

Southern Write

Southern Write

Dear Members,

The year of change continues here at the Centre, with news that Jude Aquilina has left us to spend more time writing and exploring new opportunities. While we wish her luck in these endeavours, it is with great sadness that we farewelled her, and I would like to thank her for her dedicated and passionate service to the Centre, and to the SA writing community.

Replacing her we welcome Vanessa Jones, who is now acting as our Program Manager, and Niki Vouis, who is reviewing our membership services and how we can best serve your needs.

We're also excited to have officially launched our *WriterinResidence* project, thanks to the generous response we received to our annual donation appeal. Lilliana Rose, the first *WiR*, has already begun working on the final draft of her YA novel, and she has contributed to this quarter's newsletter. In October our second *WiR*, Dr Ianto Ware, will join us to work on his creative nonfiction project.

Our involvement with *Writing Australia* continues to bring new opportunities for South Australian writers. The national residency project, *Places*, has been finalised and we're delighted that Anne Bartlett, long-time SAWC member, will be heading off to Bruny Island in Tasmania. We're also looking forward to welcoming Kelly-

lee Hickey, from the NT, who will be undertaking her residency on Kangaroo Island. *Writing Australia's Unpublished Manuscript Award*, won of course last year by our own Hannah Kent, will be launched in September, so get going on that manuscript now! Remember there are no genre restrictions: it just needs to be a work of adult fiction.

We've got a packed program of events planned – including hosting the first heat of the Poetry Slam. The national winner gets the chance to attend international writers festivals, so now is the time to brush up on those performance skills and make a splash.

We're also bringing you a masterclass with Miles Franklin Award-winning author Steven Carroll, a networking event with Peter Goldsworthy, an evening with social media guru Michelle Prak and a series of craft workshops with Anne Clark, (don't miss this one – she's one of SA's most successful and prolific writers, co-author with her husband of more than 50 romance novels). See program insert for full details.

Want more? How about an evening with David Malouf? SAWC is supporting his visit, presented by the Samstag Museum of Art as part of the upcoming Jeffrey Smart exhibition. For more details and the chance to win tickets, make sure you're subscribed to our fortnightly enews.

The enews is a great way to stay

connected with us between newsletters. You should also visit our website regularly and follow us on social media for up-to-date information on events and projects, including the launch of the *Unpublished Manuscript Award*.

And get your diaries out to save the date for our annual St Lucy's Christmas Party on Thursday 13 December.

I hope you all enjoy some springtime inspiration over the next few months.

Sarah Tooth
Director

Congratulations are in order for **Hannah Kent**. After winning the inaugural 2011 *Writing Australia Unpublished Manuscript Award*,

which landed her \$10,000 and a \$2,000 mentorship with Pulitzer Prize Winner, Geraldine Brooks, she has scored another huge success – a two-book deal rumoured to amount to more than \$1,000,000. *Burial Rights* is Hannah's first book. Written as part of her PhD in Creative Writing at Flinders University, the novel is set in Iceland and gives a compelling fictional account of the last woman to be publicly beheaded in 1830.



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ISSN 2200-6230

in
this
Issue
2012
September

Southern Write is the Quarterly Magazine of the SA Writers' Centre Inc.

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Poetry and Twitter

Twitter – the social media platform belittled as the broadcast tool of celebrities such as Shane Warne, Lady Gaga and Justin Bieber – is so much more than inane short messages. And that includes being a hotspot for poetry.

With each tweet limited to 140 characters, it's a challenge that can be a tempting and inspiring for many writers. When you're tweeting, you're doing what any poet does at readings, festivals and through print – sharing your work with the world.

You might say Twitter is an ideal publishing platform for poetry. Poets have been known to share a single line in one tweet that is a sample of a longer piece of work. Some take the alternative approach by drip-feeding many lines, tweet by tweet. As with any social media tools, the account holder chooses how to use it and decides how much they're willing to share.

You might have a Twitter account set up purely to read, share and critique other people's work.

Your approach might be to tweet a few lines of your poetry and then link back to your own website.

You might have some work that is for 'Twitter only' as a means to keep your mind sharp and interact with others and have fun.

You could even share a photograph of your handwritten poetry on Twitter to give it a different feel.

The thing to remember is this: Twitter is a community. Don't approach it as a marketing tool whose only purpose is to send traffic to your website or to encourage people to buy your work now. It's a place where people relish a genuine conversation and expect you to be available over the long term. When you understand this about Twitter, you'll discover the massive benefits to joining, both as a reader and as a writer.

Twitter works best when you find the accounts of most interest to you, and when you visit Twitter often and interact with others (that means at least several times a week). You might build your Twitter network into the best community you've ever subscribed to.

So, how do you discover poetry on Twitter? There are several approaches.

You can search for and follow Twitter accounts that are based on poetry, for example, Poetry Australia (<https://twitter.com/AusPoetry>)

There are more US-based poetry accounts including Poetry Daily, https://twitter.com/Poetry_Daily, which aims to help 'make poetry part of daily life, presenting a new poem each day from new books and journals'. There's also *Poetry Magazine*, <https://twitter.com/poetrymagazine>, and the Poetry Foundation at <https://twitter.com/PoetryFound>

There may be specific poets you would like to follow. Type their names into the Twitter search box and cross your fingers. Of course, not every poet has a Twitter account, but if you use Twitter search you'll discover if they are there. If your favourite poet isn't on Twitter but has a high profile, you may find there is a Twitter account set up to honour and share their work.

