

## Friday 22 May

9.45am	Theatre doors open
10.00am - 11.00am	<b>Streamed Session:</b> Don Watson: The Bush with Eleanor Hall
11.30am - 12.30pm	<b>Streamed Session:</b> Writing Family – Panel with Barrie Cassidy, Kate Grenville and Romona Koval
12.30pm - 1.30pm	LUNCH <i>Books Plus Book Shop open</i>
1.30pm - 2.30pm	<b>Streamed Session:</b> Growing Up and Other Disasters – Alan Cumming and Damian Barr with Paola Totaro
3.00pm - 4.00pm	<b>Streamed Session:</b> Anna Bligh: Through the Wall with Lucinda Holdforth
4.30pm - 5.30pm	<b>Streamed Session:</b> Michael Frayn: On Fiction with Jonathan Lethem
5.30pm - 6.30pm	<b>Live Event:</b> Writing the Past – Kim Kelly, a local author of historical fiction, in conversation with Jenny Barry (Books Plus)
6.30pm - 8.00pm	<b>Bathurst Writers' Festival Launch and Networking:</b> Enjoy a glass of local wine as we kick start the Bathurst Writers' Festival. Sponsored by Pan MacMillan. <i>Books Plus Book Shop open</i>
7.15pm - 7.30pm	<b>Performance:</b> Invisible Body – A new performance work by Fiona Green and bloggers Tracy Sorenson and Chai Palila

## Saturday 23 May

9.40am	Theatre doors open
9.55am - 10.00am	<b>Welcome to Country</b>
10.00am - 11.00am	<b>Live Event:</b> The Path to Publication – Panel. Local writers discuss their journeys
11.00am - 11.30am	<i>Books Plus Book Shop open</i>
11.30am - 12.30pm	<b>Streamed Session:</b> Imagined Futures – Ashley Hay speaks with with Emily St. John Mandel, James Bradley, Jonathon Lethem and David Mitchell
12.30pm - 1.00pm	LUNCH
1.00pm - 1.30pm	<i>Books Plus Book Shop open</i>

1.00pm - 1.15pm	<b>Performance:</b> Invisible Body – A new performance work by Fiona Green and bloggers Tracy Sorenson and Chai Palila
1.30pm - 2.30pm	<b>Streamed Session:</b> Ben Okri on his book <i>The Art of Magic</i> with Michael Cathcart
3.00pm - 4.00pm	<b>Streamed Session:</b> Give me back my Pre-internet Brain – Douglas Coupland, Richard Flanagan and Sally Andrews speak to Adam Spencer
3.00pm - 4.00pm	<b>Live Event:</b> Writing for Young People – Local Panel
4.00pm - 4.30pm	<i>Books Plus Book Shop open</i>
4.30pm - 5.30pm	<b>Streamed Session:</b> The Greatportent* David Walliams talks with Hamish Blake
6.00pm - 7.00pm	<b>Streamed Session:</b> Mistakes we've made and other lessons in Feminism – Annabel Crabb, Anna Bligh, Amy Bloom, Ayu Utami with Tracey Spicer

## Sunday 24 May

10.00am - 11.00am	<b>Streamed Session:</b> Anthony Horowitz: Moriarty with Lucinda Holdforth
11.30am - 12.30pm	<b>Streamed Session:</b> Douglas Coupland: Writing that defines modern culture with Michael Williams
12.30pm - 1.30pm	LUNCH <i>Books Plus Book Shop open</i>
1.30pm - 2.30pm	<b>Streamed Session:</b> Evie Wyld: All the Birds Singing with Geordie Williamson
3.00pm - 4.00pm	<b>Streamed Session:</b> The Books that Exploded (and why we fell in love): Liane Moriarty, Graeme Simsion and Terry Hayes with Leigh Sales
4.30pm - 5.30pm	<b>Live Event:</b> The Joy of Blogging – Local Panel
6.00pm - 7.00pm	<b>Streamed Session:</b> 2015 Closing Address – Helen Macdonald: On Looking at Nature
7.00pm - 7.45pm	<b>Local Closing:</b> What's next for Bathurst Writers' Festival
7.45pm - 8.30pm	<i>Books Plus Book Shop open</i>

