

New Programs

As mentioned in the November *Southern Write*, the Board and staff of the SAWC have been reviewing its services based on a recent survey of both current and lapsed members. We were heartened to hear that the majority was extremely satisfied with our activities. Many stressed the importance of our workshop and seminar program and the industry advice gained from the SAWC.

Therefore, in 2010, we will be offering an extension of these professional development opportunities. Firstly, we'll be offering a number of extended courses which will help writers shape their work. The first of these – a six-week session – will be run by Carol Lefevre in January and February 2010 (details on page 4).

Secondly, members will have a chance to discuss their work on a one-to-one basis and even gain feedback on their writing from industry professionals. We have already secured a visit by Peter Bishop, Varuna's Creative Director, who will hold interviews at the SAWC from Wednesday

24th to Friday 26th February – more details to follow in our February issue.

For those wanting informal opportunities to mix and mingle with writers, or to visit the Centre after normal business hours, the Centre will hold a regular evening coffee and chat session.

Writing desks will be made available for members, the website will be revamped to include more industry information and the newsletter will incorporate suggestions made by contributors of the survey.

In order to maintain our existing program while accommodating these changes, the SAWC will be closed on Mondays and Fridays in 2010 allowing staff to work uninterruptedly on these projects.

I wish you all a very Merry Christmas and Happy New Year, and hope to see you raring to write in 2010.

Barbara Wiesner
Director



Christmas Party Update...

Never mind the pencil or ink mentioned in our November edition, grab the white-out because the Christmas Party is on Tuesday 15 December rather than the Wednesday. The Editor would like to apologise for any inconvenience caused due to the mix-up with the dates.

Is it still the St Lucy's Party? Well, sort of, but as St Lucy's Day falls on the Sunday we decided that it would be a bit remiss of us to invoke our patron saint if we weren't going to have the gig on the actual day – never mind the claims of false advertising – so, like the truly agnostic organisation that we are, we decided to hedge our bets. Officially it's our Christmas Party, but unofficially we're still celebrating our patron saint. Bring yourself along, together with a plate of food to share and a bottle.

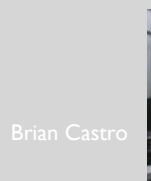
Writers' Week

The Writers' Centre would like to congratulate the following South Australian authors who will be appearing as part of the 2010 Writers' Week program:

Jude Aquilina



Fabienne
Bayet-Charlton



Brian Castro



Lolo Houbein



Jill Jones



Carol Lefevre

Writers' Week will take place as part of the 2010 Festival program from 28 February – 5 March in the Pioneer Women's Memorial Gardens. The Program Guide will be available early February.

Please note that the SA Writers' Centre will be closed during Writers' Week

Centre Information

Contributions

Thanks to the following people and organisations who donated books to the Centre:

• **Lynette Arden** for *Out of the Box: Adelaide U3A Writers Workshop 2009*, Adelaide University of the Third Age Writers Workshop Group, 2009.

• **The Australian Society of Authors** for *Australian Book Contracts*, 4th Edtn., Keesing Press, 2008.

• **Janeen Brian** for *I Spy Dad!* (illustrated by Chantal Stewart), New Frontier, 2009 and *Machino Supremo!* (Co-author Mark Carthew; illustrations John Vekeen), Celapene Press, 2009.

• **Carol Faulkner** for *Chester and Gil* (illustrated by Ann James), Omnibus Books, 2009.

• **FreeXpresSion**, vol. XVI, no. 11, November, 2009.

• **Going Down Swinging**, no. 29, 2009.

• **Kensington & Norwood Writers Group**, *Writers On Parade*, vol. 2, no. 2, Summer, 2009.

• **John Malone**, *Big Blue Mouth*, Kerrinda Press, 2009.

• **Cas Middlemis** for *Hung Out to Dry: Gilbert Toyne's Classic Australian Clothes Hoist*, Peter Cuffley and Cas Middlemis, 2009.

• **SA English Teachers' Association** for *Spring Poetry: An Anthology of Poetry by South Australian Students in Opinion*, Vol. 53, No. 5, October, 2009.

• **Joel Shayer** donated *Famous People's*

Favourite Books by Margaret Berketa, Brighton City Library, 1991.

• **Jon Stark**, *Funny As ... A Collection of Hilarious School Stories*, 2009.

• **Ken Vincent**, *Chains of Fear*, Ginninderra Press, 2009.

SA Writers' Centre Life Members

• **Max Fatchen**

• **Gillian Rubinstein/Lian Hearn**

Our Thanks

Thanks to Laurie Anderson, Jade Carrick, Betty Collins, Jennie Cumming, Jo Dey, Coie and John Dikkenberg, Joanna Goldsworthy, Yvonne Griffiths, Catherine Jones, John Malone, Jean Morris, Joel Shayer and Ken Vincent for their assistance in mailing the November newsletter to all our members.

Disclaimer

The information in this publication is presented in good faith as a service to SA Writers' Centre members. While the information is believed to be correct, the Centre takes no responsibility for its accuracy. No liability is accepted for any statements of opinion or any error or omission. Advertising material is accepted for this newsletter but such acceptance does not imply endorsement by the Centre.



Wheelchair/Lift Access to SAWC

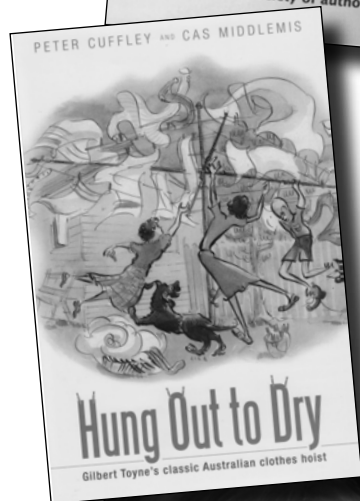
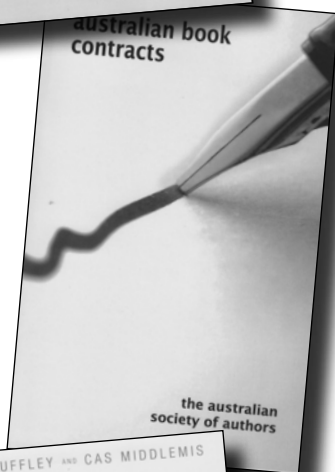
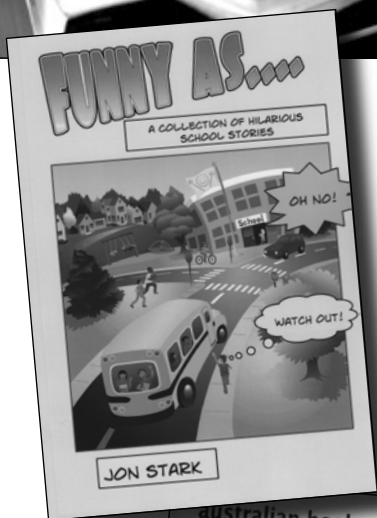
Wheelchair access to the SA Writers' Centre is available at the 26 York Street rear entrance. Alternatively, come in from Rundle Street via Caffe Brunelli, proceed towards the toilets and take the door to your left to reach the lift.

