



[WQ]

VISIONARY

ISSUE 272

Mar 2021 – May 2021

Paul Mason
Robyn Sheahan-Bright

– Writing for Comics
– Australia Day Honours List



where stories live

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"Visionary"

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Dr Paul Mason is an award-winning cartoonist, and animation concept designer, working for companies such as Frew Publications, Gestalt Comics, and A Stark Productions. He is a sessional lecturer in visual storytelling, art direction, animation pre-production, and comics in the Bachelor of Animation program at the Griffith Film School.

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Editorial

Sandra Makaresz
Editor



Visionary is the theme of this issue of WQ and I think you'll be amazed at the mix of old and new ways of exploring this theme. From storytelling in video games and virtual reality, to the visionary leap of an author opening their work up to the possibility of collaboration through our Adaptable competition.

There is so much to inspire us about the future of writing and the timeless nature of great writing.

Our cover design is by comic book artist and writer, Paul Mason. It contains a small tribute to the braille alphabet that we hope you'll find interesting and thought provoking. Take a look – you might be inspired to find out more.

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Queensland Government



Uncle Herb Wharton AM

2020 Johnno Award recipient

An elder of the Kooma people, Uncle Herb Wharton had a rewarding 2020 with both a Queen's Birthday Honour and the Johnno Award.

Late last year our regional representative, Michael Lloyd, drove the many hours from Longreach to Cunnamulla to personally present Uncle Herb with his Johnno Award. They enjoyed a long chat on Uncle Herb's verandah, despite the hot wind blowing through.

Each recipient of the Johnno, awarded by the Queensland Writers Centre management committee at the end of each year, now receives a commemorative 'Johnno Award' book. Its pages are blank: a call to action to keep Queensland stories being told.

There were a lot of laughs between Michael and Uncle Herb. And there was excitement about the possibilities of the blank pages. Uncle Herb promised to get started on his next story. We hope he might have already begun.



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Meet Robyn Sheahan-Bright AM QWC Co-ordinator (ED) 1991–1997

in conversation with Judy Gregory

Dr Robyn Sheahan-Bright was Queensland Writer Centre's (QWC) inaugural co-ordinator (ED) and held the position from 1991–1997. In August 2011, Robyn was awarded the prestigious CBCA (Qld) Dame Annabelle Rankin Award for her services to children's literature. In 2012, she received the CBCA Nan Chauncy Award, created to honour people who have made an outstanding contribution to the field of Australian children's literature. In 2014, she was awarded QWC's Johnno Award for her significant contribution to the development of Queensland's writing community.

QWC was established as an incorporated body in 1990 by a voluntary committee chaired by the indefatigable Dr Craig Munro, and I was employed as the organisation's inaugural co-ordinator (later Executive Director) on 14 January 1991. The first AGM was held shortly after I began work. I subsequently worked with committees chaired by Adjunct Professor Philip Neilsen, and finally, Terry O'Connor. Helen Horton was another stalwart founding supporter, and acted as secretary during some of those early years. From a sole staff member supported by a dedicated committee and volunteers (sadly, too many to mention here), we later employed a senior program officer, Helenka King, and eventually a number of other program officers. Initially, we were based in the old DPI building in William Street, in a few unrenovated rooms in a largely empty building. It's difficult to believe now that we had only an electronic typewriter for several weeks, before acquiring a computer! The Wickham Terrace premises we moved to in 1994 were more spacious, but no more salubrious. We were temporary government tenants in both buildings and didn't manage to acquire our own dedicated space during my time at QWC.

I was privileged to work at QWC during a time of great growth and energy in the Queensland writing community and with significant support from both Arts Qld (where

Stuart Glover was responsible for literature), and the Australia Council for the Arts. A real highlight for me was the second Queensland Writers' Train, which took place in 1992. I joined the train from Brisbane to Winton, and it was an unforgettable experience. Watching Thea Astley saunter onto the stage in Longreach was one of the funniest moments of the journey. She brought the house down.

During my time at QWC, we celebrated many awards, including three Queensland writers winning the Australian/Vogel Literary Award (Andrew McGahan, 1991; Helen Demidenko, 1993; Darren Williams, 1994), and Gregory Rogers winning the 1994 Kate Greenaway Medal – the first Australian to do so; and Gary Crew winning both the CBCA Older Readers Award for Angels' Gate (joint winner with Isobelle Carmody's *The Gathering*) and the CBCA Picture Book of the Year Award for *First Light* illustrated by Peter Gouldthorpe, in the same year, 1994. These awards helped to focus people's attention on the Queensland writing community and provided great motivation for local writers.

QWC organised many celebrations of literature during the 1990s, including the Covers Exhibitions in partnership with Children's Book Council of Australia (Qld) (held at the Myer Centre and then toured), and the Black Writers Tour of Far North Queensland in partnership with the University of Queensland Press. Two regional writers' conferences were held in Cairns in 1992 and Rockhampton in 1995, working with our regional writers' representatives. We were also pleased to witness the establishment in 1994 of Somerset Celebration of Literature (now Somerset Storyfest), in 1995 of Ipswich Festival of Children's Literature (now Story Arts Festival Ipswich) and in 1996 of Voices on the Coast. All three festivals continue today as influential regional festivals. The Menjerriba Tribute to Oodgeroo on Stradbroke Island was organised by Warana

Writers' Week on 30 September 1993 and was one of the most memorable events I attended during those years. In 1996, the Warana Festival and Warana Writers' Week were renamed, and Brisbane Writers Festival was established. QWC was represented on the festival committee.

