon-1pm
SDC4

Underbelly co-writer and co-producer Greg Haddrick has won six AWGIE awards for scriptwriting and his credits often extend to the creator/producer role. He talks about the advantages and disadvantages of prose writing versus screenwriting. **Free**



Paola Totaro - 96, 192, 267

91 Hugh Mackay in Conversation
May 21, noon-1pm
SDC1

Australia's best-selling social analyst Hugh Mackay talks about his new novel, *Ways Of Escape*, which is the first-person story of a burnt-out clinical psychologist. **Free**



Mark Kitz - 118, 163, 194, 263

92 The Editorial Relationship
May 21, 1-2pm
BM

US writer and editor David Ebershoff joins a panel of Australian editors to discuss the processes, politics and protocols of the editorial relationship. Includes the announcement of the Beatrice Davis Fellowship. **Free**



Robert Wainwright - 96, 192, 267

93 Adult Orphans
May 21, 1-2pm
HP-MS

The sadness, the heightened sense of one's own mortality, the comfort taken in bequeathed treasures: the passing away of a parent can rechart the course of their grown children's lives. Caroline Jones talks to Suzanne Leal about *Through A Glass Darkly*, her recent book about the adult experience of parental loss. **\$15/\$10 Bookings 9250 1988**
www.sydneytheatre.org.au



Sonja Hartnett - 117, 171

94 The Long and Short of It
May 21, 1-2pm
ST-RW

Novellas and short stories versus the novel. Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie, Robert Drewe and Amanda Lohrey have all written novels but selected shorter forms for their latest books. They explain their attraction to these precise forms. **\$15/\$10 Bookings 9250 1988**
www.sydneytheatre.org.au

95 Assassination Plots
May 21, 1-2pm
SDC2/3

Paul McGeough and Mohammed Hanif discuss fact and fiction in their political assassination plots. McGeough's *Kill Khalid* details the plot to kill the then head of Hamas's political bureau in Jordan. Hanif picks up on who killed Pakistani president General Zia ul-Haq. **Free**

96 True Crime Stories
May 21, 1-2pm
ST

Tom Gilling and Clive Small's true crime story *Smack Express* was a primary source for *Underbelly 2*. Robert Wainwright and Paola Totaro's *Born or Bred?* tells the back story to Martin Bryant. They discuss documenting the darker side of human nature. **\$15/\$10 Bookings 9250 1988**
www.sydneytheatre.org.au

97 The Stories in Things
May 21, 1-2pm
BT

Philip Jones and Ross Gibson have taken visual objects - artefacts and photos - to produce rich and compelling narratives of Australian history. They discuss their work. **Free**

98 Manning Clark and Gough Whitlam
May 21, 1-2pm
SPC

Biographers Brian Matthews and Jenny Clark consider the lives of two highly influential Australians of the past half-century - Manning Clark and Gough Whitlam. **Free**

100 Irreverence
May 21, 1.30-2.30pm
SDC1

Larrikin irreverence is dear to

the Australian heart. The typist who drinks Ben Canaider and *The Chaser's* Dominic Knight talk about taking the mickey with Mark Dapin. **Free**

102 And So It Went
May 21, 1.30-2.30pm
SDC4

In his latest review of the world at large, Bob Ellis evokes a host of public figures including Obama, Rudd, Palin, Rees, Ramos-Horta, Blanchett, Bhutto, Howard and Carr. How it was in 2007-08, when the world irrevocably changed. **Free**

104 Capturing Contemporary Australia
May 21, 2-3.30pm
MOS

In his latest book, James Arvanitakis deciphers our chaotic and rapidly changing world. He facilitates a discussion, sharing personal experiences to explore how we can analyse the dynamics of our everyday lives to challenge and change ongoing injustices. Co-presented with the Historic Houses Trust as part of trustwords. **\$10/\$5 Bookings 8239 2211**

105 A Stout Pair Of Boots
May 21, 2.30-3.30pm
HPB

Peter Stanley is a leading military historian and author. *A Stout Pair Of Boots* is based on his research of Australia's battlefields in many parts of the world. Co-presented with the Historic Houses Trust as part of trustwords. **\$10/\$5 Bookings 8239 2211**

106 Launch. Harbour City Poems
May 21, 2.30-4pm
BM

Readings of historical Sydney poems by actors, followed by readings of contemporary Sydney poems by their authors. Jack Thompson launches the new anthology. Presented by the Poets Union. **Free**

107 The Poet's Voice
May 21, 2.30-3.30pm
BT

An aural treat featuring readings from poets Emma Jones, Robert Gray, Emily



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Ballou, Devin Johnston and Marjorie Evasco. **Free**

108 Graeme Blundell in Conversation

May 21, 2.30-3.30pm
ST

In his memoir, Graeme Blundell writes about Australian life in the '40s, '50s and beyond, with the insight of someone who was always part of the action – whether he wanted to be or not.

\$15/\$10 Bookings 9250 1988
www.sydneytheatre.org.au

109 Nava Semel in Conversation with Alan Gold

May 21, 2.30-3.30pm
ST-RW

Nava Semel is a foremost voice of the Israeli “second generation”, children born to Holocaust survivors. She has received numerous awards, including the Israeli Prime Minister’s Award for Literature and Woman of the Year in Literature – The Tel Aviv Award 2007. She talks to Alan Gold.

\$15/\$10 Bookings 9250 1988
www.sydneytheatre.org.au

110 Philipp Meyer in Conversation

May 21, 2.30-3.30pm
HP-MS

Drawing comparisons to Hemingway, Cormac McCarthy and Richard Russo, Philipp Meyer’s debut novel, *American Rust*, has taken the US by storm. He talks about his dark and timely vision of small-town life with Geordie Williamson.

\$15/\$10 Bookings 9250 1988
www.sydneytheatre.org.au

111 The Female Libido

May 21, 2.30-3.30pm
SDC2/3

Author of *A Most Immoral Woman*, Linda Jaivin, and clinical psychologist and author of *The Sex Diaries*, Bettina Arndt, talk about feminine sexual desire in fact and fiction. **Free**

112 The Mother of Mohammed

May 21, 2.30-3.30pm
SPC

Born and raised in Mudgee, Rabiha Hutchinson seems an unlikely jihadist but to Western intelligence analysts she is

“the matriarch of radical Islam”. Sally Neighbour explores this mysterious woman who has Western governments so unnerved. **Free**

113 Lupine

May 21, 3-4pm
SDC4

Perhaps more than any other animal, wolves have featured in stories as villains, as antiheroes, as mysterious benefactors or dark threats. Kirsty Gunn and Mark Rowlands share wolfish tales. **Free**

114 Fact and Fiction. Navigating the Borderlands

May 21, 3-4pm
SDC1

Matthew Ricketson, Estelle Blackburn, Tony Maniaty and Merinda Bobis discuss the issues arising when non-fiction and fiction have their beginnings in real lives and real events. Presented with the University of Technology, Sydney. **Free**

115 Child Protection and The Arts

May 21, 4-5pm
SDC2/3

The Henson case sparked new debate on the rights of the child and the definition of art. David Marr leads a discussion on the best way for a community to ensure children’s welfare in their representation in the arts. Chaired by Rowena Danziger. **Free**

116 Laura Lippman in Conversation

May 21, 4-5pm
HP-MS

Laura Lippman, one of the finest writers of detective fiction in America today and creator of the award-winning Tess Monaghan series, talks to Christine Cremen about her new novel, *Life Sentences*.

\$15/\$10 Bookings 9250 1988
www.sydneytheatre.org.au

117 Sonya Hartnett in Conversation

May 21, 4-5pm
ST

Sonya Hartnett’s fiction crosses territories and genre and she has written for

children, young people and adults on topics such as family breakdown, aggression, suicide, incest, obsession and loneliness. She talks to Sandra Yates about her new novel, *Butterfly*.

\$15/\$10 Bookings 9250 1988
www.sydneytheatre.org.au

118 Expats in China

May 21, 4-5pm
ST-RW

China hand Mark Kitto and historian and travel writer James Palmer talk about their experiences in the Chinese media and why they have made China their home.

\$15/\$10 Bookings 9250 1988
www.sydneytheatre.org.au

119 Launch. Motherlode (Puncher and Wattman)

May 21, 4-6pm
BT

Motherlode is the first major collection of Australian women’s poetry since 1995. Hear 12 Sydney poets traverse nature, iconography, pregnancy, birth, loss, daily grind, politics and ageing. Edited by Jennifer Harrison and Kate Waterhouse, launched by Elizabeth Webby. **Free**

120 On Grief

May 21, 4-5pm
SPC

Susan Varga, Caroline Jones and Amanda Lohrey take on the subject of death and bereavement, and what it means to pick up the pieces afterwards. They discuss writing about grieving and reconnecting with life after a tragedy. **Free**

121 The Debut

May 21, 4.30-5.30pm
SDC4

The road to becoming published can be littered with joy and anguish, and a lot of technical things of which the uninitiated would never have dreamed. Gary Bryson, Catherine Therese and Jennifer Mills share their experiences of first-time publication. **Free**

122 Launch. And So It Went – Bob Ellis (Penguin)

May 21, 4.30-6pm
BM

Join Penguin Books for the



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Devin Johnston - 85, 107, 151

launch of *And So It Went* by Bob Ellis. **Free**

123 Risky Business. Building Resilience into the Arts
May 21, 4.30-5.30pm
SDC1

Griffith REVIEW essayists Robyn Archer, Nicholas Jose, Nicolas Low and Elizabeth Ann Macgregor discuss how to build a resilient creative society able to take risks. With chair Julianne Schultz. Presented with *Griffith REVIEW*. **Free**



Cees Nootboom - 149, 272

125 The Man Booker Prize
May 21, 6-7pm
HP-MS

The Man Booker Prize is the ultimate accolade for many writers. Former judge Kate Summerscale and former long and short listees, Monica Ali and Mohammed Hanif, share their experience of the Man Booker ride. Supported by Man Investments.

\$15/\$10 Bookings 9250 1988
www.sydneytheatre.org.au



Eva Hornung - 34, 146, 166

126 Musings on Mr Darwin's Shooter with Roger McDonald
May 21, 6-7.30pm
MT

Join author Roger McDonald for an evening of readings and conversation centring on his award-winning novel, *Mr Darwin's Shooter*, and its themes, including the reconciliation of science and religion. Presented by the Royal Botanic Gardens.

\$15 Includes light refreshments
Bookings 9231 8134



Monica Ali - 125, 211, 268

127 The 57th Book Design Awards
May 21, 6-10pm
PHM

Each year, the Australian Publishers Association honours those talented designers who have broken boundaries, pushed envelopes, thought outside the square and smashed preconceptions. Celebrate the best in Australian book design with cocktails and canapes. Presented by the Australian Publishers Association.

\$66 Bookings
www.publishers.asn.au



Alex Ross - 132, 309



Jennifer Byrne - 142

128 The Baader Meinhof Complex. Screening and Q&A with Stefan Aust
May 21, 6-9pm
DOQ

The Baader Meinhof Complex chronicles the notorious Red Army Faction, which was responsible for carrying out murders, shootings, bombings, kidnappings and a plane hijacking. After the film, writer Stefan Aust will take questions from the audience. Presented with Dendy Opera Quays.

\$18/\$15 Bookings 9247 3800

129 Jørn Utzon's Sydney Opera House
May 21, 6.30-7.30pm
CH-BLR

Jørn Utzon's Sydney Opera House is a labour of love by German photographer Katarina Stuebe in collaboration with the architect himself and, later, his son Jan. Stuebe and Jan Utzon speak with Alan Saunders. Presented with the City of Sydney Library and the Consulate General of Denmark, Sydney. **Free**

Bookings essential
9242 8555 library@cityofsydney.nsw.gov.au

131 The Poet's Life Works with M.T.C. Cronin
May 21, 6.30-8pm
ST-RW

The Red Room Company launches *The Poet's Life Works*, installations celebrating the work and life of four Australian poets. Featured poet M.T.C. Cronin delivers the Red Room "Minislec" address. Presented with the Red Room Company. **Free**

132 Listening to the 20th Century. Alex Ross in Conversation with Ramona Koval
May 21, 6.30-7.30pm
ST

Alex Ross's *The Rest Is Noise* is a sweeping musical history that goes from the salons of prewar Vienna to New York lofts of the '60s and '70s, by way of Stalin's Soviet Union, Hitler's Germany and Cold War America. Supported by the Macquarie Group.

\$25/\$20 Bookings 9250 1988
www.sydneytheatre.org.au

133 Wine and Words
Richmond Grove Wine Dinner
May 21, 6.30-10.30pm
OC

Sydney Writers' Festival wine sponsors Richmond Grove invite you to an evening of fine dining and first-class wines with Christian Lander and other festival guests at Ottoman Restaurant. Includes four courses and wines from Richmond Grove's Limited Release collection. MC Simon Marnie.