You can also search and follow Twitter hashtags. Funnily enough, the #poetry hashtag doesn't reveal a swathe of good works. More often, it's used to promote poetry events including photos from live readings. Occasionally, you might find a gem. Try searching for #micropoetry or #haiku instead. They appear to be more focused on sharing work.

Any questions? Of course, you can tweet me via @prakky

Michelle Prak

Check out our new Poetry Feature on page 5.

Centre Info

Life Members

- Max Fatchen
- Gillian Rubinstein
- Sean Williams

Our Thanks

Thanks to Henry Ashley-Brown, Connie M. Berg, Betty Collins, Jo Dey, Coie and John Dikkenberg, Barbara Fraser, Joanna Goldsworthy, John Malone, Haydn Radford, Gay Sanderson and Kate Wise for their assistance in mailing the June edition to all our members. A special thanks to Gay Sanderson, John and Coie Dikkenberg, Barbara Fraser, John Malone, Joanna Goldsworthy and Haydn Radford for going above and beyond the call of duty by staying on after lunch during the June folding session.

Disclaimer

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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 Caffè Brunelli, proceed towards the toilets and take the door to your left at the end of the passage to reach the lift. SAWC events/workshops free for a carer or companion.

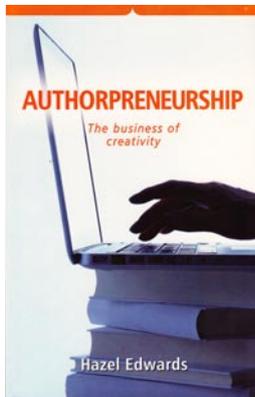


In Review

Authorpreneurship: The Business of Creativity **Hazel Edwards**

Keesing Press, 2012

Reviewed by **Tim Harvey**



The business of creativity is changing, and Hazel Edwards offers her insights into what it takes to establish and maintain self-employment in the 'business of ideas'. Best known for children's books *There's a Hippopotamus on Our Roof Eating Cake* and *Stickybeak*, Edwards has created a guide-book for writers looking to succeed in a modern publishing environment and make a living from their work.

It's clear from the start that Edwards means business and readers looking for a quick 'how to get published' will be disappointed.

Instead, *Authorpreneurship* is a series of helpful tips and questions for writers to ask themselves in order to create a career. The book quickly jumps into the business side of being an author, and readers who still haven't decided on what their manuscript is about may feel a bit overwhelmed by sections on 'strategic decisions' and 'time costing'.

For authors who are ready to take the leap into the business of creativity, *Authorpreneurship* provides many easy-to-achieve and quick strategies to start getting recognition as an author, and to build an audience of loyal readers. The book also explores issues that authors may face once they've built their brand, such as managing time and finances. There is even advice for established authorpreneurs such as a public speaking guide, mentoring suggestions and tips on the etiquette required at book launches and literary events.

Edwards asks plenty of hard-hitting questions for budding authors, such as: 'What is your potential market?'; 'Is this your passion, part-time occupation or full-time work?'; and 'How much do you intend to invest in your writing career and for how long?' As each writer's career and journey are different, these are questions that only they can answer, although Edwards

uses her own experiences to help break the big questions down into manageable portions. In one section she provides a case study as an example of censoring her own work, *There's a Hippopotamus on Our Roof Eating Cake*, which is particularly interesting for anyone who grew up with that book.

Some readers may feel thrown into the deep end with the technical jargon scattered about early in the book. Terms such as eSkills, eBooks, blogs and apps don't come with definitions and if you don't have the assumed knowledge it's easy to get confused. Edwards clearly doesn't want to waste time, but thankfully her writing style makes it easy to understand the ideas behind these technical terms without too much trouble.

Overall, *Authorpreneurship: The Business of Creativity* is an informative read for any author looking to make a living from writing, and a practical guide for authors who are already published. The tips and advice offered may go over the heads of some readers, who could find the lengthy sections on balancing finances and public appearances don't apply to them yet. But for people who are driven to make a viable career out of writing, this book will be a great resource.

Authorpreneurship: The Business of Creativity can be purchased from the **ASA** at www.asauthors.org



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The Barbara Wiesner Fiction Page

Short fiction: **'Satisfied'** by **Caroline Reid**.

A cat creeps over the dark city roof of Carah's Second-hand Bookshop where, each night after shutting-up-shop, Carah and Bryce Dray get together in the back kitchen. Dressed in a short tartan skirt and opaque stockings, Carah sits on a wooden chair while her husband, a man with a fetish for women in short skirts and stockings, writhes and moans at her feet, pawing his wife's legs until he's satisfied.

Carah used to find this fetish oddly amusing, charming even, but now she's tired of it. Now she wishes for the straight sex they had when they first began courting. Her husband, however, has no interest in having vanilla sex with his wife and tells her so.

'Then I refuse to play dress-ups any longer,' she says and gives away all her stockings and short skirts to St Vinnie's, re-filling her cupboards with polyester slacks. From that day, Carah and Bryce Dray make sure they're never in the shop's kitchen together.

Bryce decides to pay a woman in stockings to meet him at the New Oregon Hotel, once a week, so he can stroke and caress her legs until he's satisfied. But he finds the stretch from one Wednesday to another far too long to bear, so he increases his meetings to twice a week; then two becomes three; three becomes four and so on, until Bryce is meeting the woman in stockings at the New Oregon Hotel every single day of the week, twice on Sundays.