Right from the beginning, QWC aimed to support Queensland's writers through advocacy, information and professional development, just as it does today. We managed the Writers in the Library project, using libraries as venues for a statewide program of workshops – something that continues today. We established QWC's employment service and manuscript appraisal service, published the newsletter, organised monthly readings and held seminars on the business of writing.

In some ways, the world of writing is different now to how it was in the 1990s. There are many more writers and illustrators working in an overcrowded marketplace, and more public appearances, regional festivals and touring taking place. Digital developments in publishing mean that authors need to have an online presence (either personally or via publishers or agents) and that they have access to multiple delivery formats. There are also new challenges to copyright.

But other things don't change at all. Writers' incomes have remained stagnant, hovering at around \$12,000 per year earned from writing. And the things that writers need to do to develop their craft haven't changed – read widely, write well, write often and develop an individual voice. New writers need to learn from their masters and be aware of emerging trends, so it makes sense to take advantage of training and mentoring, but they also need to avoid following advice slavishly.

All writers need passion, discipline and professionalism. Learning about the writing and publishing industry is

important, as is adopting a business-like approach to the work. In today's environment, those things also include being aware of online developments. Many writers are adept at this sort of promotion, and the current public health crisis has shown us how important it can be. Sadly, many great writers I know are not as recognised as they should be. It's important for writers to believe in the value of their work and resist the temptation to allow rejection or disappointment to erode their self-belief.

Professional support networks and advice are valuable for all writers – that's why QWC and similar organisations remain as important today as they were in the early 1990s.



Demystifying the Art of Videogame Storytelling

By Brooke Maggs

Games have been telling stories for a long time, but their potential for meaning and depth has been questioned in the past. More recently, with technology improving, the industry growing, and talent maturing, games are proving they can offer a range of emotional experiences outside of heart-pounding adrenaline rushes. And what of the writer's role in these experiences? What do those story-people do in games and what storytelling skills can be transferred from other media to games?

I haven't done the same work on any game project—the nature of a writer's work in games depends on the size of the team and the size and genre of the game. I was the only writer on the small development team of *The Gardens Between*, a puzzle game with one storyline and two characters. I discussed story structure, character development, wrote character biographies, and helped design and document how we intended to tell the story. As I learned more about game development, I discovered I was a writer and narrative designer.

A narrative designer is someone

who combines storytelling and game design skills, designs parts of the game that deliver the story and documents for the team. On *Control*, a large story-driven action-adventure game, there are several exploratory puzzle sequences. I emphasised to the team that the puzzles should feel 'dream-like' in their logic, but not fantastical, so they fit the New Weird tone of the game. Narrative designers focus on the player's experience of the story, whereas writers focus on the character's experience.

Games require more writing than the average novel or screenplay because they may last longer. Game



Image from *The Gardens Between* by the Voxel Agents

writers may write multiple storylines, weapon, item and ability descriptions, scripts for cinematic scenes, combat dialogue ('look out, grenade!'), synopses and treatments, spiels for marketing and casting sheets. Us narrative people also have the humble duty of naming almost everything in the game. Places, ships, planets, people, objects, abilities, creatures, enemies, modifications, weapons, crafting materials... everything! It all adds to the mood and tone of the narrative world.

In games with multiple storylines, the player progresses through the main story, while side stories and items gradually become available. For example, *Control* is set inside a secret government building under attack by a supernatural force. The players can find forms, letters, and messages composed by government staff. The narrative team worked together to plan, write, and track this fictional archive, while ensuring these side stories can be played in any order and don't break continuity in the world or give anything away in the main plot. There is added complexity when players choose to engage with these surrounding narratives at different times.



Image from *Control*

Games need the player to interact for the story to move forward. As developers, we must communicate the rules, actions, and the goal of the game to the player. Narrative is often the context for the rules: the character motivations, the setting, and the plot. Game writers understand that the play is more meaningful if it is congruent with the character and the story. For example, in *Control*, you play Jesse Faden, who is an outsider looking for her brother in a strange government building. As Jesse, you acquire a shapeshifting gun, gain supernatural abilities and fight monsters as you get closer to answers about your brother. The gameplay and story work together.

For the gameplay and story to work together, writers and narrative designers must collaborate with the rest of the development team. Everyone in the team is trying to connect with the player. When penning their scripts, good writers—like film and TV writers—are aware of the constraints of the project and the needs of other disciplines. They might think of useful ways to reuse locations to reduce the workload in the environment art and level design

departments. If a level designer wants the player to explore an area where they've hidden valuable rewards, the writer could write a line of dialogue for the main character ('I could look around, see if there's anything I can use') to prompt them to look around.