\$110 Bookings 9250 1988
www.sydneytheatre.org.au

136 Golden Age of Jazz
May 21, 7-10pm
VH

Enjoy the word prowess of jazz diva and poet Edwina Blush as she performs with the Tony Gardener Jazz Orchestra. Includes a tour of Vaucluse House and supper in the Tearooms. Co-presented with the Historic Houses Trust as part of trustwords.

\$65/\$60 Bookings 8293 2211

139 The Imperial Panda Festival Presents: Erotic Fan Fiction
May 21, 7.30-9pm
HP-CS

Erotic fan fiction is an amateur cultural phenomenon that began in the darkest corners of internet chatrooms when amateur writers - spurned by the more discerning members of the literati - decided to put their celebrity fantasies into print. Written and read by some of Australia's newest and most exciting voices, this event promises to conjure up a different kind of magic in an adults-only kind of way. Hosted by actor Virginia Gay with stories by Tim Derricourt, Marieke Hardy and Eddie Sharp. Presented with the Imperial Panda Festival.

\$15/\$10 Bookings 9250 1988
www.sydneytheatre.org.au

347 An Evening with Germaine Greer
May 21, 7-8pm
CRH

Since storming into public consciousness in 1970 with *The Female Eunuch*, her acerbic attack on sexist culture, Germaine Greer has been kicking up dust of one type



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or another. She presents a lecture on "The Australian Way: The Influence of Australia and Australians on British Politics and Politicians" in which she traces the influence of the Australian example on British politics, first as the inspiration for Thatcherism and then as the rationale of New Labour. The most recent example is the adoption by the British Government of the points system for immigrants. Supported by *Overland*.

\$35/\$30 Bookings 9250 1988
www.sydneytheatre.org.au or 8256 2222
www.cityrecitalhall.com

140 Darlinghurst Nights
May 21, 8.30-10.30pm
LOW

See Event 67 on May 20 for details.

141 Late Nights at Number One
May 21, 9.30-11.30pm
N1

A relaxed Quayside wine bar, Tony Bilson's Number One is the place to be for all writers and readers looking for a post-event drink or bite and some very fine words. Guest readings nightly from Thursday to Saturday. Check www.swf.org.au for more details. **Free**

FRIDAY, MAY 22

206 The Poet's Life Works. A Red Room Installation
May 22-24
HP-CS

This installation celebrates poet M.T.C. Cronin with the display of her "room", containing objects and ephemera linked to her life and work. An artist will complete her portrait within the display. Presented with the Red Room Company. Runs Friday 22 to Sunday 24. **Free**

146 Eva Hornung in Conversation
May 22, 10-11am
ST-RW

The earlier novels of Eva Hornung (previously Eva Sallis) examine themes of exile and loneliness through cultural displacement. *Dog Boy* shifts these to animal and human nature. She discusses her

retelling of the timeless tale of an innocent living among beasts.

\$15/\$10 Bookings 9250 1988
www.sydneytheatre.org.au

147 The Future of Journalism
May 22, 10-11am
SDC2/3

Journalism is changing and reportage is no longer left to professionals. Now, "citizen journalists" armed with mobile-phone cameras and laptops offer their own views. Should this be celebrated? **Free**

148 David Williamson. Behind the Scenes
May 22, 10-11am
ST

Don's Party and *The Removalists* have made David Williamson a national treasure. Now the woman who knows him best has documented his life. David and Kristin Williamson share backstage stories with Caroline Baum. Supported by *The Sydney Morning Herald*.

\$15/\$10 Bookings 9250 1988
www.sydneytheatre.org.au

149 Cees Nooteboom on ABC Radio National's Book Show
May 22, 10-11am
HP-MS

Frequently mentioned as a candidate for the Nobel Prize in Literature, essayist, poet and novelist Cees Nooteboom is one of Holland's most revered writers. He talks to Ramona Koval in a live broadcast of *The Book Show*.

\$15/\$10 Bookings 9250 1988
www.sydneytheatre.org.au

150 State of the Nation. Directions in the US Publishing Market
May 22, 10-11am
SPC

Catherine Drayton joins international publishers Nita Taublib and Charlie Conrad to examine US publishing trends and the books that are successful, with chair David Kent. Presented by the Australia Council for the Arts Visiting International Publishers Program. **Free**

151 The Sydney Poetry Reading II
May 22, 10-11am
BM

Outstanding contemporary poetry from Australia and the US.

Devin Johnston, Bob Adamson and Anthony Lawrence each have a deep interest in the natural world. They share their responses and concerns. Presented with the Poets Union. **Free**

152 The Inside Out of Book Design
May 22, 10.30am-noon
BT

Supported by visual presentations, a panel of prominent designers discuss how, in Australia, we consistently produce some of the best-designed books in the world. Presented with the Australian Publishers Association. **Free**

153 From Hot Copy to Hard Cover
May 22, 10.30-11.30am
SDC4

The Walkley Non-Fiction Book Award recognises the growing contribution of journalists to the field of literature. Paul Ham and Paul Rea discuss their historical research on war with Christine Wallace. Presented by the Walkley Foundation for Journalism. **Free**

154 Philosophy in Sydney
May 22, 10.30-11.30am
SDC1

James Franklin considers how Sydney philosophers – typically realist, sceptical of "deep" but confused ideas and interested in scientific thought – have presented a vision of the world different from the mainstream. Presented with the school of philosophy and bioethics, Monash University. **Free**

142 First Tuesday Book Club
May 22, 11am-12.30pm
ABC

First Tuesday Book Club is ABC TV's first nationally televised book club. Two festival guests join host Jennifer Byrne and panellists Jason Steger and Marieke Hardy for literary debate and conversation. **Free. Bookings essential 8333 3644**

155 Launch. Sydney Ideas Quarterly (University of Sydney)
May 22, 11.30am-12.30pm
BM
 The University of Sydney



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Margo Lanagan - 162,
297, 323

launches *Sydney Ideas Quarterly*, a journal featuring reports and writings on contemporary issues stirring up the intellectual world. Launched by Geoff Gallop. Presented with the University of Sydney. **Free**

156 And He Shall be Called Barack Obama. The Makings of a Mythic Presidency
May 22, 11.30am-12.30pm
SDC2/3

After Barack Obama's vowing to usher in a new era of responsibility, some argue that he has shown a willingness to compromise between campaign rhetoric and Washington realities. Peter Hartcher and John Barron discuss this with the BBC's Nick Bryant. **Free**



Robert Desaux - 169,
262, 313

157 The Brain That Changes Itself. Judge for Yourself
May 22, 11.30am-12.30pm
ST

Norman Doidge discusses how the human brain can change its own structure and function with thought and experience, turning on its own genes to change its circuitry, reorganise itself and change its operation.

\$15/\$10 Bookings 9250 1988
www.sydneytheatre.org.au



Michael Bachelard - 147,
167, 192

158 Tash Aw in Conversation with Kevin Rabalais
May 22, 11.30am-12.30pm
ST-RW

The Harmony Silk Factory was



David Ebershoff - 92, 160,
250, 283

Malaysian writer Tash Aw's highly acclaimed and award-winning debut. He talks to Kevin Rabalais about *Map Of The Invisible World*, set during the tumultuous "year of living dangerously" in postcolonial Indonesia.

\$15/\$10 Bookings 9250 1988
www.sydneytheatre.org.au

159 Projecting and Finding History
May 22, 11.30am-12.30pm
SPC

History has been politicised over the past decade and there is a need for new ways of telling and engaging with history. Historians Ann McGrath, Ann Curthoys and Maria Tumarkin explore the issue. Presented with *Griffith REVIEW*. **Free**

160 Historical Fiction
May 22, 11.30am-12.30pm
HP-MS

David Ebershoff and Linda Jaivin discuss whether the historical novel might sometimes come closer to the truth than the "straight" history.

\$15/\$10 Bookings 9250 1988
www.sydneytheatre.org.au

161 Memory and Forgetting in China
May 22, noon-1pm
SDC4

Acclaimed fiction writer Ye Xin and leading Shanghai publisher Peng Lun join Nicholas Jose to

discuss personal experiences of the past in China. This event is bilingual (Mandarin and English). **Free**

162 Children's Literature for Adults
May 22, noon-1pm
SDC1

Visiting international publishers Sarah Odedina and John McLay are joined by acclaimed Australian fiction writer Margo Lanagan to discuss the increasing adult market for children's books. With chair Laura Harris. Presented by the Australia Council for the Arts Visiting International Publishers Program. **Free**

163 China Cuckoo. Mark Kitto in Conversation
May 22, 12.30-1.30pm
BT

In booming Shanghai, Mark Kitto hit the big time. But in 2004 he lost his business empire and suffered repeated court battles to recover it. He tells his story to Chip Rolley. **Free**

165 David Hill. 1788
May 22, 1-2pm
TM

David Hill speaks about his new book, *1788*, in which he artfully reconstructs the story of the First Fleet using diaries, letters and official records. Introduced by Rowena Danziger. Co-presented with the



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Historic Houses Trust as part of trustwords. **Free**

166 The Lives of Animals
May 22, 1-2pm
HP-MS

Mark Rowlands lived with a wolf for 11 years. Eva Hornung's novel traces the life of a child raised by a pack of dogs. Steven Conte's novel considers the suffering of animals during wartime. They discuss what our animal nature brings to our humanity.
\$15/\$10 Bookings 9250 1988
www.sydneytheatre.org.au

167 Losing My Religion
May 22, 1-2pm
SDC2/3

Richard Holloway, Michael Bachelard and Tom Frame discuss the challenges of writing objectively about a subject such as religious belief when controversy and debates abound. Supported by Barclays Capital. **Free**

168 Conversations from the Bottom of the Harbour
May 22, 1-2.30pm
BM

Six poets from the Sydney-based group Harbour City Poets present a reading of poems responding to poems, celebrating contemporary city life. Presented by the Poets Union. **Free**

169 Robert Dessaix in Conversation with Drusilla Modjeska
May 22, 1-2pm
ST

Arabesques sees Dessaix journeying from Europe to the edge of the Sahara and features meditations on such varied subjects as why we travel, growing old and illicit passions. He talks to Drusilla Modjeska.
\$15/\$10 Bookings 9250 1988
www.sydneytheatre.org.au

170 Tackling The Big Themes
May 22, 1-2pm
SPC

Andrew Davidson and Andrea Goldsmith discuss the potential of fiction to take on the big topics: memory, friendship, death, obsession, love, faith. **Free**

171 Coming of Age
May 22, 1-2pm
ST-RW

Sonya Hartnett and Craig Silvey's new novels illuminate that terrible and wonderful moment full of promise and misery that is 13 going on 14. They discuss writing about a defining period of adolescence and the revelations it engenders.
\$15/\$10 Bookings 9250 1988
www.sydneytheatre.org.au

174 Stories That Travel
May 22, 1.30-2.30pm
SDC1

Visiting international publishers

Elena Ramirez, Elisabeth Ruge and Wanda Gloude consider how some writers' works translate differently and experience different levels of success. With chair Michael Heyward. Presented by the Australia Council for the Arts Visiting International Publishers Program. **Free**

175 The Road to a Bestseller
May 22, 1.30-2.30pm
SDC4

Visiting international publishers Amy Einhorn, Charlie Conrad and Nita Taublib talk about their greatest commercial fiction and non-fiction successes with chair Fiona Henderson. Presented by the Australia Council for the Arts Visiting International Publishers Program. **Free**

176 Mortgage Mania/ Mortgage Meltdown
May 22, 2-3.30pm
MOS

Our love affair with real estate has brought the global financial system to its knees. Are we now over property pornography? Has the market returned to homebuyers and left speculators behind? Co-presented with the Historic Houses Trust as part of trustwords.
\$12/\$8 Bookings, 8239 2211

177 Terms of Engagement
May 22, 2-3pm
BT

A new generation of indigenous



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Anne Summers - 262

writers, leaders and thinkers is ready to break the mould with new thinking, activism and engagement to offer a positive way forward. Megan Davis, Sarah Maddison and Wesley Enoch discuss these issues with Julianne Schultz. Presented with *Griffith REVIEW*. **Free**



Laura Lippman - 116, 223, 323

178 From Hot Copy to Hard Cover
May 22, 2.30-3.30pm
SDC2/3

The Tall Man, in which Chloe Hooper reports on the story of Palm Island, was shortlisted for the 2008 Walkley Non-Fiction Book Award. She talks to Christine Wallace. Presented by the Walkley Foundation for Journalism. **Free**



Murong Xuecen - 194, 263

179 Underbelly 2. The Tale of a Sequel
May 22, 2.30-3.30pm
ST

While the show's creators were cooking up *Underbelly*, Clive Small was writing his own underworld story which became a primary source for the second *Underbelly* series. Greg Haddrick, Peter Gawler, Clive Small and Tom Gilling talk about how *Underbelly 2* came into being.