Thanks to SAWC sponsor:



February issue *Southern Write*
Copy deadline:
5pm, 15 January 2010

Email material to: comms@sawc.org.au
Post to: 'Attention Editor', PO Box 43,
Rundle Mall, Adelaide 5000.



Board's Eye View

SAWC Board Member **Ray Tyndale** looks at the Scottish poetry scene and how their model might apply to South Australia.

I've just got back from three months overseas (I know, lucky me!) spent mostly in Scotland and there were several things I noticed in the literary scene 'Over There' that struck me as useful to think about from the perspective of writing creatively in South Australia.

In Scotland the landscape is wild and the politics are hot and tourists are relieved of as much of their cash as possible. Tourists come for the wild landscape as well as the castles and loch monsters and haggis (and Rick Stein's fish, of course). And this year they have also been coming for the 250th anniversary of the birth of a poet. Yes, the Scottish diaspora and the foreign tourists have been inveigled to Scotland for the 'Homecoming' in 2009, to celebrate their favourite poet, Robbie Burns.

The new Scottish Parliament is fiercely nationalistic, quite cashed up compared to the rest of Britain (mostly on the strength of North Sea oil) and anxious to promulgate all things Scots. Ready to ditch England (particularly) as a poverty-stricken neighbour and a nuisance of a money-drain, they have put a lot of effort into tempting holidaymakers from across the border who can't afford their usual trips to the Costa del Sol. And they have been luring them with the promise of good whisky, exciting history and poetry.

Not only has the poetry of Robbie Burns seen a resurgence in recent years (few would deny that for many years the high spot of Burns Night was the haggis not the poems) but the whole poetry scene in Scotland is encouraging, to say the least. Like South Australia, Scotland has vast areas of very sparse population, with harsh climate conditions and some difficulties with communications. There is high unemployment among the young, a floundering education system and more than one language spoken – Scots, cultivated English, Gaelic and Doric. And poetry is being utilised by the Parliament and the education system to excite the young (some great rapping and slamming going on), re-unite communities and

develop a pride in the use of the Scottish languages.

I spent a lively evening in Stromness, way up north in the Orkney Islands, at a packed poetry reading organised by the Scottish Poetry Library (www.spl.org.uk). The readings were in English and Gaelic and Scots – no attempt was made at the Doric so far from its home in north-east Scotland – and the guest speaker read from her own work as well as that of any number of contemporary Scottish poets. There was a fabulous selection of books and pamphlets by Scottish poets (and also overseas poets writing about Scotland, including Polish and New Zealand poets), all of them from the Scottish Poetry Library, which claims to hold copies of every poetry book and pamphlet or chapbook published by Scottish poets or about Scotland.

And nobody sneers at self-publishing: the preparation of small pamphlets is encouraged and, if they are illustrated, so much the better.

I found myself admiring the way such a small country with a population of just over 5 million altogether, and neither of its two major cities Edinburgh and Glasgow even half the size of Adelaide, can encourage its poetry in such an effective way.

And I found myself thinking of the fantastic collection of poetry books, pamphlets and chapbooks held in the library at the SA Writers' Centre and how many more poetry books and pamphlets there are quietly sitting on the shelves of relatives and friends of writers who have produced just a few copies. It would be so good to make a comprehensive collection of contemporary South Australian poetry, and to have the financial support of government signifying their pride, and the pride of the community in that collection. That collection is well on its way at the Writers' Centre.

And it would be so good to tour that collection to our regional and rural centres, with guest readers to give country schoolchildren and tentatively interested



adults a taste of what South Australian poets are writing about us, our state, our landscape and our community.

Would need some funding of course. But if the Scots can do it ...

'Always read stuff that will make you look good if you die in the middle of it.'

– P J O'Rourke

'I always read the last page of a book first so that if I die before I finish I'll know how it turned out.'

– Nora Ephron

'I wrote my first novel because I wanted to read it.'

– Toni Morrison

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Writers' Café

Carol Lefevre resolves to get inspired this summer and invites us to join her.

The holiday season is almost upon us with its pleasures and excesses, its tinsel and jingly tunes. It is not usually a time of year that is conducive to making progress with a novel, I find, since my mind is always more than half distracted by shopping lists, by entertaining visitors and family and trying to keep the garden alive. Thankfully, Christmas always brings a windfall of new books to fill those oddly disorienting days at the end of December when I can't seem to settle to anything; in December my writing stagnates, as inspiration sinks into the doldrums.

But January is another story, it's a time of resolutions, of clean slates and beginnings; the New Year has an energy about it that can carry you halfway through the year. I like to think of Isabel Allende sitting down to begin the first draft of a novel, which she does each year on the 8th of January, a habit that may have something to do with tapping into the power-surge that marks the start of a brand new year. Personally, my writing resolution for 2010 is to begin as I mean to go on – to be positive, methodical, scornful of pencil sharpening and procrastination, mindful of Chaucer's wry yet wistful observation of 'the lyf so short, the craft so long to lerne.'

This year there is Writers' Week to look forward to, and that is always profoundly energising. In the run up to it I will be leading a series of SAWC workshops, helping a group of writers to make the most of their own New Year's writing resolutions. The Writers' Café is designed for writers who are seeking an injection of energy and inspiration and are willing to put the hours in. Ideally, participants will bring along a work-in-progress but they may also choose to concentrate on creating new material. The sessions will be split between three craft tutorials and three workshops in which participants will receive written feedback on their work from the group, as well as from me.