During this time Carah satisfies herself by reading books in her bookshop. After finishing *An Introduction To Freud*, she concludes that her husband's fetish is a result of unresolved childhood trauma. But having a lot of unresolved issues

herself, she decides this is still no excuse for his bad behaviour and finds herself frequently shouting and swearing at him: she is sick of his parasitic nature, his pointy fucking beard, which he strokes all the time, and of course that stupid stocking fetish. But Carah wasn't a born shouter so when she sees her husband stroking the legs of stockings customers between the bookshelves, observing the customers also being satisfied, she stops shouting and

holds this information very quietly inside.

When Carah hires a university student to work in the bookshop three days a week, she discovers the student has a thing for older women who dress in polyester slacks. She also discovers the boy has a split penis which is very

satisfying because he can reach places within her Carah never knew existed.

The boy, a PhD student in Creative Writing, is writing a novel whose main character is a giant bug. She agrees to read each chapter and give him feedback. But when she finishes the chapter where the bug receives a creative fellowship, paid for by taxpayers' money, to spend a year in Berlin working on a new science fiction symphony that he'll compose by playing the hairs on his legs, Carah loses interest. And who could blame her?

Things get more complicated when the boy refuses to kill bugs in the bookshop, even when they're eating stock, even when they ruin important rare books, collector's items, and Carah loses money hand over fist. She threatens to sack him. The boy suggests, instead of sacking him, she dress him in a short tartan skirt and opaque stockings, puts him over her knee and



Caroline Reid lives in Cowandilla with her boyfriend and a small sheep named Picton. She's had plays performed and published (*Prayer To An Iron God*, Currency Press, 2010) and is currently working on her first collection of short stories. When not teaching Picton how to moonwalk, Caroline writes, reads and goes for long walks in the shade of her orange umbrella.

spanks him, calls him a miserable little bug that deserves to be punished.

'You can ad lib if you wants to,' he adds.

This is the last straw. Carah Dray bequeaths the bookshop to St Vinnie's on the understanding it will remain a bookshop, forever. The women at Vinnie's happily agree. Bryce Dray moves to Berlin with the boy, on the boy's scholarship money. They cruise gloomy German bookshops together then co-author a book of creative nonfiction detailing their experiences. It becomes a best-seller. Carah finds a book of spells, turns herself into a frog and lives a long and happy life in the bookshop's kitchen. She reads great works of literature by day and feeds on bugs at night. In their own way, everyone is satisfied.

Submissions Open!

Submissions are once again open for our short fiction page and we're looking for stories for our December and March issues. Please refer to page 11 and our guidelines before submitting your work.

Donations to the Centre

Elaine Barker, Dorothy Cormack, Judy Fander, Judy Gillett Ferguson, Arthur Giannopoulos, Ian Gibbins, Leonard Glastonbury, Rosanne Hawke, Erica Jolly, Joe Juchniewicz, Richard Lintvelt, Jean Mann, Rose Helen Mitchell, Michelle Peake, Dr Hank Prunckun, Marlene J Richards, Michael Riddle, Robbie Robinson, John Lyden Scott, Stanley Sim, Sandy Verschoor, Amelia Walker, Judy Wesolowski, Anne Westley and Sean Williams.

Many thanks to our members for their generous donations and also to our volunteers.

Poetry Page • Poetry Page • Poetry Page

Welcome to our new Poetry Page. Our **Guest Editor** this issue is **David Mortimer**.

Our Guest Editor **David Mortimer** believes poetry is for speaking aloud and for carrying with us: as thought; as conversation; as music and argument. His third collection, *Magic Logic* is forthcoming from Puncher & Wattmann publishing. Mortimer's poems have been broadcast on *PoeticA* and Writers Radio and published widely in newspapers, journals, e-journals, collections and anthologies. He's been shortlisted for the Blake Poetry Prize 2009, the Newcastle Poetry Prize 2010, and the Montreal Poetry Prize 2011.

The Cellist

Leaning languorously across him
Slender neck nestled into his
Generous hips pressed between his open knees
She succumbs to his embrace.
While one hand caresses her throat
The other strokes her smooth belly.
And she croons softly, rapturously
In caramel contralto
The Swan by Saint-Saens.
We are voyeurs
But they seem not to notice.

Judy Ferguson

Rehearsal

They are both playing a part

He repeats his words
because he can't help it

She repeats hers
because she has to

She helps him on and off the stage
adjusts his costume
prompts him from the wings
and smiles, like a pro, at the audience

but, in the curtains of her mind
she knows –

that when he makes his final bow
her next role will be

a monologue.

Jill Gloyne

Jim, Katy & Alex

Jim could've played AFL, if he'd made any effort.
Katy had three years of braces, but her skin was good at least.
Alex once listened to the same Smiths song for fifty hours straight.

When Jim was four, he liked pink things – briefly.
Katy and Alex went to the same kindergarten,
but neither remembered when they met, years later, at a party

and wound up in the back of Katy's Corolla,
plastic St. Christopher watching from the dash.
Jim was at the same party, but never spoke to Katy

or Alex. It was a big party. The kind Jim went to often,
Katy less often and Alex almost never at all.
Jim's girlfriend at the time wore lime green eyeshadow

and too much perfume. It lasted two months. It usually did.
Soon after, Katy dropped out to hitchhike along the coast.
Alex tried meditation, found smoking worked better.