\$15/\$10 Bookings 9250 1988
www.sydneytheatre.org.au



Don Walker - 181, 228, 258

180 Peter Corris in Conversation with Graeme Blundell
May 22, 2.30-3.30pm
HP-MS

Peter Corris recently published the 34th title in his Cliff Hardy series - his 60th book of fiction. He also has a swag of non-fiction books to his credit. He talks to Graeme Blundell about his prolific writing life.

\$15/\$10 Bookings 9250 1988
www.sydneytheatre.org.au



Dominic Knight - 100, 252

181 Rock 'n' Roll Lives
May 22, 2.30-3.30pm
SPC

Two icons of Australian music - former Cold Chisel keyboardist and songwriter Don Walker and The Sports' Stephen Cummings - have recently published their memoirs. They talk about music-making and much more with Mark Mordue. **Free**



David Marr - 115, 192, 251, 270

182 Biography and Intimacy
May 22, 2.30-3.30pm
ST-RW

The role of friendship in writing a biography is an interesting one. Brian Dibble and Michelle McDonald discuss whether or not intimate knowledge of a person gives the writer truer, less conjectured access to what is below the surface. Chaired by Peter FitzSimons.

\$15/\$10 Bookings 9250 1988
www.sydneytheatre.org.au

183 Continental Philosophy in Australia
May 22, 3-4pm
SDC1

Paul Patton considers some of the ways Australian philosophers have both engaged with and contributed to contemporary European philosophy and how this has enriched our intellectual life. Presented with the school of philosophy and bioethics, Monash University. **Free**

184 The Last Whale
May 22, 3-4pm
BM

Chris Pash has told the human story of the whalers and the anti-whaling activists who risked their lives to stop them in Greenpeace's first direct action in Australia. Join Pash in conversation with the book's major character, Jonny Lewis. **Free**

185 Parents and Children
May 22, 3-4pm
SDC4

Amanda Curtin, Gabrielle Carey and Amanda Lohrey discuss writing about parent/child relationships, exploring the sometimes fraught territories of interdependence, protection and establishing the necessary balance of distance and closeness. **Free**

186 Launch. UTS Writers' Anthology, On the Side
May 22, 3.30-5pm
BT

From the writing program at the University of Technology, Sydney comes the 2009 UTS Writers' Anthology, *On the Side*. Launched by Charlotte Wood, with readings from contributors. **Free**

187 The Ethical Responsibility of the Writer. George Eliot Meets Elizabeth Costello
May 22, 4-5pm
SDC2/3

Maira Gatens brings George Eliot and J.M. Coetzee into conversation in order to ask "What is the ethical responsibility of the writer?" Presented with the school of philosophy and bioethics, Monash University. **Free**

188 The Baader Meinhof Complex. Stefan Aust in Conversation
May 22, 4-5 pm
ST

The Baader-Meinhof group turned to terrorism in the '70s to fight against perceived imperialism and the lingering spectre of the Nazis. Stefan Aust co-wrote the screenplay of the film *The Baader Meinhof Complex* based on his book of the same name. He talks with Martina Mollering. Supported by the Macquarie University Innovative Universities European Union Centre.

\$15/\$10 Bookings 9250 1988
www.sydneytheatre.org.au

189 Literary Journals
May 22, 4-5pm
SPC

For 150 years, writers have launched their careers through the nation's literary journals. Can literary journals rise to the challenge of the digital age? Sophie Cunningham, Jeff Sparrow and Julianne Schultz discuss this with Susan Hayes. **Free**

190 Biography with a Twist
May 22, 4-5pm
ST-RW

Evelyn Juers' portrait of Heinrich Mann and Nelly Kroeger-Mann challenges conventional understandings of biography. Kristin Williamson is exceptionally close to her subject, husband David Williamson. They talk about navigating the traditional terrain of biography.

\$15/\$10 Bookings 9250 1988
www.sydneytheatre.org.au

191 Paul McGeough in Conversation
May 22, 4-5pm
HP-MS

Paul McGeough discusses



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his account of the attempted assassination of Palestinian Khalid Mishal, then head of Hamas's political bureau in Jordan, and the scramble to save his life that involved the Israeli prime minister, the king of Jordan and the US president. Supported by *The Sydney Morning Herald*.
\$15/\$10 Bookings 9250 1988
www.sydneytheatre.org.au

192 Investigative Journalism
May 22, 4.30-5.30pm
SDCA

David Marr, Michael Bachelard, Robert Wainright and Paola Totaro discuss their eye-opening research and resulting books covering the Henson controversy, the Exclusive Brethren and the Port Arthur massacre. Chaired by Peter FitzSimons. **Free**

193 Playing Poker with the SAS
May 22, 4.30-5.30pm
SDCI

In 2006, comedian Tom Gleeson went to entertain Australian troops in the Middle East. Confirming that he'll do anything for a laugh, he fired machine guns, drove tanks in a drag race and played poker with the SAS. He talks about his life-changing trip. **Free**

194 Murong Xuecun in Conversation with Mark Kitto
May 22, 4.30-5.30pm
BM

In 2002, Murong Xuecun's first novel, *Leave Me Alone, Chengdu*, took China by storm. He talks to Mark Kitto about his tragicomic take on love and life in modern China, with translation by Harvey Thomlinson. **Free**

195 Robert Harling in Conversation
May 22, 5.30-6.30pm
ST

American writer and film director Robert Harling is best known for *Steel Magnolias*, his play made into a film, and screenplays *Soapdish*, *The First Wives Club* and *Laws Of Attraction*. He talks about his career and life in Hollywood. In association with Blackbird Productions.
\$15/\$10 Bookings 9250 1988
www.sydneytheatre.org.au

342 Fictionalising Jewish Experience
May 22, 5.30-6.30pm
SDC2/3

As the memory of the trauma and exile of the Holocaust shifts into future generations, Navel Semel and Alice Nelson discuss writing Jewish experience in their novels. **Free**

343 Poetry in the Mother Tongue. Marjorie Evasco
May 22, 5.30-6.30pm
SPC

Marjorie Evasco reads from her work and discusses her decision to write in Cebuano-Visayan and become a bilingual writer, a political and artistic choice in the context of postcolonial acts of language. **Free**

214 Celebrity Chefs Exposed
May 22, 5.30-6.30pm
HP-CS

Cuisine Du Moi by Gavin Canardeaux, the creation of Ben Canaider, is a biting (pun intended) satire on the recent rise of celebrity-chef culture. Canaider provides an exposé on what the current crop of celebrity chefs is getting away with and how. With Sandra Yates. **Free**

197 NSW Premier's Literary Awards
May 22, 6-7pm
ST-RW

Chloe Hooper, Louis Nowra, Rachel Perkins and Toby Riddle discuss their NSW Premier's Literary Awards' shortlisted works with Caroline Baum, sharing the inspiration behind their writing. Presented with Arts NSW. **Free**

198 Son Of A Lion Screening and Q&A with Benjamin Gilmour
May 22, 6-8pm BT

Son Of A Lion is a delicate and real portrait of a father-and-son relationship from first-time director Benjamin Gilmour set in the tribal region of north-west Pakistan near the Afghan border. Eleven-year-old Niaz dreams of studying at school but his stern father wants him to continue in the family business of making guns. Followed by a post-screening Q&A session with director Benjamin Gilmour. **Free**

201 Is this the End for You, Me and Capitalism? The Friday Night Salon
May 22, 7-9pm
HP-CS

The world is in global recession and it's clear something systemic has failed. With governments forced to intervene, is this the end for freewheeling capitalism? Vivienne Bath, George Friedman and Ross Gittins debate with Shaun Davies and James Stuart. Presented with Non-generic Productions.
\$20/\$15 Bookings 9250 1988
www.sydneytheatre.org.au

202 An Evening with Wendy Harmer
May 22, 7-8pm
PTH

Wise and witty, the impressively multi-talented Wendy Harmer is Australia's best-known humourist. She also has a swag of books under her belt. In this session, she talks about *Roadside Sisters*, the story of three very different friends, reluctantly approaching middle age, who take a road trip up the east coast of Australia.
\$25/\$20 Bookings 9250 1988
www.sydneytheatre.org.au

203 Nocturnes. Kazuo Ishiguro in Conversation via video link
May 22, 8-9pm
ST

Master storyteller Kazuo Ishiguro is the author of six novels, including the international bestsellers *The Remains Of The Day* (winner of the 1989 Man Booker Prize) and *Never Let Me Go*. From London, he talks to Sydney Writers' Festival chair Sandra Yates about his sublime story cycle *Nocturnes*, a quintet that ranges from Italian piazzas to the Malvern Hills, a London flat to the "hush-hush floor" of an exclusive Hollywood hotel. Supported by *The Sydney Morning Herald*.
\$20/\$15
Bookings 9250 1988
www.sydneytheatre.org.au

204 Darlinghurst Nights
May 22, 8.30-10.30pm
LOW

See Event 67 on May 20 for details.



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Andrea Goldsmith - 170,
213, 317

205 Late Nights at Number One
May 22, 9.30-11.30pm
NI

A relaxed quayside wine bar, Tony Bilson's Number One is the place to be for all writers and readers looking for a post-event drink or bite and some very fine words. Guest readings nightly from Thursday to Saturday. Check the Sydney Writers' Festival website, www.swf.org.au, for more details. **Free**

SATURDAY, MAY 23



Tash Aw - 158, 242,
272, 281

208 Lakelands Olives Oil Tasting
May 23, 9.30am-5.30pm
Pier 4/5

Many cooks and chefs regard olive oil as the one ingredient they can't live without. Lakelands Olives produces some of the most delicious varieties available in the country and will provide free tastings for festival-goers. **Free**



Stephen Cummings - 181,
231

210 Marcus Chown in Conversation with Fred Watson
May 23, 10-11am
HP-MS

The two towering achievements of modern physics - quantum theory and Einstein's general theory of relativity - together explain virtually everything about our world, yet most people still haven't the slightest clue what either is about. Radio astronomer and author Marcus Chown explains to Fred Watson why *Quantum Theory Cannot Hurt You*. **\$15/\$10 Bookings 9250 1988**
www.sydneytheatre.org.au



Kate Summerscale - 87,
125, 233

211 Monica Ali in Conversation with Claire Scobie
May 23, 10-11am
ST

Monica Ali's new novel *In The Kitchen* opens with a mysterious death in a cosmopolitan hotel. Over ensuing pages, Ali peels back the layers of polyglot London to reveal the melting pot existing below. She talks to Claire Scobie. Supported by *The Sydney Morning Herald*. **\$15/\$10 Bookings 9250 1988**
www.sydneytheatre.org.au



Paul Ham - 153, 217, 246



Graeme Blundell - 108,
160, 224

212 Auburn Rising. The Sky Belongs to Everyone II
May 23, 10-11am
BM

Celebrate the International Year of Astronomy with Auburn Poets and Writers Group. This multilingual performance explores the sky as an inclusive space and probes a planet they experience differently beneath one sky. **Free**

213 Andrea Goldsmith in Conversation with Drusilla Modjeska
May 23, 10-11am
ST-RW

Acclaimed Australian writer Andrea Goldsmith talks to Drusilla Modjeska about her new novel, *Reunion*, a story of friendship, obsessive love and untimely death. **\$15/\$10 Bookings 9250 1988**
www.sydneytheatre.org.au

215 The Block
May 23, 10-11am
SPC

Bill Simon was stolen, beaten and used as child labour. He spent eight years in a boys' home, after which a life of self-abuse and crime finally saw him imprisoned. Today Simon helps other members of the Stolen Generations find a voice. He talks to John Maynard. **Free**

346 Richard Flanagan in Conversation
May 23, 10-11am
SDC 2/3

One of Australia's literary giants, Richard Flanagan's multi-award-winning novels, *Death Of A River Guide*, *The Sound Of One Hand Clapping*, *Gould's Book Of Fish* and *The Unknown Terrorist*, have been published to popular success and critical acclaim in 25 countries. He talks about his latest novel, *Wanting*. **Free**

216 The Happiness Mistake
May 23, 10.30-11.30am
SDC1

Happiness is a psychological good that many people seek. But what if there is no such thing? Caroline West explores what happiness could be and what it could not be. Presented with the school of philosophy and bioethics, Monash University. **Free**

217 Research and Writing
May 23, 10.30-11.30am
SDC4

Paul Ham, Catherine Jinks and Babette Smith were shortlisted for "The Nib": CAL Waverley Library Award for Literature, which recognises excellence in research. They speak with Ashley Hay. Presented by Waverley Library and Copyright Agency Limited. **Free**

218 Will the Real Writer Please Stand Up?
May 23, 10.30-11.30am
BT

Who gets to call themselves a writer and why? Singer/songwriter Sarah Blasko, spoken-word artist Miles Merrill and adventurer/journalist Chris Bray dissect their various approaches to being writers with Benito di Fonzo. **Free**

222 Launch. Peril Magazine Issue 7 "Fashion, Fetish"
May 23, 11.30am-12.30pm
BM

Peril, an online Asian-Australian arts and culture magazine, launches issue 7 with broadcaster and fashionista Annette Shun Wah. Visit www.peril.com.au. Supported by the Australia Council for the Arts. **Free**

223 Drawn from Life or Drawn from the Imagination
May 23, 11.30am-12.30pm
SPC

Many would argue that all fiction comes from lived experience but the pitfalls around representing personal experience in fiction are legendary, particularly in first books. Veteran of 14 books, Laura Lippman, and first-timer Gary Bryson exchange notes on the interplay between real life and life on the page. **Free**

224 Mohammed Hanif in Conversation with Steven Gale
May 23, 11.30am-12.30pm
ST-RW

Mohammed Hanif talks to Steven Gale about *A Case Of Exploding Mangoes*, his superb Man Booker longlisted debut novel centred around the assassination of Pakistani dictator General Zia ul-Haq. Doing for Pakistan what



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DeLillo's *Libra* did for JFK conspiracy theory, its hilarious skewering of the Pakistani military and intelligence infrastructure is teasing, provocative and very funny.
\$15/\$10 Bookings 9250 1988
www.sydneytheatre.org.au

225 Stuff White People Like. Christian Lander in Conversation
May 23, 11.30am-12.30pm
HP-MS

Recycling, expensive sandwiches, standing still at concerts, natural medicine, irony, public radio, breakfast places, vegetarianism, organic foods and being an expert on ethnic cultures are just a few things that white people like. Christian Lander's satirical blog skewered the sacred cows of lefty Caucasian culture, from the Prius to David Sedaris. Fifty-six million hits later, it became a book. He talks to newmatilda.com's Ben Pobjie.