## STREAMED SESSIONS PROGRAM NOTES

### Friday 22 May

#### **Don Watson: The Bush**

Every so often a book comes along that forces us to rethink our most basic assumptions. Don Watson's latest work is one of those books. A poetic tour de force, *The Bush: Travels in the Heart of Australia*, is a celebratory exploration of the outback. Part historical rumination, part poetic yarn, it is filled with a rich sense of wonder. Join Don as he speaks with ABC Radio's Eleanor Hall on a topic close to the hearts of many writers and readers.

#### **Writing Family: Grenville, Koval and Cassidy**

How do you write the truth about your own family? How do you draw the line between candour and privacy, reality and perception, memory and emotion? Caroline Overington talks to three of Australia's favourite writers about the delicacies, drawbacks and rewards of writing about family. Barrie Cassidy's *Private Bill* recounts the history of his parents' relationship and their dramatic experience of WWII. Ramona Koval's new memoir, *Bloodhound*, is about the search for her biological father, and Kate Grenville's *One Life* is based on fragments of a memoir left behind by her mother.

#### **Growing Up and Other Disasters: Cumming and Barr**

As boys growing up in Britain, both Alan Cumming (*Not My Father's Son*) and Damian Barr (*Maggie and Me*) experienced the kind of childhoods no one would wish for. Each in his own way managed to escape his abuser and find happiness on the other side of heartache. Alan and Damian use humour to overcome darkness, yet they don't shy away from confronting trauma. They share their darkest days and moments of catharsis in an engaging conversation with Paola Totaro.

#### **Anna Bligh: Through the Wall**

Anna Bligh spent 17 years in the rough world of the Queensland Parliament, becoming the state's first female premier in 2007. She led Queensland through Australia's greatest natural disaster, but was roundly routed in the 2012 election. And her battles were far from over. She was forced to call on her strength when she was diagnosed with cancer soon after leaving politics. Anna's memoir, *Through the Wall*, is written with her trademark warmth, intelligence and humour, all of which she brings to the stage in a candid conversation with Lucinda Holdforth.

#### **Michael Frayn: On Fiction**

Author of over 10 novels, including *Skios*, *Headlong* and *Spies*, British writer and playwright Michael Frayn has seen both critical and commercial success in his long and illustrious career. He was awarded the Writers Guild of Great Britain Lifetime Achievement Award in 2010. At 81, Michael's still publishing new material (his latest is a book of playlets called *Matchbox Theatre*). Michael sits down for a discussion about his fiction with one of America's most acclaimed novelists, who's also a great admirer of Michael's work, Jonathan Lethem.

### Saturday 23 May

#### **Imagined Futures**

A planet ravaged by climate change. A global population struck down by a fatal flu pandemic. The fictional future is a vision plagued with dystopian disaster. Why are so many of our finest novelists obsessed with the disquieting question: what next? Are these strange realities just sophisticated thought experiments or covert calls to action? Ashley Hay speaks with four writers who push the boundaries of imagined futures to reveal the anxieties of today: Emily St John Mandel, Jonathan Lethem, James Bradley and David Mitchell.

#### **Ben Okri: The Age of Magic**

Man Booker Prize-winner Ben Okri has described his first novel in seven years as 'a little touch of wonder'. The Nigerian-born novelist, who rose to international fame with *The Famished Road*, takes us on a strange and mystical journey with his latest work, *The Age of Magic*, in which a group of filmmakers make a documentary about arcadia. Presenter of ABC RN's *Books and Arts* Michael Cathcart talks to Ben about dreams, demons and the 'lost magic of life'.

#### **Give Me Back My Pre-Internet Brain**

Does leaving your smart phone at home make you feel panicked? Maybe its absence feels like a guilty pleasure. Today, a life without the internet is like a life without reality. We have taught our brains to expect connectedness, instantaneous answers and constant entertainment. We no longer get bored, or know how to. Most of us have spent over 10,000 hours online and it has changed the way we think, act and relate to one another. Cultural critic Douglas Coupland, novelist Richard Flanagan and cognitive scientist Sally Andrews speak to Adam Spencer about the ultimate brain teaser: have we reached a point of no return, and what have we given up without noticing?

