

The Flight of the Mind

Writing and the Creative Imagination

A major National Library of Australia conference,
incorporating the Kenneth Binns Lecture

Supported by Copyright Agency Limited (CAL)'s
Cultural Fund, the Ray Mathew and Eva Kollman Trust,
and Alison Sanchez

Saturday and Sunday, 24–25 October 2009



All details correct at time of printing
More information: www.nla.gov.au/events/flight



**THEATRE
NATIONAL LIBRARY OF AUSTRALIA
PARKES PLACE, CANBERRA**



Join some of Australia's finest writers as they explore the joys and challenges of the creative process.

How does a novelist, short-story writer, essayist or poet make the journey from inspiration to publication? Can a critic be creative? What are the challenges for biographers in recreating a creative life? And just what is the writer's journey?

Keynote speaker, Geraldine Brooks, delivers the Kenneth Binns Lecture, which is generously supported by Alison Sanchez.

Featured writers include: Steven Conte, Rodney Hall, Andrea Goldsmith, Brian Dibble, Mark McKenna, Kevin Brophy, Michael Morton-Evans, Claire Thomas, Judy Horacek, Lisa Gorton, James Bradley, Mabel Lee, Alex Miller, Peter Goldsworthy, Felicity Packard, Sophie Cunningham, Aviva Tuffield, Terri-ann White and Peter Pierce.

**An exhilarating conference of ideas for
writers, readers and anyone interested
in the creative process.**

CONFERENCE REGISTRATION

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CONFERENCE FEES

(Note: These prices include morning and afternoon tea. Lunch is not included.)

- Two days, full rate: \$110
- Friends of the NLA/Concessions/Students (both days): \$90
- One day, full rate: \$60
Please indicate your day of attendance
 Saturday Sunday
- Friends of the NLA/Concessions/Students (one day only): \$50
Please indicate your day of attendance
 Saturday Sunday

Conference venue: National Library Theatre

- Pre-conference Dinner
Friday, 23 October 2009, 6.30 pm
Cost: \$90

**Dinner venue: The Great Hall, University House,
The Australian National University**

Total Cost _____

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JAMES BRADLEY

James Bradley is the author of three novels, *Wrack*, *The Deep Field* and *The Resurrectionist*, and a book of poetry, *Paper Nautilus*. His books have won or been shortlisted for a number of major Australian literary awards. He blogs at www.cityoftongues.com. He lives in Sydney.



Randi Baird

GERALDINE BROOKS

Geraldine Brooks was born and raised in Sydney's inner western suburbs. She attended the University of Sydney and worked as a reporter for *The Sydney Morning Herald* and the *National Times*. For a decade, she covered conflicts in the Middle East, Africa and the Balkans as correspondent for *The Wall Street Journal*. The author of three novels and two works of non-fiction, she was awarded the Pulitzer Prize for Fiction in 2006.



KEVIN BROPHY

Kevin Brophy has written ten published books of fiction, poetry and essays. He teaches creative writing at the University of Melbourne. His novel, *Visions*, was shortlisted for the Vogel award. His poetry is widely anthologised. In 2009, he was co-winner of the Calibre Prize for an outstanding essay.



STEVEN CONTE

Steven Conte is the author of *The Zookeeper's War*, which won the inaugural Prime Minister's Literary Award for Fiction in 2008. He is writer-in-residence at the University of Melbourne's Trinity College. Steven's website is www.stevenconte.com/.



SOPHIE CUNNINGHAM

Sophie Cunningham is the author of the novels *Geography* and *Bird* and the editor of the literary magazine *Meanjin*. Before she was writing for a living, Sophie worked in publishing for 15 years, including as a senior publisher of innovative fiction and non-fiction.



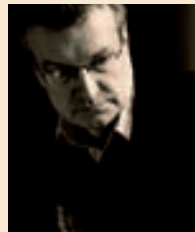
BRIAN DIBBLE

Emeritus Professor Brian Dibble's biography of Elizabeth Jolley, *Doing Life*, represents a decade of research, hundreds of interviews and exclusive access to Jolley's embargoed archives. Professor Dibble holds a personal chair in Comparative Literature at Curtin University and has published criticism, poetry and fiction, along with biographical works on William Hart-Smith and Leonard Jolley.



ANDREA GOLDSMITH

Andrea Goldsmith is a Melbourne-based novelist and occasional essayist. Her last novel, *The Prosperous Thief*, was short-listed for the Miles Franklin Literary Award. Her new novel is *Reunion*, a story of friendship, obsessive love, intellectual strivings and untimely death, published in May 2009.