Jim got a job at a bank, married a co-worker and gained thirty kilos.
Katy became a socialist, then an anarchist, then an anarcho-socialist.
Alex wondered what the deal was with poodles.

One night, Jim dreamed he was drowning in a sea of Big Macs.
The next day he joined a gym, but his wife left him anyway.
That same night, Katy found a Bible in her hostel bedside table

and cried and cried and cried. Alex quit smoking, tried mediation
again, found it worked better after smoking.
Jim used his gym membership for two months, kept paying for twelve –

but it wasn't a waste. He met his second wife there. She was bigger than him.
When Katy got home, she joined her parent's real estate agency.
By that stage, Alex was a qualified psychotherapist.

Ten years later, Jim died in a car crash – distracted listening to AFL.
Katy worried about wrinkles, but her teeth were straight at least.
She showed Alex through a house one day. Both wondered where they'd met before.

Amelia Walker

The Guest Editor for our December Poetry Page
will be **Jude Aquilina**

Poetry **Submission Guidelines** can be found on **page 10**.

Have you read **Michelle Prak's** 'Poetry and Twitter' article
in **Bylines** on page 2 of this issue?

The Writer's Natural Comfort Zone

Lolo Houbein reflects on writing, eating and the comfort that comes from living in and with nature.

How to make a living as a full-time writer remains a perennial question. Of the multiple routes to get there, not one is easy. Full-time writing remains characterised by lacking in food, clothing, housing, holidays and superannuation. Solutions can be having a patron or living with Mum and Dad if solitude can be arranged.

As a teenage writer I lived in Amsterdam around the corner of Reynolds, a legendary writers' café. You'd walk in, order a coffee and find a wooden chair through the smoke clouds issuing from pipes and roll-your-owns. Fame and notoriety sat to the right, left and opposite, dressed in hard-wearing corduroy. If you listened intently, nodding knowingly, someone might turn, say hello and ask, 'What do you write?' You then participated in the ongoing discussion of how to attain fame, or fortune, who to avoid or who to favour with your latest masterpiece. When you'd stretched one coffee far enough you went home to a bowl of macaroni with bacon pieces and began a new story.

Writing and eating are mutually exclusive. Crumbs get into keyboards. A mind pre-occupied with taste, smell and texture, loses the plot. Drinking is more convenient, from traditional black coffee to exotica like yerba maté and pu er, or a stronger brew that stuffed many a writer's liver.

Do writers still live in garrets on starvation rations in order to produce the great novel that will cast their name immortal? Xavier Herbert worked in a London garrett, cutting down his one-million-word novel *Capricornia* by three quarters. We remain forever grateful.

But what writer would starve these days amidst apparent plenty? One is more likely to default on the electricity bill. Almost anything deemed crucial to modern life can be sacrificed if there is the will to write that book. To earn a modest income there is always teaching, tutoring, or walking other people's dogs. Vital needs are met by dressing shabby chique from op shops, doing house-and-farm-sitting, or playing the piano on a cruise ship. Ship's cuisine

aside, what does the full-time writer eat for health and stamina?

Ancient Greek poet and chronicler Hesiod (contemporary of Homer +750-650 BC) complained of poverty while working on his father's farm. He wrote in *Work and Days*: 'Both gods and men are angry with a man who lives idle, for in nature he is like the stingless drones who waste the labor of the bees, eating without working.' Keep him in mind.

Bread and chickpeas may have been the ancient writer's stand-by. Blind bard Homer ate from royal kitchens where he told his stories. Lacking kings' courts, are there any bards left going along to city restaurants to read poetry in exchange for a three-course meal? Or does the deafening din in so many eating places rule that out? Could it be that a real poet could make such a place so still that you could hear a pin drop? Bring a poem and a pin to your next dinner date.

Closer to our times, Honoré de Balzac (1799-1850) was known to be a glutton. In the year he married he died from long-term stress, too much black coffee and heart disease.

His compatriot Marcel Proust (1871-1922) was probably anorexic. The more he wrote about food, cooking, smell and taste the less he ate, existing largely on bread and coffee. It was said he ate words. Words filled him up as memories of past meals tunnelled through his writings.

Neither Proust nor de Balzac could have fulfilled their promise as writers. Both died at fifty. Clearly, there is a case to be made for a writer to eat for optimum health and clear arteries – like talented sports champs – while rationing whatever does not contribute to longevity.

Patrick White (1912-1990) famously said that being a writer consisted of being bent over a desk, smoking and getting asthma. But he ate very well, living with partner Manoli Lascaris on a farm with goats, chickens, fruit and vegetables, while writing one long novel after another.

Today we drown in foodie literature in a culture where people still drink to everyone's health at the backyard's burnt offering place. Today's ultimate foodie speaks food in seven languages, nibbling crisps on the couch while watching Heston's unhealthy countenance hovering with nail scissors over miniscule strips of produce.



In contrast, the writer's natural comfort zone is a backyard, however small, with or without a grill, where food can grow and fruit trees be espaliered on a north-facing fence. Starting the day by inspecting food plants, the writer's senses are stirred by sights, smells, textures and the unexpected beauty of bean flowers, the ravenous presence of giant red mustard, the visual vigour of scalloped Russian kale, the reckless climbing tomatoes and the ecclesiastical purple globes of eggplants. Aromas, scents, fragrances and bolder stinks have awakened the creative consciousness.

