

Read a Blak book lately?

Most
Sessions
Free

**First Nations
Literary Festival**
5—8 Sept 19
Melbourne

**Blak &
Bright**

Message from the Minister for Creative Industries

Welcome to the 2019 Blak & Bright First Nations Literary Festival.

This important event will showcase incredible local First Nations authors alongside their contemporaries from across Australia, New Zealand and Canada.

From spoken word poetry to relearning and recovering traditional languages, and a myriad of experiences in-between, Blak & Bright celebrates the cultural storytelling that has been integral to the First Peoples of this land for tens of thousands of years.

The Andrews Labor Government is proud to support this festival which amplifies the wisdom, diversity and the extraordinary talent of First Nations authors.

Martin Foley

Minister for Creative Industries

Message from the Artistic Director

I am thrilled to bring you the second Blak & Bright First Nations Literary Festival. This year's programme is sure to smash your expectations.

More than 60 Blak storytellers will feature in a diverse array of sessions including: Our most lyrical writers responding to the idea of Treaty. A topical hypothetical. Readings of Blak children's books. Five play readings in a day. A gourmet evening of song and story at Charcoal Lane. Aboriginal philosophies and healing. Elders around the campfire. A Yung tent embassy. Curious about First Nations languages? They will feature throughout the Festival.

Come, be informed, inspired and entertained by Blak literature and Blak storytellers, old favourites and new.

Jane Harrison (Muruwari)

Festival Director



Blak & Bright acknowledges the Kulin Nations, on whose forever lands this Festival takes place, paying respects to the leadership and stories of their Elders, past and present.

Blak & Bright



**Thursday
5 September**

**Change
the date?
A Hypothetical**

Free

Blaktivists vs Blakademics argue the toss. Should Australia Day happen on 26 January — or not — and why? It's a serious topic but we've thrown in a dollop of Blak humour. With **Nayuka Gorrie, Jason Tamiru, Yvette Holt, Liza-Mare Syron.** Hosted by **Gregory Phillips.**

6-7pm | The Wheeler Centre

In partnership with The Wheeler Centre and Melbourne Writers Festival.

**Keynote:
Smoke
Whispers
Sorrow**

Free

The master of precise and poetic storytelling shares a recent and very personal story: 'As a means of connecting Country while dealing with personal grief, I decided that the only way to engage with both was first to walk, second to think, and third to write about the experience before losing sense of what I was able to learn about myself and my loss'. With **Tony Birch.**

7.30-8.30pm | The Wheeler Centre

In partnership with The Saturday Paper.



**Friday
6 September**

**Walkin
Country,
Walkin
Birrarrung**

Walk the footsteps of culture, Country and connection. Find the hidden histories of space and place along the banks of the river now called the Yarra. Immerse yourself in past and present, black and white, colonial and traditional stories. Oral historian, educator and conservationist Dean Stewart will challenge and surprise you with knowledge of our city's iconic and ancient waterway. Subsidised fee for Blak & Bright attendees. Limited places. Lead by **Dean Stewart.**

Friday 6 September | 1-3pm

Saturday 7 September | 10am-12pm

Meet at Enterprize Park for start of walk | Costs \$15

**Blak &
Bright**

**Official
Opening:
Read a Blak
Book lately?**

Free

We welcome you to the Blak & Bright 2019 Official Opening, including a Welcome to Country, ceremonial song with Kulin artists, and speeches. This will be followed by our opening event, in which hosts Daniel Browning and Evelyn Araluen discuss and review some of the latest, and some of the greatest, Blak books. Hear excerpts and, if you're lucky, glimpse an author or two. With **Daniel Browning and Evelyn Araluen.**

6.30-7.30pm | The Wheeler Centre

In partnership with The Wheeler Centre and Melbourne Writers Festival.

**Nocturnal:
Blak&Bright
x MWF**

Free

As sacred museum spaces come to life, you're invited to get loose amongst the exhibits while celebrating fresh First Nations beats and bards. Featuring electro-tribal pop duo **The Merindas**, a full set from hip hop hard-hitter **Birdz**, interdisciplinary artist **DRMNGNOW**, and dance-floor mesmerist **Soju Gang** and DJ **KYAANZ** spinning tunes throughout the night.

7-10.30pm | Melbourne Museum | Costs \$40

In partnership with Melbourne Writers Festival and Museums Victoria.



**Saturday
7 September**

**Yarn
Bombers**

Three minute 'bonus' yarns from community storytellers will pop up at the start of many sessions. Happening throughout Saturday.

**Aboriginal
Philosophies
and Healing**

Free

In a world dominated by Western philosophies hear three extraordinary Blak thinkers in conversation. Victoria Grieve-Williams will speak to the concept of *Makarrata*, a peacemaking process after a conflict, which begins with truth-telling. Dr Gregory Phillips established the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Healing Foundation. Uncle Jim Everett, *purulia meenamatta*, has over 50 years of commitment to the Aboriginal struggle. With Victoria Grieve-Williams, Gregory Phillips, Uncle Jim Everett. Moderator Lauren Gower.