Subjects covered in the tutorials will include shaping dialogue, balancing description, summary and scenes, writing a

compelling beginning, working with tense and point of view, choosing details that count, creating suspense, as well as other topics that may arise within the group. Participants who have a prose work-in-progress may decide to work intensively on one particular section, perhaps the first chapter of a novel, making the most of this opportunity to receive ongoing feedback following revision. Alternatively, they may prefer to workshop three separate pieces.

My aim will be to gather together a group of compatible writers and encourage them to both give and receive constructive feedback within a safe and respectful environment. Group workshoping has been at the heart of many famous writing programs; it does require complete commitment and a certain amount of stamina from those participating, since they will be reading their colleagues' work in the week between workshops, as well as making their own revisions. With realistic word limits put in place at the outset, this should be quite doable for us all, and well worth the effort. In my experience, workshoping is a dynamic activity that helps shape and polish prose in short order, and I have no doubt that it will work equally well for other writers.

As for the venues, it has been a pet theory of mine for a while now that, since the French Impressionists advocated painting *en plein air* with such startling results, artists have something to teach writers about getting out of the 'studio' and into the open air. Since most of us spend far too many hours cooped up in rooms with the door shut, hunched in front of computer screens, the Writers' Café proposes a stint of getting out into the spaces where we set our fictional characters to wander. Provided the weather is bearable for all, tutorials will take place in writer-friendly cafés around the city. We will, however, have the use of a seminar room at the SAWC, and on 'feedback' days, after meeting for a preliminary coffee and chat, the group will adjourn there, since offering and receiving comment on work-in-progress necessitates a quiet and private environment. We may also decide to utilise the SAWC facilities in the event of another heatwave.

Unlike the Impressionists, who lugged their easels, boxes of pigment, brushes and canvases across rough terrain, writers are able to travel light – a notebook and a pen being the only real essentials. Then again, a side effect of this public rather than private writing schedule will, I hope, be the opportunity for serendipitous on-the-spot observations and perhaps a new awareness of the city, both its physical landscape and the less visible realm of atmosphere. Some of the little dramas that will, inevitably, be in play around us may even find their way into our fiction, but whether or not that happens, the city of Adelaide – basting in its own juices by late January – is sure to provide us with a shimmering backdrop.

Sessions will run for six weeks from Saturday January 23rd until Saturday February 27th, with Writers' Week scheduled to open on the 28th. Places will necessarily be limited, so for this reason, and in order to ensure the compatibility of the group for workshoping, those wishing to take part should submit a preliminary page of writing when registering their interest. Applicants who are chosen to attend the Writers' Café will be notified as soon as possible and supplied with a detailed breakdown of the sessions, along with a schedule of where and when to meet. In the meantime, just get writing!



To register your interest in the Writers Café sessions, please contact Carol Lefevre: carol@carollefevre.com

Please submit one page of your writing, double-spaced, size 12 font.

The cost of the six three-hour sessions is \$330. Once selected, you can book through the SAWC.

Written a book lately?

In the New Year the SA Writers' Centre will be providing an innovative new service where any recent books by current members, providing they have an ISBN number, can be sent through to the South Australian Public Libraries network. This new initiative will tie in to our biennial 'Spread the Word' catalogue, with the information provided being used to update that publication; but, most importantly, as we will be updating titles on a monthly

basis, it will expose more South Australian authors and their recent publications to the libraries system on a regular basis.

The SA Writers' Centre will collate the information and then send it through to ALS Library Services. ALS became the first library supplier to collate and offer new title data through an electronic service to a state-wide Public Library system. They offer around 4.000 carefully chosen pre-

publication titles each month for clients to choose for their own library needs. So, if you have a recently published book that you would like to promote via our public libraries, please email Malcolm Walker at comms@sawc.org.au requesting our New Titles .doc and he'll send you out the form.

ALS Library Services website can be found at <http://www.alslib.com.au/index.html>

Tertiary Creative Writing Update

Due to lack of space we were unable to include Tabor College in our recent feature in the October edition of *Southern Write*.

Tabor Adelaide, a Christian, inter-denominational tertiary institution, has offered creative writing through its School of Humanities since 2005, with an MA programme added in 2007. They also offer a one-year undergraduate course, along with the traditional BA major in Creative Writing. Graduate students may enrol in a one semester Graduate Certificate or a one year Graduate Diploma. With a

successful portfolio, students can undertake the MA, which involves writing a major creative manuscript (usually a novel) and an exegesis (or research component) supporting their creative work. The subjects offered range from basic introductions to prose and poetry, to specialised subjects like writing for children, sci-fi, script writing, life writing, the short story, editing and publishing, drawing and illustrating for writers, etc. Several writing groups connected with the College and an annual publication of short stories, poetry and scripts by students and staff (*Tales from the Upper Room*), support the creative

writing community at Tabor. All creative writing programmes may be undertaken via distance education. For more information and contact details please refer to the advertisement on page 7.

We would also like to point out that **Flinders University** offers a Major in Creative Writing and a Bachelor of Creative Arts. For more details of what's offered in the Creative Arts Program at Flinders please visit their website – www.flinders.edu.au – or contact Professor Jeri Kroll on 8201 3400 or by email at jeri.kroll@flinders.edu.au

Wet Ink #15 e-Book Editorial

Everyone, it seems, is talking about e-books and the revolution in the delivery of text to consumers. For example, in *The Weekend Australian* of April 11-12th this year, Rosemary Sorenson claimed that the e-book revolution will probably hit Australia within a year to eighteen months, and that 'the e-book may fill up so much space on the mental shelf marked "reading" that there will be little room left for conventional books'. She cited examples of publishers and others who are participating and watching developments with bated breath. Bob Stein, of the New York based Institute for the Future of the Book, is quite adamant: 'If you think about the book as an object made of printed pages, there is no future for the book, and it's an uninteresting discussion.'