Before the dew has dried a salad is picked, fresh garlic pulled and a choice made for the midday meal. A 'green pot' of silverbeet, kale, mizuna, pea shoots, parsley, onion greens and herbs will keep the writing juices flowing into the afternoon without strain or fatigue. Herbal tea is there for the picking. Edible weeds come free. Fruit trees hold out seasonal promise in exchange for a pruning between chapters.

The food garden can be the writer's essential other job and after hours' gym. Forget the cruise ship, forget tutoring exam-nervous students. An hour's work in the morning food plot exercises every muscle and delights the senses. The micro-life of flying wonders and bottom feeders provides constant comparison with the human condition that feed into the day's writing. The need to fix things – stakes,

continues on the following page

A Word from the Writer in Residence

Lilliana Rose, Writer in Residence, talks about creative spaces.

A few years ago I decided to pursue a writing career more seriously. One of the main things I focussed on was trying to create a space where I could write, be inspired, and of course not be interrupted. I thought by creating my own space to write it would help my creativity flow strongly and make it easier to write.

The junk room (aka spare room) was tidied up and the family writing desk, recently inherited, moved in to the room. The floor was cleared so there wasn't a trail between piles of books to negotiate through. I changed the curtains to venetian blinds to let in more light. To make the space more creative I hung material from corner to corner, enveloping the ceiling in pinks and purples. But that wasn't enough. It was too dark, too cold, and I just couldn't sit and focus in the room. I purchased a heater and took out a knee rug and hung some bright tinsel from the ceiling. Then I figured all I had to do was to sit down and the inspiration would flow through me. I sat at the antique writing desk, with my laptop, fingers ready to dance away on the keys and spill out emotional characters, thrilling plots and beautiful settings. But I couldn't write there. This worried me because I wondered if I could really write. Did I really have it in me to write story after story? If I couldn't write in the space I created, where could I write?

Comfort Zone ...

continued from page 6

gates or rakes – reinforce a sense of self-reliance without which no writer can survive. And becoming a gourmet cook is no longer an impossibility.

The Japanese concept of wabi sabi stood for living in and with nature and became a chosen lifestyle of solitude in frugality, treasuring handmade objects, looking to nature for sustenance – an existence of tranquility and spiritual awareness.

Are there books about writers and their food gardens? Is someone doing a Ph.D. on writers' food gardens creeping into their writings?

In frustration, I picked up my laptop and went out to the kitchen table. This worked better until the neighbours decided to do major renovations. This left me with limited options, and with the lure of coffee, I went to a café. This worked amazingly well. The noise, the smells, the busyness and lots of people made it easier for me to sit and write. And this wasn't even my space.

In order to meet deadlines I've written in restaurants, on trams and on benches waiting for friends. At times it was a miracle I managed to read my notes when I came to type them up, but in the chaos of everyday life I managed to write and discover my favourite character, Zarna.

Sometimes it's still about stealing time in the day (or night) to sit and write, but having the space where I'm comfortable means the time carved out can be more productive, enjoyable and satisfying.

It's not always about where I write but how well I can adapt and use the space for inspiration. It's about trying new places and being aware what works for me. Now at SAWC as WiR, I've got a space to write, and a new place to write means a new set of ideas to connect with and this breathes life in to my creativity and expands my writing.

Lolo Houbein's recent books are *One Magic Square: Grow Your Own Food on One Square Metre* (2008) and *Outside The Magic Square: A Handbook for Food Security* (2012). Both titles are published by Wakefield Press.

One Magic Square won a Gourmand Award for most innovative cookbook in Australia and was shortlisted for Le Cordon Bleu's 'Best Food Book' Award.

Her books have also been published in New Zealand, North America and South Africa.



Lilliana Rose is the current SAWC Writer in Residence. She has lived on a farm, played with DNA, taught science and travelled, which has fed her imagination and spurred her to write. Her poetry and short stories are spreading wings around the world.

www.lillianarose.com

Quotable Quotes!

'If there's a book that you want to read, but it hasn't been written yet, then you must write it.'

– Toni Morrison

'When you read a book as a child, it becomes a part of your identity in a way that no other reading in your life does ...'

– Nora Ephron

'Life shrinks or expands in proportion to one's courage.'

– Anaïs Nin

Your Enews

As a member you should be receiving our enews every fortnight. If you're **not** getting it in your inbox we probably don't have your current email details. Please contact admin@sawriters.org.au and let our staff know so they can change your details on our database.

Author - 2 - Author

Stephen Lord looks at how Clive Barker has influenced his own writing.

Found as I am of stories I will for the sake of this article call mysteries, their celebration of logic and insistence upon solution often belie the name. The self-contained puzzles of whodunit, how and why are important to me and I hope they will always find a place in readers' hearts and minds, but they are microcosmic rather than metaphysical. When I consider the larger riddles of the unknown and unknowable, I prefer to look elsewhere and know better than to expect easy answers.

Liverpool-born Clive Barker has spent the greater part of his sixty years pondering the eternal questions of who we are, where we came from and where we're going. He turns his thoughts into art that is both visionary and visceral, transcending categorisation and medium. An accomplished author, playwright, painter and director for both theatre and cinema, his versatility is matched only by the scope of his imagination.