PETER GOLDSWORTHY

Peter Goldsworthy divides his time equally between writing and medicine. He has won major literary awards across many genres—poetry, the short story, the novel, stage plays and opera libretti. His novels have been translated into many languages. A new collection of short stories, *Gravel*, will be published in 2010.



LISA GORTON

Lisa Gorton lives in Melbourne. Her first poetry collection, *Press Release*, was shortlisted for the Mary Gilmore Award and won the Victorian Premier's C. J. Dennis Prize for Poetry. She has also received the Vincent Buckley Poetry Prize. Her novel for children, *Cloudland*, was selected in *The Age Best Books 2008*.



RODNEY HALL

Rodney Hall has published 36 books, 13 of them novels, most of which have also been published in the USA and UK and in translation into French, German, Spanish, Portuguese, Swedish and Danish. He has won the Miles Franklin Literary Award and been awarded the Australian Literature Society's gold medal.



JUDY HORACEK

Judy Horacek is an Australian cartoonist and children's book creator who has been published both in Australia and overseas. She began life as a writer, and her work still nearly always begins with words. Her books include *Woman with Altitude*, *Where is the Green Sheep?* (with Mem Fox) and, most recently, *These are My Hands*.



MABEL LEE

Mabel Lee is Adjunct Professor of Chinese Studies at the University of Sydney and a Member of the Australian Academy of the Humanities. She has translated the work of two Chinese writers: Yang Lian, who won the Flaiano Poetry Prize in 1999, and Gao Xingjian, who won the Nobel Prize in Literature in 2000.



MARK MCKENNA

Mark McKenna is a research fellow in history at the University of Sydney. He is the author of *Looking for Blackfellas' Point*, which won the Douglas Stewart Prize for Non-Fiction and the Book of the Year, NSW Premier's Literary Awards in the 2003. The first volume of his biography of Manning Clark will be published next year.



ALEX MILLER

Alex Miller is twice winner of the Miles Franklin Literary Award and is an overall winner of the Commonwealth Writers' Prize. He lives in country Victoria with his wife, Stephanie, and writes full time. His ninth novel, *Lovesong*, will be published in November 2009.



MICHAEL MORTON-EVANS

Michael Morton-Evans has spent the past 50 years writing, first as a Fleet Street journalist and then with the BBC, before coming to Australia. He is the author or editor of eight books, the latest of which, *The Flower Hunter: The Remarkable Life of Ellis Rowan*, he co-wrote with his wife, Christine.



FELICITY PACKARD

Felicity Packard is one of the writers behind the acclaimed *Underbelly* television series. She has won two Australian Writers' Guild Awards and the Queensland Premier's Literary Award (television writing). Felicity also teaches in the Faculty of Arts and Design at the University of Canberra. She is currently working on the third series of *Underbelly*.



PETER PIERCE

Peter Pierce is Honorary Research Fellow and Professor at the National Centre for Australian Studies, Monash University. He is a critic, reviewer and author, whose books include *Australian Melodramas: Thomas Keneally's Fiction*, and *The Country of Lost Children*. He also edited *The Cambridge History of Australian Literature*.



CLAIRE THOMAS

Claire Thomas is a Melbourne-based writer whose short stories have been published in various literary journals, including *Meanjin*, *Island* and *Overland*. Her first novel, *Fugitive Blue*, recently won the Dobbie Award for Women Writers and was longlisted for the Miles Franklin Literary Award in 2009.



AVIVA TUFFIELD

Aviva Tuffield has worked in publishing for more than a decade, mainly as an editor. She is currently Fiction Acquisitions Editor at Scribe Publications, where she is establishing an Australian fiction list. Previously, she was Deputy Editor at *Australian Book Review* and has written literary features and reviews for a number of newspapers and journals.



TERRI-ANN WHITE

Terri-ann White is a Professor at The University of Western Australia, and the Director of its Institute of Advanced Studies and UWA Press. Formerly an independent bookseller, Terri-ann's stories and other writing have been published widely. Over the past two decades she has been a passionate collaborator with other artists: dancers, visual artists, musicians.

6.30 PM THE GREAT HALL,
UNIVERSITY HOUSE,
AUSTRALIAN NATIONAL UNIVERSITY

Join some of Australia's best writers for an evening of fine food, wine and conversation. Featuring a performance by musical comedy band Tripod.