Literary magazines in Australia, faced with the cost of producing short print runs, may also be seduced by a technology that, in a perfect world, might eliminate the physical

problems of distribution and exchange. The technological revolution is of course here, but it is interesting that the 'tipping point', as it were, seems to be happening at a time of global financial crisis where major publishers (in the US at least) are slashing costs across the board – e-books are of course a brilliant way of doing that. But questions remain, such as slippery copyright arrangements for authors, and the potential for the worldwide piracy of creative work.

A whole generation has grown up with this technology, so it mightn't be an issue for them, and only one for the generations brought up with the book and for authors who want to be remunerated. So should book and magazine publishers just get with it and risk deconstructing their operations of the printed word? It is interesting to note that some Australian literary magazines are toying with the idea of going mainly online, but maybe that would destroy the very

reason for their existence as places that encourage the communal interaction of ideas, because it appears that much of the new technology is a privatizing experience. Even so, downloads of whatever type can be a part of promoting the hard copy product and part of the overall product. The question is – what are the ideas that are communicated? Elizabeth Weiss of Allen & Unwin was quoted by Sorenson as suggesting that the book as an "aesthetic object" 'is too good a technology, in its printed form, to disappear.' We agree – the book and the printed magazine are still brilliant forms of accessible technology. To oppose the digitization of books runs the risk of being seen as old-fashioned, but that, we think, is not the point. Rather, it is the content of what people are getting, via whatever technology, that is important.

Phillip Edmonds and Dominique Wilson

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The Virgin Mary and Her Oysters (or How a Story Might Unfold)

Gillian Britton contemplates the art and craft of writing short fiction.

Standing at the crowded intersection of North Terrace and King William Street waiting to cross, I only vaguely registered the woman in front of me in socks and sandals and an old-fashioned floral-sprigged frock. I wouldn't have noticed the witches' hats in their straggly irrelevant line down North Terrace at all but for what happened next: as we all surged across the intersection, the frock woman veered from the pack, picked up a witch's hat and set it down inside the front fender of a car about to turn right into King William Street. Nobody took any notice – she looked so innocuous – surely she was trying to be helpful? But of course it was anything but helpful; the car began its right turn and ground to a halt halfway across the intersection with the witch's hat wedged firmly between front tyre and fender. Traffic began to jam. The frock woman, meanwhile, had disappeared up King William Street, apparently not interested in the outcome of her malevolent act.

Who knows what she had hoped to achieve, but for me, the writer as witness, a story lies waiting in that scene, lurking among the oddities and contradictions, asking to be invented. The image of the frock woman in action springs to my mind from time to time and I ponder how I might use it, who she might become, what motives I might give her for her bizarre gesture.

Images are great starting points. I keep a store of them in my mind; if I were a more organised person I might even put them on paper or file them on my computer; I certainly know writers who do. But mine stay in my head, bouncing around, presenting themselves at myriad angles, colliding from time to time in strange and occasionally wonderful juxtapositions, generating new characters or peculiar situational twists. I carried an image for years of my mother battling uphill through a Norwegian pine forest in high heels and matching handbag, but it was too much about my mother (and my annoyance at being saddled with her on

that Norwegian holiday) for me to use it in a story. At some point, however, through that serendipitous mindplay writers love to indulge in, it melded with another image, that of a woman I knew who stuffed oysters down the fingers of her white gloves at a formal reception rather than risk the embarrassment of not eating them. An entirely new character was born (my mother would never stuff oysters down anything, particularly involving her person) and from that character a story began to emerge.

Not to say that all my stories begin with images or characters. Some seem to grow from the language itself, sentence upon sentence, using the words themselves to excavate connections and meanings. 'Rilke died and I am supposed to live with that,' landed in my head one afternoon while I was hanging the washing. It excited me, that sentence, don't know why. Rilke the character was not Rilke the poet, I was sure of that, and the voice of the narrator was male, definitely not my own. There was a vague image of a girl with milky skin and a froth of blonde hair scissoring her legs in some sort of dance on a tea crate, another

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of an orange arcing through sunlight. Rilke was named for poetry and died, so I discovered, stepping along the path of these forming sentences, listening to the shape and sound of every word, feeling them like you feel a piece of fruit for its ripeness, its rightness. Rilke threw the orange to the grieving narrator and she might have been throwing him the world.

I have to fall in love with my characters, even if I hate them. By that I mean that I become besotted with their motives and their actions, down to the tiniest detail. I crawl inside their skins and muck about in there, moving them this way and that until I can see what it is that they must do within the forming universe of the story. Of course, most of what I know about each character doesn't end up on the page, but ideally the presence of this underlying information is felt in the precise turns of phrase, the exactness and peculiarity of motive and reaction.

And this is another thing – I have to fall in love with the language too – it is the only tool I have, the only voice available with which to tell this story in all its uniqueness. It is also my gauge: what I don't know about my story or my characters becomes evident in bland or clichéd or ambiguous language, the bits that I tend to skip over when I'm re-reading because they bore me. True also for the places where the story gets stuck, or slips into wishy-washy purposelessness, predictability or stereotype. I have to reinhabit the characters and seek direction. I have to ask myself what I am really trying to say or do, I have to demand of these characters genuineness and specificity.

As Einstein purportedly said, 'If you can't explain it simply, you don't understand it well enough.' Simplicity in the context of the short story means using as few words as possible to capture the thing most precisely. There is no room for wastage – every word counts. If I find my language burgeoning into florid repetition I know I have to stop. Pace the floor a few times. Go and pull a few weeds. Study every word for its relevance. Clarify in my mind and then on the page exactly what it is I am trying to convey through those sparing, weighty words.

But also remember that these words are not meant to straightjacket the reader into an obligatory, singular understanding; the

reader's imagination and intellect should be invited into this process of unfolding; in the end it is their story as much as mine. I don't need to hammer them with information, or justify a position, or demand a particular response. To paraphrase something I read in the journal of Canadian writer Timothy Findley: don't explain, reveal. What is the difference? Something like the difference between a lecture and an epiphany, I've come to think.