Barker cut his creative teeth writing for the stage (six of his plays are today available in the collections *Incarnations* and *Forms of Heaven*). He began to write horror stories 'at odd moments and just enjoyed doing them for the benefit of friends or my own pleasure.' Inspired in equal measure by Poe and the rivers of celluloid gore that flooded cinemas in the early to mid 1970s, three volumes of *The Books of Blood* appeared on bookshelves in 1984. I first read them sixteen years later, and their richness of language astounded me. In a genre prone to excessive cliché, Barker's potent evocation of the senses and cup-runneth-over approach to description left their mark and, while I don't often manage to incorporate such abundance into the bare facts of a murder scene and its aftermath, they give me an ideal against which to measure my efforts.

Barker uses the short form as a testing ground for ideas that would permeate his later works. Bodies, their inhabitants and the spaces they occupy are fluid and in many cases eager for the next phase of their transformation. Becoming something other than the self is a change to welcome and celebrate because, by embracing the

'monster' within, the characters come to know themselves better.

Three more *Books of Blood* collections, a Faustian debut novel, *The Damnation Game*, and the film *Hellraiser* consolidated Barker's reputation as 'the future of horror' but he was not content to rest on such blood-stained laurels. Keen to progress from what he would later call 'the unrelentingly bleak, violent tales that had earned me some early notice', his sophomore novel *Weaveworld* took an inevitable and very welcome turn towards the fantastique. Barker makes superb use of established genre devices such as the quest and the dream passage from one realm to another, but eschews the easy option of an invented world cut from a similar cloth to those of JRR Tolkien or CS Lewis. The results are far more enticing to this reader than most traditional fantasy, because they drop me head first into a churning stream of consciousness where the lines between 'good' and 'evil' blur to the point of total obscurity.

He repeats and refines the process in most, if not all, of his subsequent novels, mapping worlds beneath, between and beyond the one we have been conditioned to accept as real. In *Cabal* (1988), Barker's sympathies lie with the nether realm of Midian, and the form his protagonist assumes upon travelling there after he dies is shown as far preferable to his human incarnation.

Again and again Barker shows us how to accept change and use it as a means to understand ourselves and each other. In *The Great and Secret Show* (1989), lovers Howard and Jo-Beth come to terms with their roles in the struggle between their fathers for control of the dream sea Quiddity, itself a metaphor for Jung's concept of the collective unconscious. That the subsequent battle spills over into California, a place prone to world shattering seismic events and dominated by attempts to bring dreams to life through film, is no coincidence.

For a time I considered *The Great and Secret Show* my favourite of Barker's books but, as I type, a third try at *Imajica* (1991) has almost displaced it. *Imajica* is



perhaps the ultimate exploration of all its author's favourite themes. It folds God, death, sex, gender and love into a richly woven adventure across five Dominions. Earth is the fifth of these, known to but separated from the others and, as the time of Reconciliation nears, John Furie Zacharias (AKA Gentle), Judith Odell and the mystif assassin Pie'oh' Pah journey towards a revelation every bit as complex and life-changing as that of St John the Divine. The Christian parallels are quite deliberate. Barker sees the novel as a bid to reclaim the story of Jesus from those, particularly in the US, who have distorted and exploited it for their own ends.

Twenty years on from that sprawling, career-defining tome, Barker continues to invent and populate worlds like no other in his field, most recently with the ongoing *Abarat* quintet. His reasons for doing so will strike a chord with anyone who's ever put pen to paper in hopes of conjuring a place beyond themselves, and are best summed up in these words from the prologue of his 1996 novel *Sacrament*:

'I am a man, and men are animals who tell stories. This is a gift from God, who spoke our species into being, but left the end of our story untold ... So we make stories of our own, in fevered and envious imitation of our Maker, hoping that we'll tell, by chance, what God left untold. And finishing our tale, come to understand why we were born.'

Stephen Lord is the founder of Crime Writers SA which meets on the first Sunday of each month, from 10.30am-12.30pm at the SA Writers Centre.

Jane Howard – Theatre Critic

There's nothing plain about this Jane – **Vanessa Jones** talks to Jane Howard

Jane Howard is the only solo theatre critic blogger in Adelaide and one of very few in Australia. She is paving the way, not only for other emerging writers but also for the significance of arts critic writing.

Whilst studying for a science degree, she seemingly fell into arts writing. She started composing short, pithy theatre reviews as a distraction from her 3000 word dissertations. The more she wrote, the more she uncovered her passion for it.

During the Festival Season earlier this year where she saw over thirty shows, something tipped over for Jane. She decided to quit her 'real' job and launch herself into writing as a career.

Jane was selected to undertake the Text Camp mentorship program, which was arranged via Melbourne's Next Wave Festival, where she was one of six emerging writers to be paired up with an established writer. Her mentor was John Bailey, who writes for publications such as *Real Time* and *The Age*. Jane's been a long time admirer of his work, so this has quickly become a life-changing experience for her.

But Jane also looks to a myriad of resources to keep her talent developing. She jokes that her blog roll is shocking and has accumulated more than a hundred blog links, which she desperately tries to keep up with as she believes that reading is her biggest teacher. Jane also admires and closely follows Melbourne theatre critic Alison Croggon, whose *Theatre Notes* is believed to be the most important and influential theatre blog in the country – even gleaning worldwide recognition. Locally, Jane has discovered unwavering support from editor Jane Gronow, formally of *Lowdown* magazine, whom she considers her greatest ally and support person in Adelaide.