Narrative is not always the main reason to play a game. It is possible for players to engage less with the story of a game and more with other aspects like exploring the world or combat. Players may also forget important parts of the story (easy to do when games can be over 60 hours long) or miss them altogether (not all story in a game is necessary to play in order to complete it). Game storytellers know this and work with other disciplines to reinforce the look and feel of the story world, without dialogue or character. We may also include a summary of the story in the player's menu that updates as they progress, to make the story more accessible.

My background in creative writing and the mechanics of storytelling (structure, character arcs, characterisation, dialogue and so on) is integral to my work. Moving

into game narrative required me to combine these skills with the interactive nature of games. Challenges lie in the way players can choose to engage with the story, their active role in gameplay, and the size and complexity of a game's story and world. Solving these challenges as a game writer and narrative designer is the day-to-day work that eventually results in narrative infusing every aspect of the game experience.

Brooke Maggs is an award-winning narrative designer who has worked on *Control*, *The Gardens Between*, *Paperbark* and *Florence*. She works as a Senior Narrative Designer at Remedy Entertainment. She writes fiction and has published academic papers on narrative design, storytelling and the links between digital and traditional literature. www.brookemaggs.com



Writing With A Vision

By Wendy Dartnall

Writing With A Vision, a writing group for blind and vision impaired people in Brisbane, was affectionately known by its members as WWAVIES. We met regularly for 16 years, and finally disbanded in December 2020 with a fond farewell party.

I wondered how vision impaired people wrote, when in 2005 I was invited to speak to blind and vision impaired people about writing groups. Some of them wanted to form their own writing group, having already started a book club, organised by the Queensland Narrating Service. I volunteered to kick-start them, saying that they would be able to run it themselves after a few months. Sixteen years later I was still there, along with many of the founding members.

Fifteen people came to the first meeting. Some were able to write by hand, others brought laptop computers, one or two had braille machines, while others had human scribes who wrote what was dictated to them.

I explained that it was my first time with a group of vision impaired people and that I might say daft things like 'have a look at this.' They laughed and told me that one thing they would always require was a rollcall at the

beginning of each meeting so they would know where their friends were sitting around the room.

For the first writing prompt, I invited each person to reach into a large basket of everyday objects, feel for one to hold in their hands, and then write first thoughts and keep going. Afterwards, a retired scientist said stoutly that she never thought she would write about a plastic funnel, but it had taken her back to the laboratory and a story came instantly. A man chuckled, saying he never thought he would write about a necklace, but it had reminded him of his mother in Sri Lanka. Writers allowed their inner critic to take a back seat and followed wherever memory and imagination flowed for them, letting unexpected words and images lead the way. It is in this kind of allowing that we can begin to find our voice in writing.

The group name of Writing With A Vision was chosen by its members. They soon found confidence and joy in writing, both together and alone. After the first two years, our meetings were held at Brisbane Square Library until early in 2020, when Covid-19 forced us all to isolate. We continued sharing our stories and comments by email, but it is not an easy medium for some forms of vision impairment.

Members of Writing With A Vision learned about craft through specific writing prompts, positive feedback at meetings, and group or private editing sessions. If someone presented a manuscript draft for critique, everyone was invited to give considered critical comments. I saw writers develop their skills and overcome fears.

At every meeting there were always enough volunteer scribes/readers to write stories as people dictated them. Scribes then typed and emailed them back to the writer. A scribe needs to be like a human pencil during the creative process, writing what they are given, never suggesting alternative words, unless asked to by the writer, and never objecting to content on moral grounds.

In 2009, the group produced a double CD set of stories and poems called *My Mind's Eye*. Brisbane's Radio for the Print Handicapped, Radio 4RPH, let us narrate them in their recording studio. It was encouraging for the writers to have a goal to work towards. We made a second recording with Radio 4RPH in 2019 called *Tapestries of Life*.

Braille House in Brisbane runs The Dickinson Memorial Literary Competition, an annual writing

competition for Australian residents who are legally blind. It boosted the confidence of our group's writers who entered it and often won prizes over the years.

Vision Australia's website informs us: "Government departments use the term 'legally blind' to define a person whose degree of sight loss entitles them to special benefits." Definitions are useful for running societies, but prejudices can damage us, even unconscious ones. For example, the teacher who writes over a child's work in red pen because spelling or grammar is incorrect and doesn't

acknowledge how the content sparkles, can cause a child to believe they cannot write. These beliefs can last a lifetime; likewise, someone with a physical disability who missed a few building blocks in their education, might think creative writing is beyond them.

It sometimes takes a visionary to show us the light. Mine was Pat Schneider, the founder of Amherst Writers & Artists of which I am an affiliate. A visionary teacher, Pat inspired thousands of writers throughout her life using the AWA method, and her legacy lives on through her books on

writing: *Writing Alone & With Others* (2003) and *How the Light Gets In* (2013). I share Pat's belief that everyone has a voice and art belongs to everyone. We all have the right to write.

Wendy Dartnall writes short stories and poetry. Her memoir, *A Wind from the East*, was published in 2016. She has a BA in English Literature from the University of Queensland and is an affiliate of Amherst Writers & Artists (AWA). She currently runs AWA workshops online called Writing Voices.