I don't know why others write, but I think that I write largely to understand, to work away at the thing until it reveals itself, simply and clearly. It isn't magic, this process, but it can feel like it: a few images, a few sentences, and suddenly the story begins to unfold. I get the sense, as I have heard many other writers describe it, that the story is already there, complete, waiting to be found. Inherent in the search for it is the idea of its possible (although never quite attainable) perfection. For this the writer spends the laborious hours, days, weeks, months or years working and reworking. And no matter how long it takes, when the final form begins to emerge, to me it always feels sudden, out of the blue and very, very exciting. Of course, inevitably following that first rush of euphoria is a degree of disappointment – a story is never everything it could be, and its failures are generally about what I don't know or can't do. Still, there's always the next time ...

It feels like magic but I don't think it is. I suspect that the instinctive glimmerings and resonances that lead us down a story's trail are rooted in nothing more mysterious than our own cache of conscious and less conscious apprehensions, those things we know, in our own highly individualised ways, from our highly individualised life experiences. I suspect that anybody who yearns to write (and you have to yearn, at least some of the time – the gruelling hours of not knowing are not otherwise worth it) wants to reach into this idiosyncratic psychic grab-bag and pull stuff out for a look, give it form or beauty or whatever it requires to render it meaningful.

But there is more to it than that. There is the matter of craft: a writer has to be able to write, which, perhaps contrary to popular belief, is harder than it might appear. Ideas and words are slippery, tetchy creatures, hard to handle.

I co-edited an anthology recently, short stories and poems about Adelaide, entitled *Small City Tales of Strangeness and Beauty*. Reading the hundreds of submissions that were sent to us gave me plenty of opportunity to reflect on what makes a story work. I read good sentences employed poorly, for want of cohesive or original ideas, and I also saw great ideas destroyed by poor sentences. The stories that captured our editorial attention were those in which both elements were evident; originality and cohesiveness were combined with clearly wrought, clean, sparkling, beautiful language.

As for my own stories, I start them in the dark, not knowing. I don't mind; I view them as my teachers. I can learn from them if I'm prepared to work hard, listen hard and acknowledge where I go wrong.

As for my own stories, I start every one of them in the dark, not knowing. I don't mind; I view them as my teachers. I can learn from them if I'm prepared to work hard, listen hard and acknowledge where I go wrong. If I have the courage and discipline to start over. And over. Or to put something away until it is ready to be written. To let it float around, dissolve, reform, wash up in some completely unexpected place.

A creative act is, after all, dependent upon seeing things newly, differently, uniquely, making connections that may not have been made in quite the same way before. There are no new stories under the sun, perhaps, but there are countless ways to tell them.

I heard a story about a priest who took all of the icons from his church and threw them into the river. I love the image of the Virgin Mary and Christ floating away together but I'm yet to find the story that deserves the metaphor. All in good time. You never know what they might collide with downstream.

Gillian Britton is currently completing a PhD in creative writing at the University of Adelaide. She has been writing and publishing short stories for many years, most recently in *Meanjin*, *Wet Ink* and *Island*. In 2009 she co-edited, with poet Stephen Lawrence, an anthology of short stories, poems and photographs, entitled *Small City Tales of Strangeness and Beauty*, which was published by Wakefield Press.

Parallel Importation Update

Too busy writing to watch the tele or read the newspapers? In that case you won't have heard about the Federal Government's rejection of the Productivity Commission's findings on the parallel importation of books. ASA Director Dr Jeremy Fisher said, 'Our members ... persistence has been rewarded. Our leaders have listened. The announcement by Competition Minister Craig Emerson that the status quo 'will remain unchanged is a clear victory for Australia's literary creators.' For more information visit the ASA website at www.asauthors.org

Creative Writing

Tabor Adelaide offers a range of fully accredited creative writing programs via internal and external studies, from Higher Ed. Diploma to MA in Creative Writing. FEE-HELP available.

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Tabor also hosts several creative writing groups open to students, staff and others, and publishes an annual anthology of poems, short stories and scripts from its creative writing program.

Further information:

Dr Mark Worthing (08 8373 8777)

Dr Rosanne Hawke (08 8373 8777)

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W h a t ' s O n



Poetica December Program

Poetica is presented by Mike Ladd on Saturday at 3.05pm and repeated 3.05pm on Thursdays.

- 5 Dec The Interior Landscape: classical Tamil love poetry.
12 Dec Portland Poets: a meeting with 5 contemporary poets from Portland, Oregon.

The poetry of the 'Seven deadly Sins' returns for Summer.

- 19 Dec Lust: arranged and produced by Anna Messariti.
26 Dec Gluttony: arranged and produced by Robyn Ravlich

For further details visit the website at www.abc.net.au/rn/arts/poetica/

Sat 5 Dec: Book Launch

Adrian Rogers's *Avalon* and *Alignment*, books II and III in 'The Hidden Kingdom' trilogy, will be launched by Enzo Fardone at 3.00pm in the Atrium of the SA Writers' Centre.

Wed 9 Dec: Book Launch

Sharon Kernot's collection of short stories, *In the Shadows of the Garden*, will be launched at 6.30pm at the Tea Tree Gully library. Drinks and nibbles provided. RSVP and enquiries: (08) 8397 7461.

Thurs 10 Dec: Play Reading: *Brewing*

Robert Moore's play *Brewing* will have a public reading at 7.30pm at Higher Ground. Daniel Clarke is the director. All are invited.

Thurs 10 Dec: Book Launch

Greg Ogle's account of law suits against environmentalists in relation to the Hindmarsh Island bridge, battery hens and Tasmanian forests, *Gagged: The Gunns 20 and Other Law Suits*, will be launched at the SA Writers' Centre at 6pm.

Thurs 10 Dec: Book Launch

Acclaimed author and columnist Brian Matthews will launch Joel Magarey's poignant and funny memoir of love and adventure with an obsessive-compulsive

twist, *Exposure: a Journey*. Come enjoy free wine, finger food, music and entertaining babble in the new Mary Martin Bookshop, 134A The Parade, Norwood. 6pm for 6.30pm.

Sun 13 Dec: Hills Poets

The next meeting will start with lunch at 1 pm, followed by readings at the Bridgewater Inn. Guest readers will be Jude Aquilina and Louise Nicholas. New readers are welcome to attend. The meeting will be in the dining room in the cellar of the hotel. The car park on the bottom side of the hotel is easiest access. For information and bookings for lunch please ring Jill Gower on 8339 5119.