Despite being incredibly sweet in real life, Jane has a reputation for being quite vocal about her opinions, which she quite clearly claims, are merely that – her opinions. Such opinions have been known to cause a strong reaction amongst her readers, where surprisingly she has found that theatre fans

have a bigger bite than the theatre artists themselves!

The strongest reactions to her words occur when she refers to work that she deems misogynistic, claiming that this is a big scary word for some people and as a result she has received some very nasty comments on her blog and via emails. She has learned when to engage in a conversation and when to ignore the bullies and pick her battles in these instances.

Jane has also done extensive independent research on the representation of women playwrights and directors in Australian theatre, which attracted unexpected responses from people who insinuated that she had no idea what she was talking about, despite being completely supported by statistics.

When questioned about whether her youth is a barrier or an advantage, she stated, 'my age – and the internet – give me the freedom to make mistakes, be honest about them and try to be better next time. Youth often doesn't help, not having an arts degree doesn't help, not writing for a recognised publication doesn't help. But it is all the things which make me 'me' and my work 'my work'. My age is critical.'

It almost goes without mentioning that Jane is very active on social media, particularly Twitter, where she has the ability to tap into a whole national and international collective of arts writers, artists and administrators. The conversations to be had there constantly invite her to self-enquire and refine her art.

More forums for the paid publication of long form reviews and articles about theatre and the arts are Jane's ultimate dream goals. She is working towards an understanding that there is more to a review than just advising whether the audience should or should not buy a ticket. She wants the emphasis on reviews to be pulled back from marketing to a focus on whether the writer can be a source of trust, inspiration and someone the industry can



learn from. She wants writing about the arts to be a continuous form of dialogue. She recalls a time when someone said that 'your interaction with art as a piece of theatre starts the first time you hear about it and ends the last time you think about it.' Jane would love to be an essential part of that equation.

Her advice to budding arts writers? Just do it. Don't ask for permission. Read as much as you can, write as much as you can, talk to as many people as you can. Expect it to be hard work, a constant battle and have many people not understand what you do or why you want to do it. Know that artists are your allies, they can be your friends but they can never be above a critical eye or a harsh question. Look beyond Adelaide for inspiration but, if you can, invest in this city because we desperately need good arts writers.

'I hope I can take my own advice.'

Oh, did I mention that Jane is a mere twenty-three? Yeah, that.

Jane Howard is a regular contributor to *The Adelaide Review* and has written for publications such as *Australian Stage Online*, *ArtsHub*, *Everguide* and *Lowdown*.

As part of the 2012 Adelaide Festival Centre program, Jane was a co-panellist at the 'In Conversation With: Everyone's a Critic' forum where she explored the role of the critic in today's society. Jane's blog can be found here: www.noplain.wordpress.com

Apple Apps For Writers

Lee Sinclair looks at how smart phone and tablet technology is changing the way writers go about their business.

For those of us who embrace the wonders of technology, and endure the frustrations of it as well, you may have searched through the quagmire of apps in Apple's iTunes and/or the App Store and wished it was all a lot easier.

The table below does not cover all apps that writers would find useful, but whether you are a student or a professional writer, there should be something in here for everyone. I have not used all that are listed here, but I hope to give you a starting point. Some of these may also be available in the Android market.

Note that in the table those apps available via the App Store are for download to your desktop Mac, but use iTunes to download to your mobile devices such as an iPod Touch, iPhone or iPad.

For those of you who are cyber-cloud shy, (sending and keeping your hard work or precious data flying around out there in cyber-land is not everyone's idea of comfortable data management), you can export your notes or data to an email address. Some of the cloud-computing compatible apps are Dropbox, Evernote

and Apple's iCloud, and there are many more. This often means you will also have to purchase one of these compatible 'cloud' apps to export your work or data. Compatibility between other programs and apps varies and you will need to check this with each app before you purchase it.

There are many other apps that are useful for organising notes and research, to plan or brainstorm, and to keep your information, references and contacts together.

Apart from those in the table, other apps that you may like to consider – in no particular order – are:

- **Outline +** – (iTunes, \$15.99);
- **Notetaker & NoteShare** – (Notetaker in App Store, \$25.99, and iTunes for NoteShare Mobile Viewer (Free) to link to your mobile or iPad)
- **Tree** – (App Store, \$15.99)
- **WriteRoom** – (App Store, \$10.49; iTunes, \$5.49)
- **Storyist** – (iTunes, \$10.49). iPad only
- **Notecard** – (App Store, \$8.49). For those of you who love sticky notes.
- **CopyWrite** – Only available as

software for Mac via developer's website Bartas Technologies for \$24.99: [http:// www.bartastechnologies.com products/ copywrite/](http://www.bartastechnologies.com/products/copywrite/)

- **Chapters** – (iTunes, \$4.49) iPad only
- **Circus Ponies Notebook** – (App Store, \$64.99; iTunes, \$20.99). Targeted to students, but seems to have many useful features
- **Ulysses** – (App Store, \$12.99)
- **Mellel** – (App Store, \$40.99)
- **StoryMill** – (App Store, \$51.99)
- **MacJournal** – (App Store, \$41.99; iTunes, \$5.69–iPhone and \$6.49–iPad);
- **Papers** – (iTunes, \$15.99). To keep all of your researched on-line articles in one place.
- **SimpleNote** – (iTunes, Free)
- **Nisus Writer Express** or **Nisus Writer Pro** – (App Store, \$46.99 or \$84.99 respectively)
- **Omni Outliner/Omni Outliner Professional** – (App Store, \$41.99 or Pro version \$74.99)