\$15/\$10 Bookings 9250 1988
www.sydneytheatre.org.au

226 Lives on Stage. Graeme Blundell and Julia Morris
May 23, 11.30am-12.30pm
ST

Two legendary Australian entertainers – 2008 Helpmann Award nominee Julia Morris and actor, director, producer and writer Graeme Blundell – trade tales from their memoirs and talk about making their private lives public.

\$15/\$10 Bookings 9250 1988
www.sydneytheatre.org.au

227 The Rise and Fall of Government
May 23, 11.30am-12.30pm
SDC2/3

On November 24, 2007, Australia resoundingly changed government. What really happened during that tumultuous year behind closed doors? Peter Hartcher, Sally Warhaft and Bob Ellis consider the rise of Rudd and the demise of Howard. With Tony Jones. **Free**

228 Don Walker in Conversation
May 23, noon-1pm
SDC1

Former Cold Chisel member and songwriter Don Walker talks to Suzanne Leal about his memoir,

which evokes wild times in the '70s, life on the road, making music and more. **Free**

230 Craig Silvey in Conversation
May 23, noon-1pm
SDC4

Craig Silvey's first novel, *Rhubarb* sold more than 15,000 copies and saw him acknowledged as one of *The Sydney Morning Herald's* Best Young Australian Novelists. He talks about his much-anticipated second novel, *Jasper Jones*. **Free**

231 Stephen Cummings in Conversation with Bernard Zuel
May 23, noon-1pm
BT

Legendary musician Stephen Cummings talks with Bernard Zuel about his tell-all memoir of 25 years in Australian music. He shares some inside truths about the music business, pulling no punches. **Free**

233 The Suspicions Of Mr Whicher
May 23, 1-2pm
ST

Kate Summerscale talks to Caroline Baum about her history of a sensational Victorian murder and its aftermath. Pioneer sleuth Inspector Jack Whicher's 1860 case of the murder of a small boy shaped detection, in fact and fiction, and transfixed the British, including Wilkie Collins and Charles Dickens. A riveting true-crime story, it is also the story of the birth of forensic science.

\$15/\$10 Bookings 9250 1988
www.sydneytheatre.org.au

235 The Stuff of the Past
May 23, 1-2pm
SDC2/3

Kate Grenville, Amanda Curtin and Nava Semel talk about turning history into fiction in their latest novels. With Alan Gold. **Free**

236 The Message
May 23, 1-2pm
HP-MS

Is it possible that wars can be fought, even won, via nonviolent media like film, music, books and blogs? Benjamin Gilmour, James Maskalyk and Emmanuel Jal talk about their messages of peace

and calls to action through alternative media.

\$15/\$10 Bookings 9250 1988
www.sydneytheatre.org.au

237 Andrew Davidson in Conversation
May 23, 1-2pm
ST-RW

Andrew Davidson talks to Christine Cremen about his international literary sensation *The Gargoyle*. The tale of doomed love was number one in Canada and rode high on *The New York Times* bestseller list. It has been described as a contemporary *Inferno*.

\$15/\$10 Bookings 9250 1988
www.sydneytheatre.org.au

238 Irfan Yusuf in Conversation
May 23, 1-2pm
SPC

How does a middle-class kid from John Howard's electorate become convinced he should die for the Muslim cause? Irfan Yusuf shares his hilarious journey into and then out of political Islam. **Free**

239 Stories from The Stolen Generation
May 23, 1.30-2.30pm
BT

Pastor Bill Simon, the first Aboriginal minister to be ordained in Redfern, and Lorraine McGee-Sippel, a Yorta Yorta woman, share their stories of growing up. With poetry readings by Emma Jones and Elizabeth Hodgson. **Free**

241 On Marriage
May 23, 1.30-2.30pm
SDC1

Alice Nelson, Steven Conte and Siew Siang Tay discuss the vagaries of romantic love in their novels. **Free**

242 Conflict and Childhood
May 23, 1.30-2.30pm
SDC4

Tash Aw's novel is set during Sukarno's drive to purge 1960s Indonesia of its colonial past. Abbas El-Zein's memoir charts his childhood and teens in war-torn Beirut. They talk to Rowena Danziger about the effects of nations in conflict on the lives of children. **Free**



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Julia Morris - 226, 327

245 Should the Critic be Fired?

May 23, 2-3.30pm
BM

A panel discusses the role of the professional critic in assessing the worth of a creative work. Includes the announcement of the winner of the 2009 Critic of the Year Award. Presented with the Geraldine Pascall Foundation. **Free**



Marcus Chown - 210, 255, 290, 326

246 Smack Express

May 23, 2-3.30pm
JPM

Smack Express is a primary source for the second season of *Underbelly*. Former assistant police commissioner Clive Small and journalist Tom Gilling unravel the web of connections at the heart of organised crime in Australia and the illegal drug trade. Co-presented with the Historic Houses Trust as part of trustwords.

\$10/\$5 Bookings 8239 2211



Hugh Mackay - 27, 91, 264, 319

348 Patrick White

Playwrights' Award 2008
May 23, 2.15pm-4.15pm
Sydney Theatre Company, Wharf 2

The winner of this prestigious award will be announced by Andrew Upton, co-artistic director of the Sydney Theatre Company, followed by a rehearsed reading of the play by the company's artists.

\$5 Bookings 9250 1777

www.sydneytheatre.com.au



John Flanagan - 44, 285, 323

247 Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie in Conversation with Ramona Koval

May 23, 2.30-3.30pm
ST

Nigerian writer Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie, the Orange Prize-winning author of *Half Of A Yellow Sun*, talks to Ramona Koval about her new collection of stories *The Thing Around Your Neck*. Searing and profound, suffused with beauty, sorrow and longing, this new collection is a resounding confirmation of Adichie's prodigious storytelling powers. "Here is a new writer endowed with the gift of ancient storytellers." - Chinua Achebe

\$15/\$10 Bookings 9250 1988
www.sydneytheatre.org.au



Mark Rowlands - 113, 166, 314



Antony Loewenstein - 280, 324

248 Shooting *Balibo*, Blood and Memory in East Timor

May 23, 2.30-3.30pm
HP-MS

Tony Maniaty covered the war in East Timor in 1975 for ABC TV. He came under shelling in Balibo and, a few days later, five other Australian journalists were killed. As consultant to the upcoming film *Balibo*, Tony returned to East Timor. He talks to Paul Ham.

\$15/\$10 Bookings 9250 1988
www.sydneytheatre.org.au

250 David Ebershoff in Conversation

May 23, 2.30-3.30pm
ST-RW

In *The 19th Wife*, David Ebershoff convincingly inhabits the voices of a 19th-century Mormon wife and a contemporary gay youth excommunicated from the church. He talks about his combination of epic historical fiction with a modern murder mystery.

\$15/\$10 Bookings 9250 1988
www.sydneytheatre.org.au

251 News, Feature, Book. Journalism's Big Narrative Dig

May 23, 2.30-3.30pm
SDC2/3
 Paul McGeough, Chloe Hooper and David Marr discuss the process of developing news events into long-form journalism and literary non-fiction. Presented with the University of Technology, Sydney. **Free**

252 Dominic Knight in Conversation

May 23, 2.30-3.30pm
SPC

The Chaser's Dominic Knight talks about his first novel, *Disco Boy*, which explores the bleak experience of young people trapped in jobs they despise and opens up the cans of worms of sexual politics and Sydney society. **Free**

253 Stories from the Climate Change Front. A Forum and Launch of *Overland 195*

May 23, 3-4pm
SDC1
 Are big polluters changing their ways or simply greening their public image? What action do we need? David Spratt, Sharon Beder and Tim Lambert discuss this with Jeff Sparrow. Presented by *Overland* magazine. **Free**

255 Ask Marcus Chown ANYTHING!

May 23, 3-4pm
SDC4

Marcus Chown is an award-winning writer and broadcaster, and currently cosmology consultant for *New Scientist* magazine. He has written about quantum physics, black holes, creation, how the entire human race could fit into the volume of a sugar cube, how every breath you take contains an atom breathed out by Marilyn Monroe. This is your chance to fire questions about the universe at Marcus. Ask Marcus Chown ANYTHING! **Free**

256 The Power of Performing Your Words

May 23, 3-4pm
BT

Five writers who perform their work demonstrate this, then dissect how and why they do it and discuss performance as an alternative to publishing. With Sonya Renee, Tom Gleeson, Edwina Blush, Tug Dumbly and Miles Merrill. **Free**

257 Launch. *The Weight Of Silence* by Catherine Therese (Hachette Livre)

May 23, 4-5.30pm
BM

Join Hachette Livre for the launch of Catherine Therese's achingly funny, heartbreaking childhood memoir *The Weight Of Silence*. **Free**

258 Don Walker in Conversation with Charlie Owen

May 23, 4-5pm
GL

Don Walker, respected songwriter and musician with Cold Chisel, has recently published his memoir *Shots*. He shares his story with fellow Tex, Don & Charlie band member, Charlie Owen, and together Don and Charlie play some of the songs that have accompanied this extraordinary journey. This is an outdoor event. BYO rug and picnic (no alcohol). First 60 bookings guaranteed wet-weather venue. Presented with the City of Sydney Library. **Free. Bookings essential 9298 3060**
library@cityofsydney.nsw.gov.au



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260 The CAL/ *Meanjin* Lecture. Should Intellectual Property be "Owned"?
May 23, 4-5pm
SPC

With the rise of digital technology, the question of whether intellectual property can or should be owned is becoming increasingly relevant. Yet even as we make the push towards online content, our copyright system is baulking under the strain of the information boom. In this lecture, Lynne Spender considers the implication of Google's creation of a searchable database of the world's books before speaking on the ethics of reproducing writers' work, expanding on the issues brought to light in her essay in the June edition of *Meanjin*. Spender asks whether we need a cultural shift in the way we view knowledge and information sharing. Supported by *Meanjin*. **Free**

262 On Doubt, Luck and Humbug
May 23, 4-5pm
HP-MS

Robert Dessaix, Anne Summers and Leigh Sales have all contributed essays on some of the big themes of life. They discuss their thoughts on the subjects of doubt, luck and humbug, as well as the craft of the essay.

\$15/\$10 Bookings 9250 1988
www.sydneytheatre.org.au

263 Bad Boys and Bad Girls of China
May 23, 4-5pm
ST-RW

Murong Xuecun's novel depicts three young men beset by dead-end jobs, gambling debts, drinking, drugs and whoring. Linda Jaivin's novel focuses on China correspondent George Ernest Morrison's obsessive sexual relationship with an American nymphomaniac heiress. They share their stories of a saucier side of China.