Thurs 17 Dec: North Eastern Writers Christmas Party and Poetry Slam

Come and celebrate the end of another fantastic year with the North Eastern Writers. Special guests will be Martin Johnson and Cathy Young, followed by a poetry slam/open mic reading. To be held from 7.00pm at the Tea Tree Gully RSL Hall. \$5 Entry. Drinks available at the bar or BYO. RSVP and enquiries to margaret@northeasternwriters.com.

Dec – Feb: The Big Book Club Summer Selection

This Summer The Big Book Club invites us as readers to explore and reflect upon ourselves and our future. The 12 titles revolve around the theme of 'Exploration' and 'Discovery' and cover Australian short story collections, young adult speculative fiction, as well as nonfiction titles that focus on sustainable living. To see what's on offer go to their website – <http://www.thebigbookclub.com.au/index.php> – and click on the hyperlink 'Tell me more...'

Tues 23 Feb: SA Writers' Theatre General Meeting

Our first meeting will be held from 7pm at the Writers' Centre. Bring along a 10-minute reading from your new play or just come along to listen and give feedback. All welcome.

CENTRE WEBSITE

....MEMBERS' ZONE

Thanks to our recent survey it's come to our attention that some members are confused about the Members' Zone on our website. It's probably worth reminding everyone that at present this area of the website only contains the electronic version of the newsletter and that to access the zone you must be registered as a 'line member' rather than a 'postal member'. If you choose to register for the 'line member' option you'll no longer receive *Southern Write* through the mail but you will be able to read it online as a PDF approximately a week earlier than postal members.

Contributions Wanted

As Barbara Wiesner outlined in last month's newsletter we'd like to involve more members in our program. We're looking for members who can run a three-hour workshop on any aspect of writing, publishing or the industry in general. If you have expertise in any of these areas that you would like to share, please send an expression of interest – an outline of no more than 200 words, along with a 50-word bio – to director@sawc.org.au or post it to the SAWC.

At the same time, the editor of *Southern Write* is seeking expressions of interest for newsletter articles. Please, no creative writing, no poetry and no self-promotional pieces. Once again, if you feel you have an interesting article that looks at an aspect of writing or publishing which we haven't covered within the last 12 months, please either email or post your 200 word outline and 50 word bio to comms@sawc.org.au

O p p o r t u n i t i e s

Queensland Premier's Drama Award 2010-2011

Entries are now open for the above Award. The judges are looking for individual or team material that is reflective of Queensland: its politics, people, culture, history and experience. Entries can be sketches, songs, cabaret elements, multimedia or a completed first draft script. The Award focuses on the creative development of the three finalist entries, leading to a staged production of the winning entry. For more details visit their website at <http://www.qldtheatreco.com.au/>

Charlotte Duncan Award for Children's Writing 2009

Celapene Press invites entries for short stories for young readers aged 9-12 years. Entry fee: \$9 per story. 1st prize - \$75, 2nd prize - \$50, 3rd prize - \$25. Winning and commended entries will be published on the Celapene Press website. **Opens 1 Feb – closes 28 Feb.** Entry form and guidelines at <http://www.celapenepress.com.au/competitions.html>

The ABR Launches a New Website

The Australian Book Review has revamped its website. The new <http://www.australianbookreview.com.au> boasts several new features, including easy online subscription options and a free archive of recent reviews.

Positive Words Magazine

Works are now being accepted on the themes 'Bad Hair Days' & 'Beginnings' for February and March. Submissions only accepted in hard copy. Send SSAE for response to the Editor, Sandra James, PO Box 798, Heathcote 3523, Victoria or email positivewordsmagazine@live.com.au

Volunteers Wanted

The Australian International Documentary Conference is looking for volunteers in February 2010. Please contact Shalom Almond on 8271 1488.

Editor Wanted

Editor wanted – at a reasonable price – for autobiography about African experiences. Please contact Ruth on 8556 8658.

Vote for Your Favourite Australian Novel and Win a Prize

Discovering the Favourite Australian Novel: the *Australian Book Review* invites you to vote in the ABR Favourite Australian Novel (FAN) Poll. Vote now and be in the draw to win one of three major prizes. Anyone can vote, but votes **close 15 December 2009**. All Australian novels are eligible – any era or genre. Superb prizes for three lucky voters. The winning novel will be announced on 1 February 2010. Email poll@australianbookreview.com.au with the author and title of your favourite Australian novel and your contact details.

Writers' Retreat: Katharine Susannah Prichard Writers' Centre

The Katharine Susannah Prichard Writers' Centre is offering accommodation for writers wishing to progress a major piece of writing. They offer accommodation and other writing facilities in the hills east of Perth. For more details please contact the Centre on (08) 9294 1872 or kspf@iinet.net.au. Further information can be found at their website: <http://kspf.iinet.net.au/>

Deadline Friday 18 December: Favourite Shorts – Armidale Playhouse Inc.

The Armidale Playhouse Inc. invites writers to submit short stories and/or play scripts to be considered for their 2010 season of 'Favourite Shorts'. This annual event is now into its fourth year. The program brings the works of both published and unpublished Australian writers to the stage, using directors and actors from the Armidale district. Submissions of play scripts and short stories up to 30 minutes in duration can be sent via email to scripts@armidaleplayhouse.org.au or to Favourite Shorts 2010, Armidale Playhouse Inc, PO Box 368, Armidale NSW 2350.

The 2010 Phyllis Primrose Whyte Churchill Fellowship

The Phyllis Primrose Whyte Churchill Fellowship is for the study of an aspect of education and/or literature. Any Australian citizen over the age of 18 can apply,

provided they can demonstrate a suitable level of achievement in the field of the proposed project and they are a resident of South Australia. Applications **close Friday 26 February 2010**. For forms or more information go to <http://www.churchilltrust.com.au/sponsors/about/phyllis-primrose-whyte/>

Need a Researcher?

Graduate – B.A. (History and English) and Honours (History) is offering to assist writers with their research. Please contact Gemma by email at jagsoden@bigpond.com

Aesthetica Magazine

The UK arts magazine *Aesthetica* will be available across Australia from the beginning of December, so keep an eye out for it in a store near you!