3D Storytelling and Virtual Visions

By Mez Breeze

The first time I encountered Virtual Reality from a storytelling perspective, was in the deep recesses of the 1990s. Back then, Virtual Reality (or VR) was far from mainstream, and the VR technology that captured my creative attention then was called VRML (Virtual Reality Modeling Language) which is similar to the 360 videos and 360 photos we use today. Although I only ended up tinkering with VRML at that time, it would set the stage for many of the projects I've been producing from then onwards - works that twist and bend traditional storytelling in unexpected ways through a mix of 3D, Virtual Reality (VR), and other Spatial Computing technologies.

VR has amazing potential for aspects of entertainment, education, social connection, and other behaviours that we're restricted from experiencing in everyday life. By popping on a VR headset and firing up an associated app, we as creatives have endless possibilities to explore and craft, though my general approach to creating in VR is largely experimental. I think of VR as an intimate storytelling medium with fantastic potential to impact an audience in a highly personalised way. By utilising the focused nature of VR, writers in particular are able to produce projects that really leave a mark.

Two projects that illustrate my non-traditional methods of crafting narratives through 3D/VR story-crafting are the award winning VR Young Adult Adventure, *Perpetual Nomads*, and an experimental 3D/VR Literature work called *A Place Called Ormalcy*.

Perpetual Nomads is an Australian-Canadian co-production set in the Inanimate Alice storyworld (a long-running digital story franchise). As Co-producer, Creative Director, Lead Interactive Writer and Narrative Designer of *Perpetual Nomads*, I made sure to emphasise the

fundamental importance of engagement and interactivity in this digital story. A reader/player plays as the main protagonist, Alice, and as Alice, you navigate your way through a videogame style environment (after choosing to play through the work through a Desktop PC or via a VR headset) where—SPOILER ALERT—you find yourself navigating creepy scenarios like finding yourself on the pointy end of a harassment stick, participating in social app-based tug-of-wars, and attempting to cope with your phone battery running crazily low just when you really need it.

Underlying all of these challenges lies a far more sinister one in *Perpetual Nomads*, one that's guided by consistent



and cohesive story world-building through rigorous attention to detail (a tip when playing through the work in either VR or in Desktop mode: make sure to play on past the end credits to get the full thematic experience). Part of crafting the narrative arc was the decision to preface the main experience with an immersive tutorial that helps anchor and assist the reader/player with text-guided instructions.

Like *Perpetual Nomads*, *A Place Called Ormalcy* is a work that has social commentary at its core. It's designed with VR/3D reading and absorbing in mind, and has multiple ways of being experienced, read, and viewed. In *A Place Called Ormalcy*, WebXR technology (via a web browser) was used to display the work and make it navigable, whereas the full VR Experience of *Perpetual Nomads* was created specifically for high-end tethered VR headsets and PCs, which (in part) explains my shift away from such platforms and growing preference for fostering greater reader/player accessibility.

For me, innovative story-crafting always sparks from a place of curiosity that's been kickstarted through exposure to specific subjects or themes, software, apps, or hardware. I really get quite the kick out of using programs and computer code in unconventional ways. Back when I first started crafting digital works, I was using online chat programs and systems to create both interactive and more passive-based microfictions which ended up evolving into my Mezangelle language system (using HTML, Javascript, email and/or chat clients). This explains why so much of my current work and narratives spawn from gestation and percolation, from exploration and mashing of formats, forms, and tools to see if they gel.

My preferred label for this type of experimental story

construction is 'digital tinkering', where the creation journey is just as important as the finished product. My work pipeline includes cobbling and combining tech in whichever ways I need, ways that craft a story that isn't just reliant on effects but one where the actual text components of the story operate so cohesively and completely that the end work could flex and story-shine even without the 3D or VR embellishments. Having said that, there is so much that's different from standard storytelling for VR and 3D, especially in relation to narrative progression and structuring. In terms of my own works, it's been incredibly interesting to observe best practices forming from standout VR experiences and attempting how to best learn from these, as well as creating works that cater to the specifics of VR such as crafting plot according to emotional weighting linked to immersion in a 360 environment. Crafting works such as *Perpetual Nomads* and *A Place Called Ormalcy* has allowed me to implement such best practices in ways that allow a viewer to become structurally acclimatised to them without being essentially prescriptive, and perhaps this may act as encouragement for you to likewise experiment, push, and twist associated storytelling boundaries.

Mez Breeze first started deep diving into the Internet in the 1990s to create digital works and she hasn't slowed since. In 2019, Mez's Virtual Reality series *V[R]ignettes* won the 2019 QUT Digital Literature Award and Mez was awarded the 2019 Marjorie C. Luesebrink Award which honors a visionary artist who has brought excellence to the field of electronic literature.

Writing At The Centre

By Katherine Wasiel



Undertaking the Fishbowl Residency at QWC was an interesting and insightful experience. After ten weeks of visualising and writing a screenplay, I found completing 120 pages challenging yet highly rewarding.

Previously, I had only written small scenes and a short film as an actor in Sydney. Before starting the residency, I developed a clear plot outline for my screenplay, *Discovery of Her*. Taking a screenwriting course with AFRS in Sydney gave me the skills I needed to develop this.