10.30–11.30am | RMIT Storey Hall

**Picture
tells a
thousand
words**

Free

Gregg has authored and illustrated many delightful and fun children's books, including *Silly Birds* and *Mad Magpies*, and Dub has illustrated the whimsical *Once There was a Boy*, among a heap of books, and has even collaborated with Banksy. Together they will provide a real insight into the craft of visual storytelling. With Gregg Driese, Dub Leffler.

10.30–11.30am | RMIT Storey Hall

In partnership with Magabala Books.

**Sistas are
doing it**

Free

These amazing Blak women are blazing a path in their creative practices, with hard work, new approaches and grit. Let them tell it how it is... With Liza-Mare Syron, Melanie Mununggurr-Williams, Marie Munkara. Moderator Julia Hurst.

11.45am–12.45pm | RMIT Storey Hall

In partnership with the Stella Prize.

**The craft
of writing**

Free

Our panellists work in a variety of genres and have vastly different styles. So how do they create? This session will delve into the how, when, where and most importantly why writers write. With Drew Hayden Taylor (NZ), Raelee Lancaster, Laniyuk Garcon. Moderator Bridget Caldwell.

11.45am–12.45pm | RMIT Storey Hall

In partnership with Writers Victoria.

**Heard a Blak
Book read
to children?**

Free

The divine **Maurial Spearim** will read a selection of adorable, funny, poignant and thoughtful Blak children's books in the special nest of the Ngarara Place garden.

12.15–1pm Children 3–5 | 1.15–2pm Children 6–8

RMIT Ngarara Place In partnership with Magabala Books.

**Language
Returned**

Free

Of the approximate 250 traditional languages spoken in 1788 only 13 are still actively being acquired by children. This cultural warrior is relearning, reclaiming and re-educating in her own language. With Vicki Couzens.

12.15–1.15pm | RMIT Storey Hall

**Yung, Blak
& Bold**

Free

The meek might inherit the world, but the bold are going to ensure there is an equitable world to inherit. Hear them talk about the things that matter now. With Maddee Clark, Tarneen Onus Williams, Carissa Lee. Moderator Nayuka Gorrie.

1.15–2.15pm | RMIT Storey Hall

In partnership with the Emerging Writers' Festival.

Big Blak Poetry Read

Free

Seven of the best poets read three of their best poems in a mellifluous hour of power. With [Ali Cobby Eckermann](#), [Uncle Jim Everett](#), [Raelee Lancaster](#), [Yvette Holt](#), [Selina Tusitala Marsh](#) (NZ), [Melanie Mununggurr-Williams](#), [Ellen van Neerven](#)

2.30–3.30pm | RMIT Storey Hall

In partnership with Australian Poetry.

Yung Tent Embassy

Free

Give the yung a platform — literally — to speak their Blaktivism. **Warriors of the Aboriginal Resistance** will present their curated, passionate ten-minute talks with time for respective audience responses. With activist [Dr. Gary Foley](#) as the wise guide.

3–5.30pm | RMIT University Lawn

Larger Than Life

Free

What is it like to have your life captured within the covers of a book? Or on stage, for all to see? These two autobiographical storytellers share some of the experiences of their (extraordinary) lives.

With [Richard Frankland](#), [Stan Yarramunua](#).
Moderator [Lenka Vanderboom](#).

3.45–4.45pm | RMIT Storey Hall

Ya Blak

Free

Festival Director Jane Harrison in conversation with Jannali Jones, winner of the Black & Write! Fellowship. With her debut novel *My Father's Shadow*, Jones has crafted a thrilling story which keeps you on the edge right to the end. This session will officially launch the novel.

With [Jannali Jones](#), [Jane Harrison](#)

3.45–4.45pm | Storey Hall

In partnership with Magabala Books.

Elders Storytelling around the campfire

Free

Tall tales and truths from the wisest storytellers in the country. Perhaps they'll even scare you out of your skin with a ghost story or two. This is an intimate and special session and places are limited. With [Uncle Talgium \(Chocka\) Edwards](#), [Uncle Herb Patten](#).

5.30–7.30pm | Ngarara Place, RMIT

Treaty, Yeah

Free

Victoria is embarking on a Treaty process — the first State to do so. How do writers from other states respond — in a creative way — to the idea of a Treaty? We've asked some of our most lyrical and expressive poets and writers to pen their responses. With [Ali Cobby Eckermann](#), [Marie Munkara](#), [Uncle Jim Everett](#), [Ellen van Neerven](#).
Moderator [Lidia Thorpe](#).