Copyright Clearances

The Australian Copyright Council has published a practical guide for anyone responsible for getting copyright clearances. It will prove useful for people whose main role is seeking permissions, as well as as those working on or producing short films, plays, publications or similar projects. It covers issues such as: when you need to seek permission; the sorts of rights you'll need to clear (e.g. moral rights as well as copyright); who to contact; streamlining the permissions process; and dealing with common obstacles. AUD \$40 (including GST and delivery in Australia). Buy online at <http://shop.copyright.org.au>

CAMA Emerging Arts Writers' Award

Art Monthly Australia is seeking budding voices to respond to the theme of 'Art + Community'. Open category prize: \$2000 plus publication in a special Art + Community edition of AMA in 2010. Senior School Age category prize: \$500, plus \$500 in art supplies for their school. Contact the editor by email at art.monthly@anu.edu.au or phone 02 6125 3988. Entry guidelines can be found at www.artmonthly.org.au Entries **close February 26, 2010**.

Murray Alfredson's 'To a March fly', was published in *Poets' Ink Review*, October, 2009 and 'Shields' jointly won the Friendly Street Political Poetry prize for 2009.

Elaine Barker's poem 'The Fixer' was published in vol. 17 of *The Mozzie* and 'Madeleine' appeared in vol. 28 of *Social Alternatives*. 'A memory' was published in the August issue of *Blue Dog* and is also featured on an Australian Poetry Centre podcast, which was launched for National Poetry Week 2009.

Irene Butte's poem 'At The Melbourne Cup' received a 'Commended' in the Scribblers Literary Competition.

Machino Supremo! – **Janeen Brian's** and Mark Carthew's picture/poetry book about machines – was published by Celapene Press. Her poem 'Take your partners, please!' was published in the no. 9 edition of School Magazine's *Touchdown. I Spy Dad!* was the Little Big Book Club's choice for November.

Dawn Colsey's translation from the French of Jacques Arnould's book *God vs Darwin: Will the Creationists Triumph Over Science?* was launched in Darwin as part of the 200th Anniversary celebrations of Charles Darwin's birth.

Ross Duffy's short story 'Decisions, Decisions' was 'highly commended' in *The Examiner* Port Stephens Literature Awards and his story 'Next Time Around' was 'commended' in the Scribblers Literary Competition.

Ali Cobby Eckermann's poetry collection 'little bit long time' was published this year. 'YarnUp' also published a full-page article about Ali and her book, Spring 2009.

Lolo Houbein's *One Magic Square: Food Plot Designs for All Seasons in Temperate Climates* was one of 12 titles chosen for the Big Book Club's 'Summer Selection', the theme of which is 'Exploration and Discovery'.

South Australian playwright **Stephen House** was the featured 'Author of the Month' in the October issue of the Currency Press Newsletter.

Doris Kartinyeri's biography *Kick the Tin* was read on the ABC's *First Person* program during November.

A selection of **Jeri Kroll's** poems, *felis domestica*, was published in September by Picaro Press (*Wagtail* #91).

Bruce Lindsay's *LANCIA - 70 Years of Trailblazing* was launched in October at the biennial Australian Lancia Register National Rally at Castlemaine, Victoria.

The Australian Poetry Centre has chosen two South Australian writers for their National Café Poet Program. **Kimberley Mann** will be Poet-in-Residence at Morska Villa at Henley Beach and **Amelia Walker** continues as Poet-in-Residence at Higher Ground in the city.

John Malone's new collection of children's poems *Big Blue Mouth* was published by Kerrinda Press.

Max Merckenschlager's poems 'Musquito, The Black Bushranger' and 'Says Martin Cash' have been placed first and second in this year's Rolf Boldrewood poetry awards. 'Says Martin Cash' recently won this year's Whyalla Writers Award, while 'Ben' took second place in the open poetry section of the NSW Bush Poetry championships. His poem 'The Road Scholar' has won this year's Snowy River Festival Poetry Award, with two other poems receiving 'highly commended'.

Cas Middlemis's book *Hung Out to Dry: Gilbert Toyne's Classic Australian Clothes Hoist*, co-authored with Peter Cuffley, came out in mid-November.

Dorothy O'Neill's story 'Walking on Water' was published in *Aussie Stories 2009* and 'I climbed Uluru' has been accepted for *Aussie Stories 2010*. Her story 'Life at Ilkley' was published in the

Methodist Recorder (UK) and an article 'Blood, Toil, Tears and Sweat' appeared in *Best of British* magazine (UK).

Shelda Rathmann's poem 'Puns Grow on Trees' was accepted by *Tamba* magazine.

Val Smith won 2nd prize in the Whyalla Writers' Group Short Story Competition with 'Rowdy's Secrets'.

Lidija Šimkute attended the International Autumn Poetry Festival (Druskininkai Poetic Fall) in Lithuania. Lidija's Haiku 'Obelisk of Sand' was included in the *Home for the Wind Anthology* (Lithuanian/English). Her Haiku 'Just One Endless Dance' was also selected by international judges for the 4th prize in the festival competition.

Annette Siketa's 'The Pirate of Pins' won 1st prize in the Whyalla Short Story Competition and her story 'Gran' received a 'highly commended' in the Scribblers Literary Competition.

Anne-Marie Smith's review of Adeeb Kamal Ad Deen's *Fatherhood* was published in *Flinders Transnational Literature* Vol 2/1 and the anthology she edited for MWA Culture is ... has been shortlisted for HREOC's Human Rights Awards.

Peter Waugh's poem 'Went Strange Today' was published in Canada's *Prairie Journal*.

Employment Opportunity!