## STREAMED SESSIONS PROGRAM NOTES

### **The Greatportent\* David Walliams**

It is with great poomp\* and maximest\* excitement that we bring you hugalumptious\* children's author David Walliams in conversation (and silly antics) with big kid, Hamish Blake. David Walliams is one of the world's bestselling children's authors. His debut children's book, *The Boy in the Dress*, took the literary world by storm. David has continued to win legions of adoring young fans with his fantmazingillicious\* stories and bestmentiousness\* characters ever since.

\*Made-up word ALERT x5

### **Mistakes We've Made and Other Lessons in Feminism**

Even the most intelligent, motivated and good-humoured souls would find it difficult to solve gender inequality within the space of an hour. But they *could* vent cathartically about everything that's gone wrong in their lives, and the extent to which the world at large has been unhelpful or surprisingly accommodating. Writer and common sense crusader Annabel Crabb, novelist Amy Bloom, former Queensland premier Anna Bligh and Indonesian activist Ayu Utami speak with Tracey Spicer in an evening of feminist dos, don'ts, been theres and done thats.

## **Sunday 24 May**

### **Anthony Horowitz: Moriarty**

Anthony Horowitz has a long list of credits, from bestselling children's books to creating the hugely popular TV series *Foyle's War* and re-imagining the coolest figure in fictional espionage, 007. Most recently he's doffed his deerstalker to Arthur Conan Doyle with two new novels, *House of Silk* and *Moriarty*, featuring Sherlock Holmes, the world's most famous detective. Lucinda Holdforth gets this master of literary disguise to crack open his case files.

### **Douglas Coupland: Writing that Defines Modern Culture**

Douglas Coupland coined the term Generation X, and is arguably the voice of modern popular culture, defining it as much as reflecting it through his art and many books. A man of manifold opinions, Douglas is also a prolific visual artist and is now living in Paris as Google's first Artist in Residence. He is also a columnist for the *Financial Times* of London. Douglas speaks to Michael Williams about his vision of all our futures.

*Supported by the Consulate General of Canada, Sydney*

### **Evie Wyld: All the Birds, Singing**

Winner of the 2014 Miles Franklin Award, *All the Birds, Singing* is a haunting, witty and intricately layered work. Evie Wyld's second novel follows a shearer called Jake as she runs away from an unknown past with her loyal dog. *The New York Times Book Review* has called it 'swift and assured and emotionally wrenching'. Geordie Williamson sits down with Evie as she returns to Sydney for the first time since winning the Miles Franklin.

*Supported by UNSW Arts & Social Sciences*

### **The Books That Exploded (and Why We Fell in Love)**

Sometimes authors just get it right. Liane Moriarty (*Big Little Lies*), Graeme Simsion (*The Rosie Effect*) and Terry Hayes (*I Am Pilgrim*) have managed to join the select group of Australian authors who have had blockbuster success locally and overseas. Their books have struck a nerve with readers everywhere, from Liane's warm and witty suburban dramas, to Graeme's irresistibly quirky romantic comedies and Terry's heart-stopping take on the espionage thriller. ABC 7.30's Leigh Sales finds out the secrets behind the stories you couldn't put down.

### **2015 Closing Address Helen Macdonald: On Looking at Nature**

Helen Macdonald, winner of the Costa Book of the Year and Samuel Johnson Prize for Non-Fiction for *H is for Hawk*, delivers the 2015 Closing Address on nature's role in teaching us how to live.

Rich with anecdote and reflection, weaving autobiography with historical and literary meditation, Helen's address explores the many ways we've used natural history to tell stories about ourselves, our homes and nations, and how nature lets us speak things we cannot otherwise say. In this time of ecological crisis, might we learn to treasure nature not as a mirror or a place of refuge or escape, but as something to be loved because it is resolutely inhuman, because it is full of things that are not like us?