\$15/\$10 Bookings 9250 1988
www.sydneytheatre.org.au

264 Truth in Fiction and Non-fiction
May 23, 4-5pm
SDC2/3

Gabriel Garcia Marquez once

said, "In journalism just one fact that is false prejudices the entire work. In contrast, in fiction one single fact that is true gives legitimacy to the entire work." Hugh Mackay and Michael Meehan talk about truth in fiction and non-fiction. **Free**

265 High Surf
May 23, 4.30-5.30pm
SDC1

From *Puberty Blues* to Tim Winton's *Breath*, surf culture continues to hold a valuable place in our cultural landscape. Tim Baker, Nick Carroll and Sean Doherty discuss surfing and surf writing. **Free**

266 First Australians
May 23, 4.30-5.30pm
BT

Rachel Perkins, Louis Nowra and Bruce Pascoe talk about *First Australians*, the dramatic story of the collision of two worlds that created contemporary Australia, told from the perspective of Australia's first people. **Free**

267 Born or Bred?
May 23, 4.30-5.30pm
SDC4

From conversations with Martin Bryant's mother, teachers, friends, psychiatrists and lawyers, and using police transcripts and the Bryant family history, Robert Wainwright and Paola Totaro discuss what drove Bryant to commit the Port Arthur massacre. **Free**

268 The Author's Right to Speak
May 23, 5.30-6.30pm
ST

On February 14, 1989, the Ayatollah Khomeini issued a fatwa against Salman Rushdie and his publishers over *The Satanic Verses*. The Rushdie affair introduced the question of how far free expression should be limited to avoid offending sensibilities in a complex society. Marking the 20th anniversary of the Rushdie fatwah, Monica Ali, Richard Flanagan, Anne Summers and David Williamson discuss the politics of freedom of expression, with chair Neil James. Supported by the Plain English Foundation.

\$15/\$10 Bookings 9250 1988
www.sydneytheatre.org.au

344 A Mother's Life
May 23, 5.30-6.30pm
SPC

Of all inter-generational relationships, the mother-daughter bond is often considered the most significant. Susan Varga and Gabrielle Carey discuss their recent books, which observe the mother-daughter relationship later in life. **Free**

269 Remembering David Foster Wallace
May 23, 6-7.30pm
BT

David Foster Wallace authored some of the most remarkable fiction of the past two decades, as well as spectacular journalism and essays. Kate Crawford chairs an evening of talks with Nick Maniatis, Julian Murphet and Caroline Hamilton. **Free**

270 Launch. *The Red Highway* by Nicolas Rothwell (Black Inc.)
May 23, 6-7pm
BM

Join Black Inc. for the launch of Nicolas Rothwell's *The Red Highway*, a hypnotic and haunting story that evokes a mesmerising part of the country. Launched by David Marr. **Free**

271 An Evening Under the Stars with Kate Grenville
May 23, 6-8.30pm
SHE

Kate Grenville was inspired by the 1790 notebooks of astronomer William Dawes while writing her best-selling novel, *The Lieutenant*. This talk by Kate Grenville is followed by stargazing through the telescopes. In partnership with the Sydney Observatory and The National Trust.

\$30/\$26 Bookings 9921 3485
www.sydneyobservatory.com

272 International Voices
May 23, 7-8.30pm
ST

Readings from Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie, Tash Aw, Monica Ali, Mohammed Hanif, Cees Nooteboom and Philipp Meyer, hosted by Annette Shun Wah. Includes the presentation of 2009's *Sydney Morning Herald* Best Young Australian Novelist



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Kate Grenville - 235, 271, 291, 313



Christos Tsiolkas - 277, 311



George Friedman - 70, 201, 292



Hilary Charlesworth - 284, 301



Sarah Blasko - 218, 293

awards. Supported by *The Sydney Morning Herald*.
\$20/\$15 Bookings 9250 1988
www.sydneytheatre.org.au

273 Spoken Four
May 23, 7-8.30pm
HP-CS

US poetry slam champion Sonya Renee joins three of Australia's hottest spoken-word stars, Tug Dumbly, Edwina Blush and Omar Musa. Hosted by the founder of The Australian Poetry Slam, Miles Merrill.

\$15/\$10 Bookings 9250 1988
www.sydneytheatre.org.au

274 Penguin Plays Rough
May 23, 8-10pm
UKS

In this new monthly event, young emerging wordsmiths read their work in a huge crumbly room in Newtown. Five programmed writers and five wild cards read their stories and everything is published in a zine. Presented with FBI 94.5FM. **Free**

275 Darlinghurst Nights
May 23, 8.30-10.30pm
LOW

See Event 67 on May 20 for details.

276 Late Nights at Number One
May 23, 9.30-11.30pm
NI

A relaxed wine bar, Tony Bilson's Number One at Circular Quay is the place to be for all writers and readers looking for a post-event drink or bite to eat and some very fine words. Guest readings nightly from Thursday to Saturday. Check the Sydney Writers' Festival website, www.swf.org.au, for more information. **Free**

SUNDAY, MAY 24

277 Christos Tsiolkas in Conversation
May 24, 10-11am
HP-MS

Would you slap a child who is not your own? Christos Tsiolkas talks about his blisteringly good novel, *The Slap*, where he turns his blowtorch on the belly of middle-class suburban

Australia and its notions of child-rearing.
\$15/\$10 Bookings 9250 1988
www.sydneytheatre.org.au

280 The Blogosphere
May 24, 10-11am
SDC2/3

James Maskalyk's and Christian Lander's books found their genesis in the blogosphere. Antony Loewenstein's book is about bloggers who live and write under repressive regimes. They consider the power of the blog with newmatilda.com's Ben Pobjie. **Free**

281 Changing Worlds
May 24, 10-11am
BM

From Berlin to Hong Kong to Indonesia, Steven Conte, Alice Nelson and Tash Aw's novels are set against a background of nations in turmoil. They discuss the "character" of nation in their books. **Free**

282 Shaking the Kaleidoscope or the Religious Situation of Our Time
May 24, 10-11am
ST

In 2000, Richard Holloway resigned as bishop of Edinburgh in the Scottish Episcopal Church. He now describes himself as a "Christian agnostic". Holloway has written for many newspapers in Britain and presented his own series on BBC Television. His books include *On Forgiveness*, *Looking In The Distance*, *Godless Morality*, *Doubts And Loves* and *Between The Monster And The Saint*. He considers religious belief in the modern world. Supported by Barclays Capital.

\$15/\$10 Bookings 9250 1988
www.sydneytheatre.org.au

283 Literary Mysteries
May 24, 10-11am
ST-RW

In David Ebershoff and Michael Meehan's epic novels, events from the past shed light on contemporary mysteries and their protagonists' search for the truth. They discuss buried secrets and digging up the past.
\$15/\$10 Bookings 9250 1988
www.sydneytheatre.org.au

284 Hilary Charlesworth in Conversation with Larissa Behrendt
May 24, 10.30-11.30am
SDC4

Eminent human-rights academic Hilary Charlesworth talks to Larissa Behrendt about her most recent co-authored book, *Bills Of Rights In Australia: History, Politics And Law*. **Free**

286 Traditional Bookbinding Tools at Work
May 24, 10.30am-3.30pm
PHM

Wayne Stock of Australian Bookbinders Inc answers bookbinding questions, shows samples of work and tools, and explains techniques. Accompanied by a display by Australian Bookbinders Inc. Presented with the Powerhouse Museum.
Free with museum admission (\$10/\$6)

288 Zine Fair
May 24, 11am-5pm
MCA-F

Calling all zinesters, writers who self-publish, artists who work with words and general lovers of the independent press and the arts. Sell/trade your zines or browse the wares of others. Presented with the Museum of Contemporary Art.
Free. Stall fees \$15 a table, stall bookings 9245 2484

291 Kate Grenville in Conversation
May 24, 11.30am-12.30pm
ST

Kate Grenville talks about her latest novel, *The Lieutenant*, where she again visits the period of white Australian settlement to create her characters Daniel Rooke, a First Fleet soldier and astronomer, and Tagaran, a young Aboriginal girl he befriends.
\$15/\$10 Bookings 9250 1988
www.sydneytheatre.org.au

292 George Friedman in Conversation
May 24, 11.30am-12.30pm
HP-MS

George Friedman is an internationally recognised expert in geopolitics and forecasting whose one- and 10-year geopolitical and economic forecasts have become hot



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commodities at the Pentagon and on Wall Street. Divining the events of the next century, he maps what he sees as the likeliest developments of the future.
\$15/\$10 Bookings 9250 1988
www.sydneytheatre.org.au

293 Sarah Blasko in Conversation with Bernard Zuel
May 24, 11.30am-12.30pm
BM

Singer-songwriter Sarah Blasko is one of Australia's most respected songwriters and impressive live performers. She talks about the art of songwriting with *Sydney Morning Herald* music critic Bernard Zuel. **Free**

294 Nicolas Rothwell in Conversation
May 24, 11.30am-12.30pm
ST-RW

Nicolas Rothwell is among Australia's most gifted writers. His new book, *The Red Highway*, explores death, friendship, travel and art, and evokes a unique and mesmerising part of the country. He shares his story of a quest.
\$15/\$10 Bookings 9250 1988
www.sydneytheatre.org.au

296 Wanderlust
May 24, noon-1pm
SDC4

What makes a true adventure? Is there any uncharted territory left to explore? Adventurers and travel writers Chris Bray, Lincoln Hall and David Smedt discuss. Presented with *Australian Geographic*. **Free**

298 Sydney Morning Herald Best Young Novelists
May 24, 1-2pm
BT

Each year *The Sydney Morning Herald* names the authors it considers to be Australia's best young novelists. Susan Wyndham chairs a discussion and readings with the 2009 winners, who will be announced in the paper on May 16. Sponsored by *The Sydney Morning Herald*. **Free**

299 Dangerous Ideas
May 24, 1-2pm
ST-RW

Sometimes dangerous ideas

enter the mainstream, such as the concepts that humanity may not have free rein with the world's resources, that mandatory detention of asylum seekers might not be appropriate policy, that environmental issues are not being solved by those tasked with their solution. Chris Pash, Margot O'Neill and Nicola Markus discuss their books of activism and social change.
\$15/\$10 Bookings 9250 1988
www.sydneytheatre.org.au

300 An Intruder's Guide To East Arnhem Land
May 24, 1-2pm
BM

Andrew McMillan talks about his book *An Intruder's Guide To East Arnhem Land* – part history, part journalism, part literature and part love story with a people and a place. **Free**

301 Australia and Human Rights. Issues for the Next Decade
May 24, 1-2pm
SDC2/3

Are human rights adequately protected in Australia? How can we improve the protection of human rights? Is judicial oversight of human rights antidemocratic? Which rights are worth protecting? Hilary Charlesworth considers debates over human rights in Australia. Introduced by Bret Walker. **Free**

302 David Williamson in Conversation with Andrew Upton
May 24, 1-2pm
ST

From the early sensations of *Don's Party* and *The Removalists* to smash hits like *Emerald City* and *Brilliant Lies*, David Williamson's plays have been the way Australians have known themselves. He shares a lifetime of passion with Andrew Upton. Supported by *The Sydney Morning Herald*.
\$15/\$10 Bookings 9250 1988
www.sydneytheatre.org.au

303 Emmanuel Jal in Conversation
May 24, 1-2pm
HP-MS

Emmanuel Jal was only seven years old when he was taken

from his family home to become a child soldier with the rebel army in Sudan's bloody civil war for nearly five years. Beaten, starved and brutalised, Emmanuel was put into battle in Ethiopia and southern Sudan carrying an AK-47 taller than himself. Now an internationally acclaimed hip-hop artist spreading messages of peace and reconciliation, he talks about his memoir *War Child: A Boy Soldier's Story*.
\$15/\$10 Bookings 9250 1988
www.sydneytheatre.org.au

305 Playing with the Past
May 24, 1.30-2.30pm
SPC

Susan Coleridge, Robert Engwerda, Lisa Lang and Mary Lightfoot play with the past in different ways. All awarded Australian Society of Authors mentorships, these talented writers read from their work. Sponsored by the Australian Society of Authors/Copyright Agency Limited mentorship program. **Free**

308 The Bloody White Baron
May 24, 1.30-2.30pm
SDC4

James Palmer talks about the gripping life story of Baron Ungern-Sternberg, an anti-Semitic fanatic with a penchant for Eastern mysticism and a hatred of communists, whose actions foreshadowed the most grotesque excesses of the 20th century. **Free**

309 Classical Music in Popular Culture
May 24, 2-3pm
SOH-DT

What is the place for classical music in the age of YouTube and the MP3? Is it dying or is it in the midst of a surprising revival? Alex Ross, the music critic of *The New Yorker* and the author of the award-winning book *The Rest Is Noise: Listening To The Twentieth Century*, gives a talk on the present state of an ever-evolving art form.
\$30/\$28 Bookings 9250 7777
www.sydneyoperahouse.com

311 FBI 94.5FM's Out of the Box with Christos Tsiolkas
May 24, 2-3pm
MCA

Each week on FBI 94.5. *Canvas*



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Geraldine Doogue - 313

dives into someone's record collection and talks about the music he or she loves, his or her life and how the two interact. Here it explores Christos Tsiolkas's musical inspirations. Presented by FBI 94.5 and *Cyclic Defrost Magazine*. **Free**

313 Sunday Afternoon Tea and Readings

May 24, 2.30-4pm

HRB

Join host Geraldine Doogue and enjoy a refined and relaxed afternoon with a delicious high tea and readings from some of Australia's most revered writers, Robert Dessaix, Kate Grenville and Robert Drewe.