DAY ONE—SATURDAY 24 OCTOBER 2009

9–9.50 AM REGISTRATION

9.50–10 AM WELCOME AND OPENING REMARKS
Sir James Gobbo, AC, CVO
Chair, National Library of Australia Council

10–11 AM SESSION 1: KENNETH BINNS LECTURE:
HEARING VOICES AND OTHER CLOSE
ENCOUNTERS WITH THE DEAD
Supported by Alison Sanchez
How does an historical novelist capture the sound of voices from the past, especially the illiterate, the marginalised and those otherwise absent from the written record of history?
In this keynote address, **Geraldine Brooks** talks about her journey in search of the lost.

11–11.30 AM MORNING TEA

11.30 AM–12.30 PM SESSION 2: CREATING FICTION FROM
'FACT': HISTORY AS INSPIRATION
How do writers transmute real events into fiction? How do the events of writers' lives inspire their fiction? When does 'fact' become 'fiction'?
What a Plunge! Exploring Truths in Fiction—**Andrea Goldsmith**
Walking into Fiction—**Steven Conte**
Advice from Robert Graves—**Rodney Hall**
Chair: **Zoe Rodriguez,**
Copyright Agency Limited

12.30–2 PM LUNCH

2–3 PM SESSION 3: RECREATING A CREATIVE LIFE
Hazel Rowley has suggested that to be a biographer is to be 'part historian, part detective and part novelist'. Three biographers consider the challenges of recreating a creative life on the page.
Elizabeth Jolley: 'Complexly Remembered'—**Brian Dibble**
The Flower Hunter: The Search for the Elusive Ellis Rowan—**Michael Morton-Evans**
Manning Clark MS7550: Writing the Biography of an Historian—**Mark McKenna**
Chair: **Margy Burn,**
National Library of Australia

3–3.30 PM AFTERNOON TEA

3.30–4.30 PM SESSION 4: WRITING ACROSS
BOUNDARIES
Writers cross many boundaries—between fact and fiction, between genres or between social and political points of view. Three writers explore truth, sincerity and artistic conventions.
Is That What Really Happened? Truth and Fiction in Writing *Underbelly*—**Felicity Packard**
White Gloves, Dusty Ground and a Bit of Serendipity: Researching *Fugitive Blue*—**Claire Thomas**
Pretence, Sincerity, Convention: Trick-riding Three Horses at Once—**Kevin Brophy**
Chair: **Nigel Featherstone, Writer**

DAY TWO—SUNDAY 25 OCTOBER 2009

9.30–10 AM REGISTRATION

10–11 AM SESSION 5: FROM INSPIRATION TO
PUBLICATION
Where do ideas come from? How does an idea become a published work? What is the future of writing in a world where publishing is taking many new forms?
Don't Look Down—**Judy Horacek**
Foolscap—**Lisa Gorton**
New Forms and New Technologies:
Some Thoughts About the Future of Writing—**James Bradley**
Chair: **John Leonard, John Leonard Press**

11–11.30 AM MORNING TEA

11.30 AM–12.30 PM SESSION 6: RECREATING OTHER
PEOPLE'S STORIES
Creative works can be transformed through the publishing process, through rewriting them in other genres or in another language. How much is translation—either into another form or language—a task of creating a work anew?
Of Writers and Translators—**Mabel Lee**
Transformations—**Terri-ann White**
Stories: A User's Manual—**Peter Goldsworthy**
Chair: **Susan Hayes,**
Australia Council for the Arts

12.30–2 PM LUNCH

2–3 PM SESSION 7: THE CREATIVE CRITIC
How do critics contribute to our cultural and literary life? How important to good writing is the act of criticism and review? Should criticism be more valued as an important literary art in its own right? Does Australia have sufficient outlets to foster a robust critical culture?
Inflamed: Criticism and the Online Environment—**Sophie Cunningham**
The Midwife's Tale—**Aviva Tuffield**
Old Dog, Hard Road: Reviewing, Criticising, Editing, Judging Australia's Literature—**Peter Pierce**
Chair: **Jen Webb, University of Canberra**

3–3.30 PM AFTERNOON TEA

3.30–4.30 PM SESSION 8: THE CREATIVE IMAGINATION
As with happiness, inspiration resists planning. The importance of the meander in the imaginative life of the writer. Alex Miller gives the conference's closing address.
John Masefield's Attic—**Alex Miller**
Chair: **Peter Rose, Australian Book Review**

4.30–4.35 PM CLOSING REMARKS
Jan Fullerton, AO
Director-General, National Library of Australia