Discovery of Her is an adventure story about a palaeontologist named Mona. She discovers a new species of dinosaur fossils in Winton, Queensland. However, her professor plans to steal the fossils and sell them to a private collector in Brisbane. During the reclamation of her discovery, Mona falls in love with a town planner, Bill. Together, they overcome a dark past and are enlightened to a brighter future with the help of an ancient spirit.

By using resources from the State Library of Queensland, I collated visual references that refined my vision of potential scenes—photographs from the outback town of Winton and the city of Brisbane. With further research into researching academic papers and books from QWC and the

State Library resources, I chose to set the story in 1970s Queensland as it was a time of political and economic turmoil. My FishBowl mentor, Sandra Makaresz, was especially accommodating in helping me to authenticate this time and place.

Receiving feedback in general was valuable throughout the residency. I had a large notebook to handwrite all of Sandra's invaluable feedback. This process steadied my thoughts, so her feedback stuck with me more when I wrote. A particularly practical piece of feedback was that while my dialogue was good, the characters had room to grow in complexity. So, to play to my strengths, I wrote out conversations between the characters and let organic lines of dialogue come into play. Many of these lines were then implemented into the script.

The FishBowl residency also pushed me to adapt. Usually, I like to take inspiration from everyday moments of people interacting with their surroundings. However, COVID limited the number of patrons coming through the library, so I had to focus internally instead and think deeply about memories of people and places. One particular memory I connected with that helped me relate to the palaeontology aspect of the screenplay, was my own personal experience in the science

field. Having completed a Bachelor of Science majoring in Geology at UQ early in my career, I worked out in the field on Groote Eylandt, NT and Moranbah, Qld. This interesting and often lonely experience made me realise just how few women work in that kind of industry, and how their voices often go unheard. I hope to give a voice to those women through my main character, Mona.

Finally, I'd like to thank everyone at QWC, especially to Sandra Makaresz who edited the screenplay. Without her, it wouldn't be completed to the best of my ability. She taught me that specificity and authenticity was key to an excellent screenplay. I hope to take this advice with me into the future as a screenwriter.

Kat Wasiel is an emerging visual writer, with a focus on unique storytelling. She grew up in Brisbane and has lived in both Sydney and New York City. With a film and theatre background, she enjoys developing three dimensional characters that deliver crackling dialogue. Spending time in nature recharges her mind, body, and spirit, to develop new creative ideas for visual storytelling. Kat is currently completing a Masters Degree at UQ, which involves both writing and business disciplines. She aspires to be a unique visual storyteller across the Film, TV, and digital media industries.

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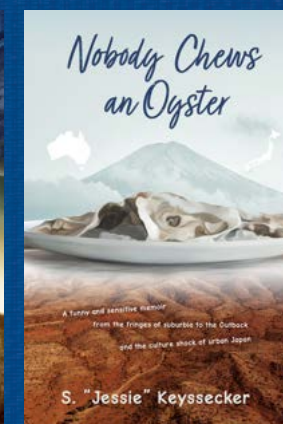
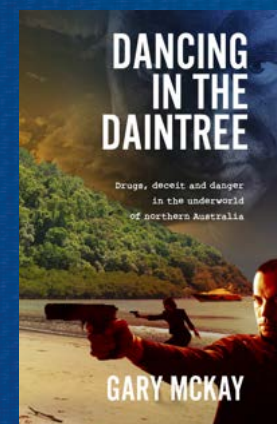
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I've now had four books published by Sid Harta. The fact that I have kept on coming back indicates that I have been very happy with the services provided, from the initial manuscript assessment, to editing, book design and distribution. I have enjoyed the collaboration, particularly in editing and design, the final outcome a fusion of my ideas and suggestions made. Many thanks!

— Noel Braun author of *The Day Was Made for Walking*, *I Guess I'll Keep on Walking*, *Whistler Street*, *Friend and Philosopher*

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QUEENSLAND WRITERS CENTER
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KEY GUIDE



Course

Part seminar, part workshop; staged over one or more days, weeks or months.



Workshop

A more intimate environment conducive to class writing exercises and tutor feedback.



Seminar

A lecture-style presentation that may involve some audience interaction.



Bootcamp

An intensive course run over consecutive days.



Engagement

This event will help you build skills to engage your readers.



Craft

This event will help you with the development of your writing craft.



Sustainability

This event will help you with the sustainability of your career.



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This event is live streamed to an online audience.



Hybrid

This is a live stream recording of an in-person workshop. It will prioritise in-person participants.



Members Only

This event is for members of the Queensland Writers Centre only.



Level 1

Suitable for writers of all levels.



Level 2

Suitable for intermediate writers and above.



Level 3

Suitable for emerging writers and above.



Pop-up

A short meet and greet with an update from QWC staff.



Free

This event is free, so feel free to join.



The Long and Winding Road

How a rejection turned into a connection

By Shelley Davidow

When I was 10 and living in the bush in South Africa, I used to use my pocket money to buy tiny notebooks to make into flipbook animations. Every afternoon I'd spend hours painstakingly drawing adventures. Frame by frame my ballpoint pen heroine did everything I could make her do in ten seconds: she went out sailing, fell out of her boat, got rescued by a helicopter while a shark swam by and birds flew overhead.