\$55 Bookings 9250 1988

www.sydneytheatre.org.au



Cheryl Kernot - 319

314 The Philosopher And The Wolf. Mark Rowlands in Conversation

May 24, 2.30-3.30pm

HP-MS

Philosopher Mark Rowlands lived with his pet wolf, Brenin, for 11 years. By turns moving and funny, his account of their shared life offers every reason to look again at how we view animals, including human beings. He talks to Alan Saunders about the lessons on consciousness, animals and knowledge that he learned from his time with a wolf.

\$15/\$10 Bookings 9250 1988

www.sydneytheatre.org.au



Suzanne Buccalatte - 338



Tom Frame - 167, 335

315 Metaphors of Space

May 24, 2.30-4pm

BM

An architectural display and poetry reading on the theme of home and public space with Chris L. Smith, David Musgrave, Elizabeth Hodgson, Peter Boyle, Pam Brown and Andy Quan. Presented by *Mascara Poetry*. **Free**



Richard Flanagan - 268, 340, 346

316 Shooting the Story

May 24, 2.30-3.30pm

ST

Son Of A Lion was shot in a hazardous corner of Pakistan. *Balibo* recreates events surrounding the shooting of five Australian journalists in East Timor. Directors Benjamin



Bettina Arndt - 111, 331

Gilmour and Robert Connolly talk about making films in difficult places.

\$15/\$10 Bookings 9250 1988

www.sydneytheatre.org.au

317 Poetry as Passion.

A Tribute to Dorothy

Porter

May 24, 2.30-3.30pm

BT

One of Australia's most acclaimed poets, Dorothy Porter, died on December 10, 2008. She was 54 and, arguably, at the height of her creative powers. Dorothy Porter is remembered in this special event with readings by her peers of her own favourite poems. **Free**

318 Literary Activists

May 24, 2.30-3.30pm

ST-RW

Many of our greatest writers, including Helen Garner and Tim Winton, are intensely politically engaged. What drives these literary figures to become crusaders of the keyboard? Brigid Rooney explores the connection between writers and activism in Australia.

\$15/\$10 Bookings 9250 1988

www.sydneytheatre.org.au

320 Grandma Magic

May 24, 2.30-3.30pm

SDC2/3

When it comes to their grandchildren, grandmas are renowned for being short on criticism and long on love. Janet Hutchinson talks to Anne Deveson, Annette Shun Wah and Gabrielle Lord about the delights of being, or having, a grandma. Supported by the Sydney Community Foundation. **Free**

319 Creating a Participation Society

May 24, 3-4pm

SPC

Cheryl Kernot, Hugh Mackay, Susan Varga and Alan Attwood discuss the importance of community, the need for new models and the impact of the recession, the internet and social entrepreneurship. With Julianne Schultz. Presented with *Griffith REVIEW*. **Free**

321 DiVerse at the Margaret Olley. A Poetic Response

May 24, 3-4pm

SHE

Eight talented poets from the group DiVerse respond to Margaret Olley's images at the S.H. Ervin Gallery. The audience will receive chapbooks featuring the poems read at the performance. Presented by the Poets Union.

\$7/\$5 at the door

Includes gallery entry

322 Scandals, Crime and Corruption

May 24, 3-4pm

SDC4

Long before the gangland wars and decades before Mr Asia and George Freeman, 19th-century Sydney had its fair share of scandals, crime and corruption. Kirsten McKenzie and Bruce Kercher, with Stephen Garton. Presented by the History Council of NSW. **Free**

323 It's All Formulaic

May 24, 3-4pm

SDC1

Aficionados of literary novels often dismiss genre fiction as formulaic. Best-selling writers Laura Lippman, John Flanagan and Margo Lanagan discuss this issue. **Free**

324 Bloggers v Journalists, Round 378

May 24, 3.30-5pm

MCA

If bloggers are all wannabe journalists and journalists are all complacent hacks, why do so few manage to cross over? Rachel Hills talks to bloggers/journalists Erica Bartle, Tim Blair, Margo Kingston and Antony Loewenstein. **Free**

326 The Science of Parallel Universes. Could There be Copies of YOU Out There? A Cafe Scientific Event

May 24, 4-5.30pm

BT

New theories in cosmology claim that each of us has many exact replicas in other universes - in theory, you could meet your identical self in an identical world. Marcus Chown and Charley Lineweaver chat with *Catalyst's*



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Paul Willis. Co-presented by ABC Science. **Free**

327 Julia Morris in Conversation
May 24, 4-5pm
ST

Julia Morris's hilarious new memoir is about moving to the UK, going broke, having too many overnight romances and learning that mojitos are not one of the five major food groups. She talks about leaving singing behind and channelling her inner Dickens.

\$15/\$10 Bookings 9250 1988
www.sydneytheatre.org.au

328 Auburn Rising. The Sky Belongs to Everyone III
May 24, 4-5pm
SO

Celebrate the International Year of Astronomy with Auburn Poets and Writers Group. This multilingual performance explores the sky as an inclusive space and probes a planet they experience differently beneath one sky. **Free**

329 James Maskalyk in Conversation
May 24, 4-5pm
HP-MS

James Maskalyk gave up his practice at a Toronto hospital to join Medecins Sans Frontieres. His assignment: a village on the border of northern and southern Sudan. He talks about *Six Months In Sudan*, his memoir of trying to heal a village on the brink of devastation.

\$15/\$10 Bookings 9250 1988
www.sydneytheatre.org.au

330 Meet the Makers of The Artist's Lunch
May 24, 4-5pm
SB

Join Alice McCormick and Sarah Rhodes as they talk about the experience of creating *The Artist's Lunch*, which led them into the homes of Australia's most prominent and distinguished artists. **Free**

331 Men, Women and Sex
May 24, 4-5pm
SDC2/3

No one outside a marriage really knows its secrets, the hidden yearnings, the love, lust and the

betrayals. Bettina Arndt and Lucienne Joy take Maxine McKew behind closed doors as they explore the sex lives of married couples. **Free**

332 Different Australias
May 24, 4-5pm
ST-RW

Mark Dapin crisscrosses Australia and meets undefeated dreamers, wild-hearted romantics, obsessed hobbyists and beautiful failures. Andrew McMillan takes us to Arnhem Land, which feels like foreign travel. They talk to Mark Mordue about their travels through hidden Australia.

\$15/\$10 Bookings 9250 1988
www.sydneytheatre.org.au

333 Morris Gleitzman in Conversation with Sophie Cunningham
May 24, 4.30-5.30pm
SDC4

Morris Gleitzman has written 27 novels for children. He talks to Sophie Cunningham about his Holocaust novels, *Once* and *Then*, and some of the more adult aspects of writing for children. **Free**

334 Launch. extempore
Issue 2
May 24, 4.30-5.30pm
BM

Issue 2 of this biannual journal inspired by jazz and improvised music features poetry, fiction, interviews, essays, photographs and a CD. Join in for the celebration, performance and readings. **Free**

335 Debating Darwin
May 24, 4.30-5.30pm
SDC1

Evolutionary theory has permeated many facets of modern life from economics to politics to theology. Is science just as fundamentalist as religion, claiming to know everything? Tom Frame and Iain McCalman examine Darwin's profound influence. **Free**

336 On Our Watch
May 24, 4.30-5.30pm
SPC

Nicola Markus believes Australia faces serious conservation challenges that are not being properly addressed by

government. She discusses the real threats to Australia's natural environment and how everyone can become involved in conserving our environmental heritage. **Free**

164 Black Politics
May 24, 5.30-6.30pm
SDC2/3

Sarah Maddison's new book, *Black Politics*, builds a picture of the past 25 years of Aboriginal political history. With Larissa Behrendt, she explores the issue of why Aboriginal communities still struggle so hard to be heard in mainstream politics. **Free**

337 Much ado about Grammar
May 24, 5.30-7pm
HP-MS

Kevin Rudd's new national English curriculum aims to restore grammar, language, literacy and literary studies to the classroom. But many argue that the old-fashioned method at the level of the sentence compromises critical literacy. Mark Tredinnick, Neil James, Michael Meehan and others debate the issue. Supported by the Plain English Foundation. **Free**

338 Launch. Hair
May 24, 6-7.30pm
BM

Join editors Suzanne Boccaltte and Meredith Jones for the launch of *Hair*. This anthology of art and writing explores the cultural and historical significance of hair. **Free**

340 The Last Word with Richard Flanagan
May 24, 6-7pm
ST

Richard Flanagan seals a week of moving words with the 2009 closing address. Afterwards, please join the writers and the Sydney Writers' Festival board and staff for a glass of wine in the Sydney Theatre foyers. **\$20/\$15 Bookings 9250 1988**
www.sydneytheatre.org.au

341 Darlinghurst Nights
May 24, 8.30-10.30pm
LOW

See Event 67 on May 20 for details.



Herald Sun
Saturday 6/6/2009
Page: 25
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Region: Melbourne Circulation: 502,000
Type: Capital City Daily
Size: 73.67 sq.cms.
Published: MTWTFs-

Brief: MUPUBLISH

The Muslim from Mudjee



THE MOTHER OF MOHAMMED

BY SALLY NEIGHBOUR,
 MELBOURNE UNIVERSITY
 PRESS, RRP \$35

This is the engrossing story of Mudjee-born Robyn Hutchinson, who converted to Islam and changed her name to Rabiah.

It's also the story of the rise of Jemaah Islamiyah in Indonesia and the Taliban in Afghanistan and the West's war on terror as seen through one woman's eyes.

Among her mentors was Abu Bakar Bashir, the Indonesian cleric jailed for his involvement in the 2002 Bali bombings. She taught English at his Islamic school in the 1980s. In 1990 she moved to Pakistan, with five of her seven kids in tow, to join the jihad.

In 2001, she became the second wife of Abu Walid al Misri, a senior adviser to al-Qa'ida, an association that brought her to the attention of ASIO.

In this meticulously researched account, author Sally Neighbour makes no judgments about Rabiah's decisions. The reader is left to admire Hutchinson's combative determination, but equally be horrified at the risks she took and her naive interpretation of jihad. **B.C.**

* Verdict: radical



Champion Post

Friday 5/6/2009

Page: 20

Section: Letters

Region: Parkes NSW Circulation: 3,200

Type: Regional

Size: 76.67 sq.cms.

Published: M-W-F--

Brief: MUPUBLISH

Born and raised in Mudgee, New South Wales, Rabiah Hutchinson seems an unlikely jihadist.

But this former country girl turned marijuana-smoking beach bunny and hippy backpacker is a veteran of the global holy war.

To Western intelligence analysts she is "the matriarch of radical Islam" or, in the words of a former CIA agent, "the Elizabeth Taylor of the jihad".

Hutchison spent four years working as a doctor in a mujahidin hospital and orphanage on the Pakistan-Afghanistan border during the Afghan jihad in the early 1990s.

She had later returned to Afghanistan under the Taliban and married a leading al Qaeda ideologue and member of Osama bin Laden's inner circle.

Her fellow jihadists know her as "Umm Mohammed", meaning the mother of Mohammed.

Today Rabiah Hutchinson is one of the most watched women in the world.

She believes she's under 24-hour surveillance, her home and telephone bugged.

She is officially designated as "a threat to national security", and prevented from travelling abroad because she might "destabilise foreign governments", in the words of the assessment by the Australian Security Intelligence Organisation.

So who is this mysterious black-veiled woman, with the broad Australian accent and fiery Scottish temperament, who has Western governments so unnerved?

This is Rabiah Hutchinson's story.

MOTHER OF MOHAMMED
by Sally Neighbour



From Mudgee to mujahid

BIOGRAPHY

THE MOTHER of MOHAMMED. An Australian Woman's Extraordinary Journey into Jihad.

By Sally Neighbour. Melbourne University Press. 358pp. \$34.99.

Reviewer: KEN HALEY

Recently, when I mentioned to a fellow journalist that I was reading Sally Neighbour's biography of Robyn Mary Hutchinson, the girl from Mudgee who became burqa-clad Rabiah, the scourge of her family as well as of people many of us think of as terrorists, he commented, "That's a ripper yarn."

After finishing this hang-on-to-your-hats roller-coaster of a life, which would have done an inventive fiction-writer proud, I endorse his view wholeheartedly.

Early on, I wondered if Neighbour had perhaps leant too far her subject's way, evoking a sympathy that would prove undeserved. This tentative impression was soon supplanted by a profound appreciation of the author's deft touch in inviting us into that subject's world – that of a girl from a broken home craving a father figure.

In "getting inside" her character, Neighbour is both dauntless and exacting. But her final achievement towers above that: she shows what draws Robyn Hutchinson into the world of rocklike faith in Islam yet leaves the reader in no doubt that her choice has endangered her children's lives and alienated most of her family.

We never lose sight of Rabiah's perspective, and can even anticipate her defence – that her primary duty is to Allah. But such a stark assertion of allegiance scarcely covers a multitude of failures to compromise in ways that most of us do just to get by with our sanity intact.