Several last tips when buying an app:

1. If you need to synchronise across all or some of your gadgets, choose carefully.

continues on the following page

App	Source/Category	Features	Compatibility	Price	Notes
Scrivener	App Store/ Productivity	Keep your notes and research together. Novels, scripts and other templates. Many functions and tools. Good for working on drafts.	Mac only. Exports file as *.rtf, *.doc or *.docx, *.html or plain text, pdf or *.epub/Kindle file. Syncs with Dropbox, SimpleNote	\$46.99	Very useful app for students and professional writers across a wide range of genres.
Manuscript	App Store/ Productivity	Similar to Scrivener.	Both Mac and iPad. Exports via Dropbox as *.ePub file.	\$41.99	I am not familiar with this one.
Writing Prompts	iTunes/ Productivity	A writing tool that randomly offers ideas for writing: words, phrases, scenes, genres characters, quotes and more.	iPhone, iPod Touch and iPad.	\$1.99	This one is fun. There is an education version available (\$5.49).
ThinkBook (TB) or Noteshelf (Ns)	iTunes/ Productivity	TB is like an exercise book that you can add pages to: various templates. In Ns you can add photos or draw.	Both are iPad only (TB) – export /import via Dropbox. (Ns) – export to email, Twitter or Facebook.	\$1.99 (TB) \$6.49 (Ns)	TB – useful, but on the more simple side. Ns – good for freehand writing.
Dragon Dictation	iTunes/ Business	Speak, and it shall be written! A speech-to-text conversion app.	iPhone, iPod Touch and iPad	Free	Speak slowly! Handy for quick notes on-the-go.
Audio Dictionary – World Web International English	iTunes/ Reference	Listen, and it shall be heard! A dictionary that includes word pronunciation.	iPhone, iPod Touch and iPad	\$4.49	Useful and very handy for word games!
Word Solitaire: Aurora/HD	iTunes/ Word Game	Like card solitaire but create words instead.	Available for Mac, iPhone, iPod Touch and iPad (HD version).	iTunes\$0.99 or Free (HD)/ App Store \$5.49	Hours of brain stimulation. Great value!

Table 1: Apple Apps – For Writers. Information sourced August 2012.

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2. I look for when the app was last updated before I make a purchase. This is just personal preference, as I prefer to buy an app that I know is being worked on and improved by its developers.

3. The last tip is to go through the reviews and star ratings. I often sort these by looking at the most critical reviews so that I get an idea of what problems others may have had and if these may be relevant to me.

Happy app surfing!*

* Information for this article current as at August, 2012. Please check that an app will meet all your requirements before you purchase it.

Lee Sinclair is a student of Professional Writing at Adelaide College of Arts. She also works as a consultant, writing funding submissions and tenders.

SAWC Wants You!

Do you want to enrich your CV, develop your skills, or just get involved with the SA writing community?

We're currently looking for volunteers to join the team and help deliver our exciting program of events. Volunteers also become eligible for discounted or free tickets to our workshops.

We're looking for people with skills and interests in a range of areas, including event management, assisting with workshops, office administration and marketing/PR.

For more information, and to register your interest, contact Steph Thomson admin@sawriters.org.au

Submissions Guidelines and Deadlines

Fiction Submissions must be:

- 750 words maximum
- double-spaced times new roman 12 pt font
- electronic submission only to **malcolm@sawriters.org.au**
- not published elsewhere, in print or online
- no restrictions around content or genre
- must be individual financial member of SAWC
- no individual feedback on submissions will be given
- only one entry per member per submission round
- selection will be made by curatorial group comprised of representatives of SAWC staff and board
- all copyright remains with author
- submission deadline for this round is **Wednesday, 31 October, 2012.**

Nonfiction Submissions:

- members **MUST** submit a 200 word outline and 50 word bio to: **malcolm@sawriters.org.au** prior to submission
- submissions may be made at any time.
- final piece must be 2000 words maximum
- double-spaced times new roman 12 pt font
- electronic submission only to: **malcolm@sawriters.org.au**
- must be individual financial member of SAWC
- no individual feedback on submissions will be given
- the SAWC welcomes craft, interviews, industry issues
- the SAWC does take submissions for reviews
- selection will be made by curatorial group comprised of representatives of SAWC staff and Board. Priority will be given to submissions that engage with issues of interest to SAWC membership.
- all copyright remains with author.

Poetry Submissions:

- poems up to 30 lines accepted (no concrete/shape poems will be published)
- by electronic submission only to **poetry@sawriters.org.au**
- embed poems in the body of the email (attachments will not be opened)
- single-spaced Times New Roman 12 pt font
- poems must not be published elsewhere, in print or online, or on offer
- there are no restrictions around content or genre
- you must be an individual financial member of SAWC, submitting your own work
- only one entry per member per submission round
- full name must accompany entry even if using a pseudonym
- selection will be made by the Guest Editor
- no feedback will be given by either the Guest Editor or the Centre
- only successful submissions will be acknowledged
- all copyright remains with author
- no payment offered
- submissions open **Monday, 15 October**
- submission deadline for this round is **Wednesday, 31 October, 2012**
- successful submissions will be notified by **mid-November**
- unsuccessful submissions will be deleted
- dates will then be announced for the following submission round.