After high school, I auditioned for and got into WITS drama school, hoping to realise my dream of making real movies. But South Africa towards the end of Apartheid was a tumultuous place. Opportunities for me were scarce. During my highly theoretical drama degree I got to write: 1) a script for a radio play. 2) a short film and 3) I actually made a single ten-minute documentary for a local community project used for generating funding. I realised that if I wanted to tell stories, I would probably have to be a writer - something that would cost nothing and required no more than my imagination and a pencil and paper.

I have since lived on five continents and had 45 books published. I've written children's books, a novel, adult non-fiction including most recently the memoirs, *Whisperings in the Blood* and *Shadow Sisters* (UQP, 2016; 2018). My style, influenced by my yearning to share story through images and symbols, is still visual. My dream of bringing my ideas to the screen persists.

When I saw the 2020 Adaptable book -to-screen contest close, I submitted *Shadow Sisters*. I thought my memoir would make a visually stirring, sweeping drama, something between *Out of Africa* and *The Power of One*, but with two interesting girl heroines. I was thrilled to get onto the longlist. And even more excited to be one of the finalists. At last, I would get to pitch my work to a range of producers at the 2020 Gold Coast Film Festival.

I booked my hotel, organized transport and even as I did that, I was watching the world slowly turn on its head.

‘COVID19, first a distant meteor somewhere far away, came hurtling towards us - and exploded’

Australia began shutting its borders to other countries. Reality hit: there could be absolutely no chance that any producer or filmmaker would be interested in something set mostly in South Africa.

Quickly, even the option of doing a face-to-face pitch disappeared. My heart sank further. Creative projects are the love-children of real connections with people, of affinities and shared dreams. Nothing that I could present via Zoom about a black and white sister growing up together in Apartheid South Africa would have the power to make someone want to take this on. Pitching online felt even more impossible. So, in this mindset I prepared my pitch. The day arrived and I pitched my story to three producers. One got back and said though this project was too ambitious for him, he liked it. He would send a synopsis to Philip Noyce whom he thought would be interested. Perhaps, I thought, there was hope! But then states went into lockdown. Australia's creative industries went quiet. Despite several follow-up emails, a connection with Phillip Noyce did not transpire. I let go.

Meanwhile, the first producer/director/writer I had pitched my story to, whose style and short films had had an emotional impact on me when I'd looked him up, got

back to me with what will stand out forever as the most beautiful rejection I'd ever received, (and I literally have thousands).

I read it several times. He was generous, supportive, sharply insightful. He deserved a response. Here was someone who had connected with my writing. Not only that, he had taken the time to respond, even if the idea of making a South African film at this point was impossible.

With nothing left to lose, I wrote back and thanked him for the best rejection ever. I dared to ask if he'd be interested in my unpublished but recently completed novel set in contemporary Queensland. He said it sounded interesting and when could he read it? I sent it immediately. A few days later he said he'd like to pitch something to me.

Over Zoom, he shared his idea of a TV series. I listened

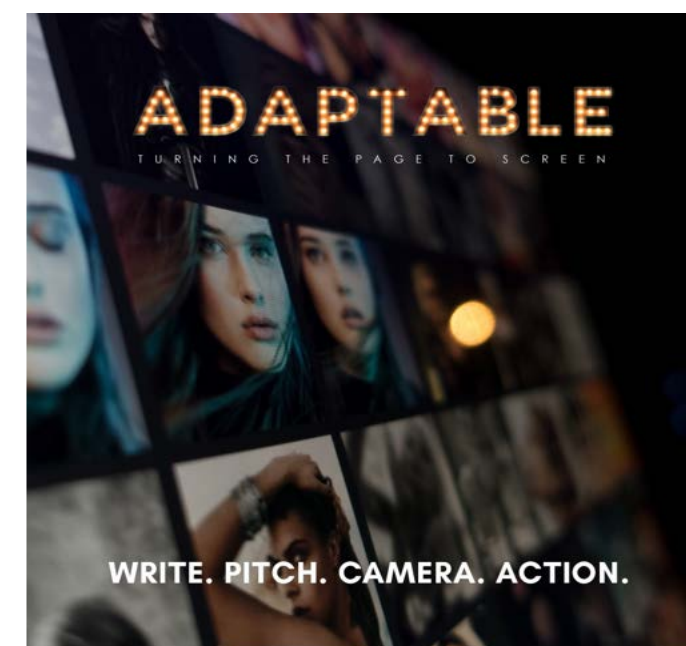
in awe. He had taken every element of my story and amplified it. Everything I'd imagined in a creative alliance shone here: synergy, creative affinity - a whole that would be more than the sum of its parts: where my wealthy characters drove BMWs, he gave them Bentleys; where the main family in my story lived in a Queenslander, his lived in the outback in a giant mansion on 10,000 acres with an Olympic sized swimming pool; where my most interesting character had already died, his was alive and still wreaking havoc. We finally met in person and the option for an ongoing TV series was signed.

Discussions with studios are, I believe, currently underway.

Failures, a global pandemic, and cancelled dreams did not prevent the unique opportunity that arose through Adaptable.

I'm honoured to have my idea taken up by a filmmaker whose work I profoundly admire. The future is always uncertain, but I have hope that a compelling TV series may indeed be in it.