As she cowers with her children in Afghanistan, American bombers roaring

overhead after 9/11, you cannot help wishing Rabiah had not mothered Mohammed or anyone else she might have martyred on the altar of her belief. (It certainly backfired – Mohammed, on returning to Australia, rejected his mother's "protection", and – giving the cycle of familial alienation one more spin – headed for Sydney's sinful beaches, a defiant stud in one earlobe.)

At one level, hers is a routine "conversion" saga: young hedonist finds aimless life turned round, given meaning, against her will. The problem is that, from start to finish, she demonstrates such independence of mind – making her a shoo-in for ranking among the righteous – that she gets tarred, by the defect of that very virtue, as headstrong, abrasive and arrogant. She intimidates everyone in her orbit, and is almost impossible to like because she verges on being as aloof and unknowable as the God she professes to obey (or, one is tempted to add, as the Scottish father she almost never had: methinks Robyn would have made a truly terrifying Presbyterian).

She once reproached fellow travellers on an Indonesian train for not sitting on the floor: "Why do you sit on a chair when the Prophet never did?" En route from Mudgee to mujahid, she even chided the Bali bombers' "spiritual leader", Jemaah Islamiyah founder Abu Bakr Bashir, in similar terms.

The terrorist guru knew when he'd met his match: next time they met, he'd got rid of the chairs.

When Rabiah approved the marriage of her 10-year-old daughter to a man twice her age, those carefully tied knots of sympathy unravel.

How can you sympathise with someone who refuses to attend her mother's funeral not only because she opted for cremation, which we are told is sacrilege in Islam but, in the daughter's words, because "You're not permitted to pray for forgiveness for people who die in disbelief... if she didn't attain paradise, then it was her choice"?

This biography of an Australian iconoclast is accessible and provocative. At few points did I find myself asking, "How could that be?" One was when Rabiah, fleeing post-9/11 Afghanistan, was placed under "house arrest" yet allowed to go out and buy food.

Even as Neighbour depicts a woman who displayed reckless disregard for her children, we are shown another side of Rabiah that can still elicit a grudging admiration. On seeking refuge in Australia's Tehran embassy, only to be dismissed as a nuisance, she uses her sole phone call to reach a Sydney solicitor and soon the embassy is treating her like a VIP. Australia wanted its renegade "terrorist-loving" daughter back but she did not return the compliment. A few pages later, she is protesting about the removal of her civil rights in "a society I hate".

It is a dilemma that, after her global quest for certainty, Hutchinson is back in her native land, but so dissociated from it, that – with her passport confiscated and ASIO declaring her a national security risk – she cannot visit her daughter and grandchild now living in Afghanistan. That dilemma is unlikely to be resolved before many more years have passed.

Sally Neighbour has done a magnificent job of producing all the evidence an intelligent reader needs to judge the effects of one woman's commitment to her adoptive faith. The only danger her account presents is that those Australians hostile to the many mainstream Muslims who make up a rich strand of our national fabric might use Hutchinson's story as an excuse to prejudge those ethical, quietist Muslims living and working among us.

What this accomplished author has done invites judgment without itself being judgmental. This is one hell of a modern morality play: I only wish it were possible to pretend there will be a happy ending.

Ken Haley is a Walkley Award-winning journalist.



Canberra Times
Saturday 9/5/2009
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Brief: MUPUBLISH
Page 2 of 2



Rabiah Hutchinson
as seen on ABC
television in the
2008 documentary
Jihad Sheilas.



Hacks find escape between the covers

Sally Jackson

AS a journalist, Susan Duncan lived her life to a deadline and never thought of writing anything she wasn't assigned to do.

Ten years ago, however, a cancer diagnosis and the deaths of her husband and her brother spurred the former *Australian Women's Weekly* and *New Idea* editor to write for herself for the first time. The result, *Salvation Creek*, became a surprise national best-seller.

"As a journalist you are always writing for the subs and for the space and for the time and for 1000 reasons and none of them for yourself," Duncan says.

"When you sit down and write something for yourself, you're writing the way you want to write (and) you can put your heart into it. I still find journalism great fun, but this was just rewarding on every level."

Duncan is far from alone, with the increasing number of journalists turning their hands to book-

length non-fiction creating a thriving publishing sector.

"There have always been journalists writing books (but) it has increased over the last decade," says Shona Martyn, publishing director of HarperCollins, which has 30 books written by journalists coming out between now and Christmas.

"The great thing about journalists is they are very deadline-focused. The negative can be when they (realise) how difficult it is to write 100,000 words when you're used to writing 1000."

Media types publishing this year include journalist George Negus; ABC journalists Margot O'Neill, Caroline Jones and Sally Neighbour (who also writes for *The Australian*); Fairfax Media journalists Peter FitzSimons, Peter Hartcher, Robert Wainwright, Paola Totaro, Ellen Connolly, Kate Askew and Gerard Ryle; News Limited journalists Paul Kelly, Garry Linnell, Caroline Overington, Murray Waldren, Nicolas Rothwell. Lisa Davies

and Ian McPhedran; and assorted others, including Mia Freedman, Sean Doherty and Tony Maniatty.

Freelance writer Gideon Haigh, whose books include the award-winning *Asbestos House* — *The Secret History of James Hardie Industries*, believes many journalists feel stifled by the limitations of their medium.

"There are a lot of journalists who are better than the media organisations they work for," he says. "And one of the consolations in dealing with their frustrations is to take a year off to write a book."

Reporters are turning their hands to all types of books, including memoir, travel, business and political writing. The most popular genre, for writers and readers alike, is the "ripped from the headlines" book, usually arising from a crime story.

If it's juicy enough, today's page-one yarn is odds-on to become tomorrow's beach read, with most major news narratives

Continued — Page 36

BUY LINES

Best-selling books by journalists

Rank	Title	Author	Sales*
1	<i>Almost French: A New Life in Paris</i>	Sarah Turnbull,	191,000
2	<i>Underbelly: The Gangland War</i>	John Silvester & Andrew Rule	186,000
3	<i>Holy Cow!: An Indian Adventure</i>	Sara MacDonald	101,000
4	<i>Tobruk</i>	Peter FitzSimons	97,000
5	<i>The Great War</i>	Les Carlyon	93,000
6	<i>Gallipoli</i>	Les Carlyon	92,000
7	<i>Kokoda</i> (Hardback)	Peter FitzSimons	88,000
8	<i>Kokoda</i> (Paperback)	Peter FitzSimons	83,000
9	<i>Leadbelly: Inside Australia's Underworld Wars</i>	John Silvester & Andrew Rule	74,000
10	<i>Who Killed Channel 9?</i>	Gerald Stone	70,000
11	<i>Salvation Creek</i>	Susan Duncan	59,000
12	<i>Jonestown</i>	Chris Masters	56,000
13	<i>The World from Islam</i>	George Negus	47,000
14	<i>Underbelly: Tale of Two Cities</i>	John Silvester & Andrew Rule	44,000
15	<i>Kochie's Best Jokes</i>	David Koch	39,000
16	<i>The House at Salvation Creek</i>	Susan Duncan	37,000
17	<i>The Amazing SAS</i>	Ian McPhedran	36,000
18	<i>Vietnam: The Australian War</i>	Paul Ham	35,000
19	<i>Big Shots</i>	Adam Shand	34,000
20	<i>Steve Waugh</i>	Peter FitzSimons	34,000

*Lifetime sales from April 2002 to week ending April 25, 2009

Source: Nielsen BookScan 2009



For herself: Susan Duncan says books allow her to write with fewer time and space constraints

Pictures: Bob Pelegason



Hacks find escape between the covers

From Page 35

eventually spawning at least one book.

This year's crop includes *Born Or Bred?: The Martin Bryant Story*; *The Killing of Caroline Byrne*; *True Colours*, about Sydney bashing victim Lauren Huxley; *Ladykiller*, about con-man and murderer Bruce Burrell; and *Firepower: The Most Spectacular Fraud in Australian History*, about the "fuel pill" business scam.

Some stories hatch several books: At least four have been written about Adelaide's "bodies in barrels" murders of the 1990s and five about the 2001 outback murder of British tourist Peter Falconio by Bradley John Murdoch.

Writers of this sort of book rarely enjoy Duncan's freedom from deadline pressure. "As a general rule, the one that's out first sells best," says Martyn.

Print and TV journalist Margot Saville reached breakneck speed when she submitted her manuscript for *The Battle For Bennelong*, about the November 2007 federal election, just three days after poll night. The book was on sale three weeks later, closely followed by three others.

"We wrote the book as we went along," Saville says. "Once the campaign started, I'd write a week at a time and in the last few days I was sending (chapters) in a couple of days at a time."

Such was the competitive pressure surrounding the Bradley John Murdoch trial in December 2005 that freelance writer Sue Williams wrote in advance two versions of a 30,000-word section of her book, *And Then the Darkness*, based on a guilty and a not-guilty verdict respectively.

Nevertheless, British journalist Richard Shears was still faster, with his *Bloodstain: The Vanishing of Peter Falconio* arriving at the printers within 24 hours of the jury's verdict.

"But he probably got the worst reviews," Williams says. "Which was a bit satisfying for some of us."

Williams says she didn't know other book projects were underway when she was commissioned. "But I began to hear about it on the grapevine," she says.

Dirty tricks were played, with some

writers trying to cruel the pitch for their rivals.

"(People) would say, 'I heard you had a legal case against you because you're a bad reporter'," Williams says. "When we all met up at the trial it was really prickly."

Despite the rigours, Williams says she much prefers writing books to "asking celebrities what their favourite sandwich is".

"And the book industry seems to be going incredibly well," she says. "Much better than journalism, really."

JUST don't mention numbers. As with most authors, asking journalists about their book sales is usually about as welcome as asking how many times a week they have sex.

One person who doesn't mind talking about it (sales, that is) is ex-Wallaby, Fairfax columnist and radio and TV host Peter FitzSimons, whose string of 100,000-plus mega-sellers includes *Tobruk* and *Kokoda*.

"I could make a living out of it. I could feed my family well, yes," FitzSimons says. "And for me there is nothing I have done that remotely approaches the satisfaction and joy I get from writing books."

Among the few to rank with FitzSimons are the crime-writing colleagues John Silvester and Andrew Rule of *The Age*, whose *Underbelly* series has sold hundreds of thousands of copies and inspired a hit TV series.

Even the criminals are fans.

"Police that have raided certain premises have told us they found copies of the *Underbelly* series and similar books ... in the bookcase or on the bedside table," Silvester says.

"They're certainly true-crime fans. Although I suspect they're not paying recommended retail."

However, a six-figure book sale is rare. The average Australian book shifts about 2000 copies, a sale of 3000 is considered respectable and 10,000 makes a bestseller.

Anecdotes abound of esteemed feature writers whose books have sold only a few hundred, although getting anyone to admit to being one of them proves impossible.

"A lot of books fail to sell 5000 copies," says Martyn. "Sometimes the

rewards are not that great, especially for nine months' work."

Prod many journalist-authors and out will tumble a book-publishing horror story. One, who wishes to remain nameless, describes her experience as "like a nightmare".

"They approached me and said, 'We like your writing, do you have any ideas for a book?'," she says. "So I did an outline, we had a meeting and came up with a title."

"Then they left me alone for three months. I didn't know what I was doing. I needed some guidance. I've blocked a lot of it out."

At least her book saw the light of day. After 18 months of research and writing, freelancer Brendan Shanahan's 70,000-word *Poodles on Prozac*, about controversial Perth socialite Rose Hancock-Porteous, never made it to the printer after its prospective publisher suddenly realised that — surprise — it might pose defamation problems.

"They were advised by their lawyers she was going to be a high legal risk," says Shanahan. "Which annoyed me, because I had already told them that."

And then there are the critics to cope with. Even FitzSimons' sales haven't protected him from the odd critical pummelling, usually directed at his novel-like writing style.

"It is not an approach that pleases everyone. So be it," he acknowledges, unconcerned.

One journalist-cum-author, who has himself dished out a number of scornful reviews over the years, was surprised by his own "totally un-cool response" when he found himself on the receiving end of one.

"I had just left the paper in which it appeared (and that) made me suspect a hatchet job," he says, speaking on condition of anonymity.

"Heck, I still suspect a hatchet job. And I can still explain at great length why the review was sub-standard and impregnated with malice."

"I took away from (the) experience an important lesson: quality journalism is an under-rated product, in the public eye, and book production over-rated."

And there's probably a book in that, somewhere.



FitzSimons



Williams



Martyn



Silvester



Shelf Talk

Shelf Talk

Poet's Corner

Auckland University Press is the bringer of poetic delights this month with three new collections. Acclaimed Wellington writer Chris Price draws on music, science and history in 'luminous performance' *The Blind Singer*; James K Baxter's classics are collected by Sam Hunt—poems that have made an 'indelible impression on the grooves of his brain and tongue'—in *James K Baxter Poems*; and Michele Leggott charts her year as New Zealand Poet Laureate, through celebration, mourning, travel, friends, history, feasts, nature and more, in *Mirabile Dictu*.