Bees Knees, a children's books distribution company, providing books to school libraries, is looking for a casual sales rep to work in Term 1 and Term 2 in 2010. This is a fabulous opportunity for writers to get to know new releases and to gain a better understanding of who is buying what kind of book. If you're interested please email Kate Simpson at kjsimpson@internode.on.net

Dec 13: Ten Minute Play Competition ☞●

Eltham Little Theatre's 10 Minute Quickie Play Competition is open to 16 years+. \$1,500 prizes available. Plays will be performed in May 2010 at Eltham Little Theatre. Visit: www.elthamlittletheatre.org.au/thequickie.html

Dec 18: Hill of Content Bookshop 2009 Hal Porter Short Story Competition ●

Manuscripts must be a maximum 2500 words, typed, double-spaced on A4 paper; only title of story to appear on manuscript, with author's details on a separate sheet. \$5.50 entry fee. No entry form necessary. 1st prize \$1000. For details email pedrom@bigpond.net.au

Dec 31: Positive Words Mini-competition ☺●

Write a poem in ten lines or less, or a short story in 100 words or less including the word 'holly' at least once. Entry fee is \$1.10 in unused postage stamps. The prize is a six-month (6 issues) subscription to *Positive Words* magazine. All entries must be postmarked by 31 December 2009. Send entries to The Editor, Sandra James, PO Box 798, Heathcote 3523, Victoria. For further information about the magazine or competitions please email positivewordsmagazine@live.com.au

Jan 7: Gilgamesh Connections Fable Competition ★●

Claypots and Gilgamesh Connections are running a literary competition of fables in conjunction with St Kilda Festival's Live n' Local program. 1st prize is \$1001 and offer of publication in a book of contemporary fables to be published by Gilgamesh Connections. 2nd and 3rd place-getters will also be offered publication. Judges will favour work which reflects a timeless quality and relates to a universal human condition. Fables must be in English, previously unpublished and no

more than 1000 words. Entry is free. Email harriet@gilgameshconnections.net for details and entry forms.

Jan 8: Adelaide Plains Poetry Competition ★●

Adelaide Plains Poets' annual poetry competition offers a \$500+ prize pool, with no entry fee for Primary School or Secondary School students. \$5.00 entry fee for the Open Section. Contact Carolyn Cordon on (08) 8527 2412, jeebers@bigpond.com or 30 Germantown Road, Redbanks. SA 5502. The theme is Life, the Universe and Everything. Winners announced March 2010. Form and guidelines at <http://carolyn-poeticpause.blogspot.com/>

Jan 31: Positive Words Mini-competition ☺●

Competition details are the same as the entry for the December *Positive Words* Mini-comp – except this time entries must include the word 'holiday(s)' at least once.

Feb 5: Alan Marshall Short Story Award 2010 ☺☞★●

There are two sections relevant to SA writers in next year's Award: an Open Section with a \$2000 1st prize and \$1000 2nd prize for stories up to 2500 words by writers resident in Australia; and a Young Writers' Section with a \$400 prize for a story up to 1000 words by a writer aged between 15 - 19 years who resides anywhere in Australia. Entries must be received (NOT postmarked) by **4pm, Friday**. Details and entry form are available from www.nillumbik.vic.gov.au For more information email artsinfo@nillumbik.vic.gov.au or phone 03 9433 3359.

Feb 6: The CWA Debut Dagger 2010 ☺●

The 2010 Debut Dagger Competition opened on 31st October, and will close at midnight on 6th February. Go on, take a stab at it, send us the opening chapter(s) – up to 3000 words – and a short synopsis of your proposed crime novel, and you could

be a published crime writer. Winning the Debut Dagger doesn't guarantee you'll get published. But it does mean your work will be seen by leading agents and top editors, who have signed up over a dozen winners as well as shortlisted Debut Dagger competitors. The Debut Dagger is open to anyone who has not yet had a novel published commercially. 1st prize is £500 plus two free tickets to the prestigious CWA Dagger Awards and night's stay for two in a top London hotel. All shortlisted entrants will receive a generous selection of crime novels and professional assessment of their entries, and will also be invited to the Dagger Awards. For details and entry forms go to <http://www.theewa.co.uk/daggers/debut/index.html>

Feb 14: Eaglehawk Dahlia and Arts Literary Competition ☞●

Three categories: 1. Short story, max 3000 words, 1st prize \$200, 2nd \$50. 2. Poetry, limit 30 lines, 1st prize \$200, 2nd \$50. 3. Bush Verse, limit 52 lines, 1st prize \$100. For entry forms send SSAE to Ruth Claridge, 99 Victoria St, Eaglehawk 3556 or phone 03 5446 8240 or go to <http://dahlia.bendigo.net.au>

Feb 19: Laura Literary Awards ☺☞●

The Flinders News Prose Awards: open section, short story. Up to 1500 words, prize \$200. Young adult (13-18) up to 1000 words, prize \$50. Junior (under 13) up to 500 words, prize \$25. The C.J.Dennis Poetry Awards: Poem up to 60 lines, open prize \$200. Young adult (13-18) prize \$50. Junior

(under 13) prize \$25. Fee for open sections \$10 per entry. Guidelines and entry forms available www.laurafolkfair.com and SA Writers' Centre.

Feb 19: Ararat Jailhouse Rock Festival Poetry Award ☺●

Original, unpublished poems up to 300 words written on a 50s and 60s theme. 1st Prize, stationary/book voucher to the value of \$200; 2nd prize to be announced. Entry Fee \$5.00 per poem. Entries to: Jailhouse Rock Festival, P.O Box 165, Ararat, 3377, Vic. Enquiries and guideline sheet from Rhonda Pohlke - 03 53521100 or rho_ter@vic.chariot.net.au or visit www.jailhouserock.com.au

Mar 20: Fish Flash Fiction Contest ☺●

The Fish One-Page Prize requires stories of no more than 300 words. Fish will publish the best ten in their 2010 Anthology. The 1st prize is 1,000 Euro and the nine runners-up receive 50 Euro and five copies of the Anthology. Details at www.fishpublishing.com, including online entry and postal entry instructions.

Mar 30: Fish Poetry Prize ☺●

There is no restriction on the theme of poems, but there is a word limit of 200. 1st prize 1,000 Euros. All poems must be written in English and must not have been published previously. The best 10 poems will be published in the 2010 Fish Anthology. Entry is 12 Euros online or 15 by post. Go to <http://www.fishpublishing.com/index.php>

Please note: competitions are listed in order of closing date

Key

- ☺ competition listed for the first time
- ★ competition with sections for young writers
- ☞ SA Writers' Centre holds the entry forms
- the entry form is available on the Internet

Entry Forms: ☞ Entry forms 20c each or send one business-sized stamped self-addressed envelope, plus one loose 50c stamp for every TWO competitions.