Shelley Davidow is an international author and educator. For the past twenty years she has written and taught on five continents. Her books include the recently released *Raising Stress-Proof Kids* (Exisle 2014, Familius, 2015), *Whisperings in the Blood* (UQP 2016), the Creative Writing textbook *Playing with Words* (Palgrave Macmillan UK 2016), *Fail Brilliantly* (Familius 2017) and *Shadow Sisters* (UQP 2018).





Writing for Comic Books

By Paul Mason

Comics is as unique a medium as you'll find in the creative fields. A marriage of both text and images, arranged in a deliberate, sequential manner to incite stories. No other medium employs words and visuals to combine in such a multitude of ways, in order to entertain and invoke a sense of thought, both conscious and subconscious. This allows the story to play out not only on the page, but also in the mind of the reader.

So, how do you start writing comics? For such a diverse medium, there is a lot to consider – the creative process, the visual language of comics, the methodologies, not to mention the historical considerations and current publishing prospects. It is a lot to cover, so let's stick with some basic ideas.

1. Thinking Visually

Comics is a visual medium, one which both writer and artist must learn the ability to tell their story without relying on blocks of text. Much of the magic of comics is not just in the panels, but also in the space between, known as the 'gutters'. It is

the manipulation of this visual space, selecting 'what moments must be shown' via image and juxtaposed words, verses 'what is implied', that convey the intended story. To 'show' rather than just 'tell'. To give the reader insight, for instance, into a character's inner thoughts, while also having the character speak and engage in the action, all in the same panel, and page.

2. Real Estate

With comics, before diving into writing script pages with no set limit, I recommend you first attempt a small comic of 4 or so pages. If you can tackle small stories, ones longer are easier to form to page/panel counts later. Where film and screenplays are a question of 'time', comics are 'space'. Say you're planning an average US-style comic of maybe 4-6 panels per page, that means you need to tell your story in about 16-24 drawings. Basically, every panel is valuable 'real estate'. You need to pick the best visual moments to tell your story, to be laid out by the artist in a way that draws the eye of the reader, so they understand the plot.

Unlike screenplays, the format of writing comics is not standardised. All methods generally boil down to either:

a. Full-Script (page 1, panel 1: brief description, dialogue, panel 2: etc.), which I recommend if you're comic writing for the first time, as it forces you to think more structurally about the composition and format of each page.

b. Plot-Drive (or 'Marvel method') where the writer describes the story and beats, and then this plot/outline is 'broken down' translated visually by the artist into pages and panels. Can save time, but takes a bit of experience and skill.

c. Hybrid: methods that employ a combination of both, such as an writer/artist plotting a script visually first. Such is the fun of writing for comics.

3. Collaboration

If you're not intending to illustrate



yourself, and you're not submitting a script to an editor or publisher, then you're looking for a collaboration. This can be an amazing creative experience, as an artist will translate your words to images, often better than you pictured in your own mind.

Starting small means trying an artist out (and their 'style') to see how they manage with your script, and not having to commit someone to a tome to draw long-term (for you would also have to pay this untested collaborator long term, if they're able to manage the workload at all). Also, consider that a first-time comics writer might have difficulty locking down an artist on a large project; the shorter work being more feasible to try out.

When looking for an artist, I always suggest looking past pretty pictures and seek examples of sequential storytelling pages. Good storytelling art can save an average story, but bad storytelling art can butcher great writing. Ask artist friends, aspiring pros, and like-minded creators you trust or have rapport with. Remember too, an artist is not an extension of your wrist. Evaluate what they bring to the story.

4. Small story benefits

Early publishing opportunities (with less commitment) can come in forms of anthology books with other creators, rather than first attempting to write a graphic novel and then waiting a long time before that project ever sees the light of day, if at all. There are kickstarting and indie publisher opportunities here; see Gestalt, IFWG, etc.

5. Writing is rewriting

Like anything, you only get better the more you do it. Multiple short scripts where you can write, rewrite, see it drawn, learn from 'mistakes', find better ways to execute your ideas, and creating a new comic, makes for far better comics than attempting your magnum opus graphic novel on the first attempt. Comics writing and illustrating contain 'rules' and methods that a writer or cartoonist could spend a career attempting to master, yet must be applied in such a way that even a child should be able to pick up and follow the story. There is no 'wrong way' of implementing, just better ways, that can only be learnt and discovered by doing.

Most of all, read comics. As many as you can. Find what you enjoy and what you don't in terms of all those writing methods you already know – story structure, pacing, character development etc. Then, put it all together and enjoy the process!

Dr Paul Mason is an award-winning cartoonist, and animation concept designer, working for companies such as Frew Publications, Gestalt Comics, and A Stark Productions. He is a sessional lecturer in visual storytelling, art direction, animation pre-production, and comics in the Bachelor of Animation program at the Griffith Film School.

www.masoncomics.com.au



How to Write a Song

By Sue Wighton

If I actually, truly, madly, deeply knew how to write a song, I'd be Janis Ian or Paul McCartney. Plus I'd be a millionaire with mansions complete with pergolas and panic rooms in the Caribbean, Antibes, and Beachmere. All that notwithstanding, I do write songs. Sometimes. And I'll do my best to explain the process.