6–7pm | The Wheeler Centre

In partnership with Melbourne Writers Festival and the Wheeler Centre.

Charcoal Lane: Quandong and Magpie

Enjoy a Rosella flower cocktail while schmoozing with the Blak & Bright literati at acclaimed restaurant Charcoal Lane. Indigenous canapés, music and drinks plus guest speaker, Stan Yarramunua (*A Man Called Yarra*), who'll share stories of his extraordinary life. This event is a fundraiser for the Indigenous Literacy Foundation. The event's named in honour the quandong, a glorious red fruit that's a treat in remote areas, and the Magpie, the beautiful warbling storyteller. Not to be missed. With [Stan Yarramunua](#), [Shauntai Batzke](#). Host [Kylie Belling](#).

8pm–late | Charcoal Lane | Costs \$100

In partnership with Charcoal Lane, Readings Foundation and the Indigenous Literacy Foundation.

This event is a fundraiser for the Indigenous Literacy Foundation.



**Sunday
8 September**

Pitch Blak Breakfast

Free

The First Nations Australia Writers Network hosts our industry event where Blak writers will have the opportunity to pitch work-in-progress to publishing industry experts. Coffee and breakfast is supplied — BYO ideas. Publishers from Hachette, Text, Penguin Random House, University of Queensland Press and Magabala plus agent **Danielle Binks**.

9–10.45am | Koorie Heritage Trust

In partnership with the First Nations Australia Writers Network.

Masterclass: Spec Fiction Check List

Hot property Claire Coleman has emerged from the garret after penning her second novel, *The Old Lie*, and will share all the secrets of her success. This is a hands-on event — bring the tools of your trade. Limited places. With Claire G. Coleman.

11am–4pm | Koorie Heritage Trust | Costs \$60

Blak & Bright has a 'no writer turned away' policy.

Please email blakbrightinfo@gmail.com if you need assistance to attend Masterclasses.

Masterclass: Memoir Writing

For aspiring and aspired Indigenous writers this workshop will explore the different elements and forms of writing memoir and why we are driven by this urge to express ourselves in this way. Participants are urged to bring along a short piece of their work for discussion. Limited places. With Marie Munkara.

11am–4pm | Koorie Heritage Trust | Costs \$60

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Blak Mama: Five plays in a day

Free

Five full length play readings. All in one day. Plays include *Coconut Woman* by **Maryanne Sam**, *Flashblaks* by **Jacob Boheme**, *Cottagers and Indians* by **Drew Hayden Taylor**, *MiWi 3027* by **Glenn Shea**, and *Swim* by **Ellen van Neerven**. Check our website for reading times.

10.30am–5.30pm | Grant St, Theatre, Southbank

In partnership with La Mama and VCA.

The Bogong

Come feast on stories at our final event. Traditionally, when the Bogong moth swarmed in the cool regions of Mount Bogong during summer, local tribes would gather to conduct ceremonies and feast on this protein-rich food source. Our Bogong is a celebration of crafted spoken word pieces. With Claire G. Coleman, Evelyn Araluen, Laniyuk Garcon, Nelson Baker, Selina Tusitala Marsh (NZ), Nayuka Gorrie, Monica Karo and Jane Harrison.

6.30–9pm | Costs \$12/\$8

In partnership with RMIT Writing & Publishing and RMIT non/ fictionLab.



blakandbright.com.au

@blakandbright





Festival Venues

A The Wheeler Centre
176 Lt Lonsdale St, Melbourne

B Melbourne Museum
11 Nicholson St, Carlton

C RMIT Storey Hall
Building 16, 336–348
Swanston St, Melbourne

D RMIT Ngarara Place
Enter via 124 La Trobe St,
Melbourne

E Charcoal Lane
136 Gertrude St, Fitzroy

F Grant Street Theatre
Building 872, Victorian College
of the Arts, Grant St, Southbank

G Koorie Heritage Trust
The Yarra Building, Federation
Square, Cnr Flinders St &
Swanston St, Melbourne

H Enterprize Park
Flinders St x Queens Bridge,
Melbourne

I Trades Hall
Cnr. Victoria & Lygon Streets,
Carlton

J Kathleen Syme
251 Faraday St, Carlton

Ticketing information

Bookings are essential for all events.
Please book via blakandbright.com.au

Access information

Blak & Bright is committed to making events as accessible as possible. All of our venues have wheelchair access. If you have an accessibility request or question, email blakbrightinfo@gmail.com.

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5–8 Sept 19
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Over 60 First Nations writers
and storytellers including:

Evelyn Araluen

Tony Birch

Daniel Browning

Claire G. Coleman

Vicki Couzens

Ali Cobby Eckermann

Uncle Jim Everett

Richard Frankland

Nayuka Gorrie

Yvette Holt

Selina Tusitala Marsh (NZ)

Marie Munkara

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