Giramondo released two new poetry titles in April, Kate Middleton's illuminations on the intensity of everyday life *Fire Season*; and Adam Aitken's fourth collection *Eighth Habitation*.

Another you may have missed is the first in Halstead Press' 'Poets and Perspectives' series, which combines individual poets' best works with essays and information in the back pages. The first is John Foulcher's *What On Earth Possessed You* (March).—Angela Meyer



The short of it

Short fiction fans would get a lot out of literary journals—both established and new. All of the following publish fiction, often alongside thoughtful essays, poetry, graphic stories, photography, and illustration. There's a journal for every flavour and most are available through your distributors—enquire at the websites if you're not sure how to get them in.

The fifth issue of the stunning *Torpedo* just came out in April, with the sixth due in July. *Torpedo* is a book-sized tome of cutting-edge fiction and art. The fourth issue was a tribute to the late cult Californian writer Richard Brautigan. See <http://falconvsmoney.com>.

Established, thought-provoking *Overland* will have issue 195 out in May, featuring short fiction by Andrew Fuhrmann, Kristel Thornell and Miranda Siemieniowicz. *Overland* is always full of surprises, and issue 196 will follow-up in August with a special City of Melbourne-funded section with Australian speculative fiction writers contributing stories set in future versions of Melbourne. See <http://web.overland.org.au>.

Wet Ink is a visually pleasing journal, which mostly publishes short fiction, plus poetry, author interviews and reviews. Upcoming issues are in June (#15), September (#16) and December (#17). See <http://www.wetink.com.au>.

The May issue of *HEAT* will be *Trappers Way*, after an article by Judith Beveridge about living with Dorothy Porter in the 1980s. Short stories in the issue will be by Mandy Sayer, Luke Johnson, Vanessa Berry, Mark Mordue and Dorothy Johnston. See <http://giramondopublishing.com/heat>.

The Lifted Brow No. 5 will be out June/July. Editor Ronnie Scott says 'We've got Scarlett Thomas, Robert Shearman, Joe Wenderoth, Tony Birch, Bryce Wolfgang Joiner, a Bourke, Krissy Kneen, Christopher Currie, Tom Bissell, Tim O'Neil, Michael Hearst, Mandy Ord, James Gurney (*Dinotopia*), and best of all, a CD of Thomas Benjamin Guernsey's epic rhyming sci-fi audio drama, *Valcapella and Dwinn: A Post-Apocalyptic Love Story*, with voice actors doing the voices and a string quartet'. See <http://www.theliftebrow.com>.

The second issue of new Melbourne biennial *Sketch* will be released in May, and other journals on the scene include *Stop Drop and Roll* (new as of March); *Sleepers Almanac* (yearly, in February); *Going Down Swinging*; *Meanjin*; *Voiceworks*; *Southerly*; and *Island*.

Some other short story collections due are *Midsummer Nights* (ed. Jeanette Winterson, Quercus, May)—opera-inspired stories by the likes of Alexander McCall Smith, Anne Enright, Kate Mossa, Ruth Rendell and many more; and Tom Cho's funny, postmodern collection *Look Who's Morphing* (Giramondo, May).

You also may have missed *New Australian Stories* (ed. Aviva Tuffield, Scribe, January); *The Death Mook* (ed. Dion Kagan, Vignette Press, March); and John Bartlett's *All Mortal Flesh*.—Angela Meyer

Wet Ink
the magazine of new writing

Good sports

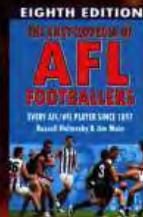
Football features strongly in the May/June sports book releases, with a smattering of golf, cricket, and horse racing thrown in for good measure.

Profiling every elite-level footballer since the AFL's first season in 1897, the eighth edition of *The Encyclopedia of AFL Footballers* (Russell Holmesby & Jim Main, BAS Publishing, May) is the code's most authoritative source of player information.

Skills of Australian Football (Slattery Media, May) explores how these professional AFL players develop their on-field prowess while, through a series of essays and accompanying photography, *Glory & Fame: the Rise and Rise of the Essendon Football Club* (Slattery Media, May) examines the club's resurgence from its lowest ebb in the '70s to its present-day position as a football powerhouse.

Featuring step-by-step instructions and swing-sequence photographs and illustrations, *Play Better Golf* (Colin Howe, Murdoch Books, May) is an all-skill-level golf coach for sports fans keen to get off the couch and lower their handicap.

Rounding out the May/June sports releases is a reissue of Australian racing commentator Ken Callander's *Good Luck and Good Punting* (Pan Macmillan, May), where he recalls the people, places, races, and horses he's encountered throughout his career.—Fiona Crawford is a freelance writer and editor.





Big Business

Autumn leaves are falling, as are temperatures, interest rates, job prospects and our faith in the economy. Thankfully business publishers provide us with a range of creative, positive, pro-active, even faith-based ways of addressing the slippery slope.

Starting with the world that we can still influence—our children and teens—look out for two new books, one complete with Facebook application for the Web 2.0 user. *Kidsbiz* (Tracy Marsh Publications, May) follows her usual bright snappy format and is chock-full of ideas for entrepreneurs aged six to 15. Perhaps the future does belong to the young!

Success in 2007 with the adult book has seen an extension of the Asset Based Thinking (ABT) franchise with *Change the Way you See Everything for Teens* (Running Press, May). ABT authors claim that changing your thoughts from deficit-thinking to asset-based thinking provides a context to focus on opportunities. You can join the Facebook group to find ideas and see examples of ABT at work.

For a touch of inspiration try *Barbie and Ruth* by Robin Gerber (HarperCollins, May). Barbie, of course is the doll that made Mattel and changed the play habits of girls throughout the 20th century. Ruth Handler is the woman who made the doll and co-founded Mattel. The context is American business and culture, but the lessons are universal. A more humanitarian, inspirational tale is that of the Fairtrade movement, and two books chart the successes and challenges of this 21st century phenomena. *Fighting the Banana Wars* (Ebury, May) is a very personal account by Harriet Lamb, current director of the Fairtrade Foundation, while *Making Poverty History* (History Press, May) is a more studied history of the radical consumer movement by economist Matthew Anderson.

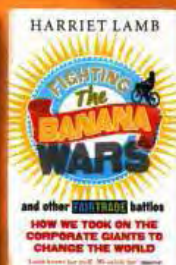
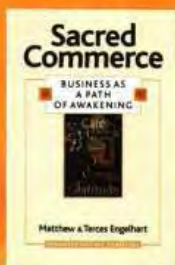
In *Sacred Commerce* (North Atlantic, May) Matthew Engleheart writes a 'how-to' book for creating a spiritual community in your workplace. Pitched at managers and HR professionals, it gives examples for mission statements, inspirational meetings and a route out of job dissatisfaction. Financial planner Brent Kessel offers similar strategies but provides eight financial personality 'types' around which an individual may base their spiritual, personal and financial planning.—Patricia (Tricia) Genat has a bookselling, teaching and publishing background, and is the current owner and MD of a national library supplier. She has a Masters in Business from Monash University.



Crime time

Isabel's husband kisses her goodbye, leaves for work, and disappears. Everyone Marcus worked with is dead. Someone screams down the phone and the police do nothing. Then she finds out the man she has been living with is a stranger ... find out what Isabel will uncover in Lisa Unger's *Die for You* (Bantam, June).

For a history-crime combo, try Imogen Robertson's *Instruments of Darkness* (Headline, June), in which mysteries unfold at Thornleigh Hall and the surrounding countryside, with brooding atmosphere 'from the drawing room to dissecting room, coffee shop to country inn', according to the publisher.—Angela Meyer



Lit-picking

There's a big buzz surrounding *American Rust* (Philipp Meyer, A&U, May). The author (apparently in the mould of Richard Ford and Cormac McCarthy) has been paid over \$400k in advances around the world. The novel is the story of two young men in a run-down Pennsylvania steel town. Running away only sees them caught up in an act of violence that will change their lives. The writing is instantly fast, bleakly atmospheric, with an invitation of warmth.

Shawna Yang Ryan's debut novel *Water Ghosts* (Pier 9, May) arrives in Australia with a trail of praise. In one blurb, author Pam Houston says this tale of intersecting lives in a Sacramento Delta Chinese farming community is 'artfully woven' and 'exquisitely modulated'.—Angela Meyer



Shelf talk

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Shelf talk

Talking Point

In *The Clean Industrial Revolution* (A&U, May), Ben McNeil looks positively at how organisations can prosper in the greenhouse age, addressing the Australian situation in a global context.

James Maskalyk worked as a doctor in Abyei, Sudan. *Six Months in Sudan* (Random House, May) chronicles not only his experiences, but what he learns about distances between individual experience. He says: 'Some of the work in repairing the world is grim, but most of it is not. Hope not only meets despair in equal measure, it drowns it'.

Mark Tredinnick's *The Blue Plateau* (UQP, June) follows the author and others' stories about settling in a difficult environment, 'where global warming has been rehearsing for some time', as it's put by the publisher. It's a lyrical, philosophical and personal exploration of place and belonging in the Blue Mountains.

The next *Griffith Review* is due out in May, no. 24: *Participation Society*, with a lead essay by Cheryl Kernot 'A Quiet Revolution' and others on the fundamental shifts in our society.

From hippy backpacker in NSW to 'the matriarch of radical Islam', the life of Rabiha Hutchinson is chronicled in *The Mother of Mohammed* (Sally Neighbour, MUP, May); and writing the memoir for her mentally handicapped 'silent' sister is Cecilia Rice, with *Always Liza to Me* (A&U, June).

The enigma of Tom Waits is the talking point of Barney Hoskyns' affectionate, critical, and detailed biography of the cult performer—*Lowside of the Road* (A&U, May).

Paul Valentis' *In Two Minds* (UNSW Press, May) covers on-the-job experiences of this medical doctor, psychiatrist, psychotherapist and traumatologist through fascinating patient stories and internal examinations of his own experience as a Holocaust survivor.

And you may have missed the evocative palm-sized historical biography *Madame Brussels: This Moral Pandemonium* (LM Robinson, Arcade, March). Caroline Hodgson was Melbourne's 'Queen of Harlotry' as the keeper of its most famous brothel. Follow her through courtroom dramas, love affairs, and more in the decadent late 1800s. —Angela Meyer



Crowd pleasers

Grace has been dumped by her boyfriend and is swimming in a sea of hangovers and disappointing days at work as an undervalued assistant at a fashion magazine. An older man comes along who wants a bit more than she bargained for, but will it be worth it? Sarra Manning writes with a fresh, youthful voice, relatable to 20- and 30-somethings in *Unsticky* (Headline, June); and in the tradition of Rachael Treasure, Fleur McDonald has a novel of love and redemption in the outback, with *Red Dust* (Arenas, May).

I Loved, I Lost, I Made Spaghetti (Giulia Melucci, Macmillan, May) is a sex-and-food memoir in New York—the loved and lost tales (with recipes) are ultimately affirmations of living life to its fullest with passion and pasta.

Two fantasy titles due out soon are Russell Kirkpatrick's third in the 'Husk' series *Beyond the Wall of Time* (HarperCollins, June); and Rhonda Roberts fun-looking *Gladiatrix*, (Voyager, May), featuring Kannon Dupree: Timestalker.

Seth Hunter's *The Tide of War* (Headline, June) finds Captain Nathan Peake torn between liberty and loyalty to his king. It's the second naval historical adventure after *The Time of Terror*. Fans of Patrick O'Brien and others of his ilk will enjoy. —Angela Meyer



On Campus

The bibliophile will be intrigued by an analysis of contemporary book culture in *The Late Age of Print* by Ted Striphas (Columbia University Press, May), an entertaining and critically comprehensive assessment of the place of printed books in our culture, in the wake of such phenomena as the 'Harry Potter' series, Oprah's Book Club and the rise of e-books.

The Animal series (Reaktion) has catalogued wildlife from the oyster to the elephant; in particular it fascinatingly examines human relationships with each creature that it focuses upon. Three new additions slither and leap onto bookshelves in May: *Hare*, *Eel*, and *Ape* look at these animals from scientific and ecological perspectives, but also through the social lens of historical and artistic interpretations.

Jeremy Mynott keeps the focus on the natural world with *Birdscapes: Birds in Our Imagination and Experience* (Princeton University Press, March). Mynott travels through a variety of geographical and cultural areas, in an engaging quest to understand the significance of birds in our sense of the world.

From wildlife to, well, arguably a different form of wildlife: Eric Beecher's collection of *Best Australian Political Writing 2009* (MUP, April) presents a diverse range of pieces, but for a more involved approach to policy making in Australia *An Introduction to Australian Public Policy: Theory and Practice* by Sarah Maddison and Richard Denniss (Cambridge University Press, July) offers a comprehensive study of how public policy is developed in Australia, using contemporary issues such as paid maternity leave and the Northern Territory intervention. —Portia Lindsay has an Honours degree in English Literature and works at the UNSW Bookshop