What is a song? It's easier to say what a song is not.

A song is not a poem. A song is not a story. A song inhabits that space somewhere between poem and story. It speaks to us in a mysterious way - where words, feelings, rhythm and melody magically collide to create something 'other'.

In my experience, most songs arrive unbidden. Some spring from deep emotions caused by grand life events - falling in love, falling out of love, falling for the wrong person, falling down the stairs. I've written songs about love affairs gone gloriously right and horribly wrong. I've also written songs about revenge and anger - very satisfying. 'I know where you live' is a revenge song of mine and it was a great way to release my negative emotions about love gone

wrong. You can't go to jail for singing: 'You think I sent my weapons back, my poison and my knives ...'. But you can go to jail for actually killing your ex. Kill them or write a song about them? You choose.

Good songs often have a 'hook' - an idea or a phrase that will lodge itself in the listener's ear, mind and heart. Ben Lee's song, *Catch My Disease* is one such clever song. The recurring 'that's the way I like it' worms its way into your ear, and that's the way I like it. In fact, that's why I like it.

A song of mine starts: 'There's a hole in my heart where the wind blows through'. This song is about loss, and it started simply from that one line. Those words have an inbuilt lilt, a cadence, which suggested a melody, and a song was born.

I have a myriad of notebooks in which I jot down odd phrases and snippets that occur to me. And I could eavesdrop for the Olympics. So other peoples' overheard conversations find their way into my notebooks and occasionally wander into my songs.

There are rules in song writing. Like, there are some words and phrases

that should never appear in a song. For example 'discount', 'average', 're-afforestation', 'schedule', 'recorded prior learning', 'hard rubbish'. Avoid the mundane, the 'pedestrian' along with banalities and bureaucratic language. Though, try telling Courtney Barnett this. She has elevated the everyday into her own kind of deadpan art form. So, like rules everywhere these are for breaking.

Sometimes the most fleeting thought can turn into a song. One day I mused, 'one of these days I'll write a song about a train.' This became the first line of a song called *Ride On* which I recorded with my band, *Unsung Heroes*.

My daughter, Katie, is an Aria Award-winning songwriter. She reminds me that all great songs have killer first lines and the lyrics are very specific. For example, in the Beatles hit: 'Lady Madonna, children at her feet, wonder how you manage to make ends meet', the first line reaches out and grabs you. The vivid lyric paints a picture.

Ralph McTell's classic, *Streets of London* starts with a strong, specific and descriptive first line: 'Have you

seen the old man in the closed down market, kicking up the papers with his worn out shoes?' Strangely the more specific the lyrics, the more universal the appeal.


Mr Bojangles is another specifically drawn story. We see this ragged man, poignantly and affectionately described by Jerry Jeff Walker and we recognise him instantly and want to hear more.

Occasionally I've challenged myself to write a song, with no real, immediate experience as a catalyst. I read somewhere that Paul Kelly uses lots of biblical references in his songs. So I wrote a love song (to an imaginary lover) and found inspiration for the lyrics in the Bible. My lyrics include, 'You are my balm of Gilead' and '... you are my Garden of Eden'. It's not for me to say if this is a good song or

not, but I created it by manipulating random thoughts and Biblical text. It was a surprisingly satisfying exercise.

So how do you write a song? I actually have no idea.

Sue Wighton is a published Brisbane-based writer and singer. She wrote a weekly op ed piece for the Courier-Mail from 2011-2014. In 2020 Sue published a book of her essays titled *'Accidental Writer'*. She writes a blog through her website (suewightonaccidentalwriter.com) and is a regular contributor to the Bribie Islander magazine. Sue performs around town with her band The Margaritas and also as a solo singer-songwriter. She's in demand as MC and guest speaker for special events. A sharp and witty observer, Sue enjoys entertaining audiences with her words and music.



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Chasing the Wild Pineapple

Paulette Flint – Columnist

by Lesley Synge



Signora Bella, May 2019 Credit SLQ

Educator and local historian, Paulette Flint, initiated her *Times Gone By* column for The Observer (Gladstone) in 1994. Implementing her personal philosophy of life – ‘you never stop learning’ – Paulette has seen her stories in print weekly, if not daily, ever since.

‘The community likes uncovering the past as much as I do,’ Paulette reflects during our interview, modestly acknowledging her engagement with a series of NewsCorp editors and her readership over several generations. ‘A flurry of letters to the editor sometimes signaled historical controversies but these always resolved amicably. My readers are an interactive lot. They give feedback, suggest topics, and send in their precious photographs.’

In 2020, after publishing the column for 27 years, the paper decided to axe it. Undeterred, she relaunched it on Facebook as a ‘Paulette Flint Author’

page. Within months the page gained some 1,700 followers. Some columns log as many as 7,000 hits.

‘Social media demands a more pictorial format but I’m thrilled that *Times Gone By* continues to appeal. The Baby Boomer demographic is especially enjoying revisiting childhood memories with adult eyes.’

Most households in Gladstone have a copy of her book, *What’s in a Name? The Stories Behind the Street Names of Gladstone, Queensland* (2009).

Paulette pays tribute to former CEO of QWC, Robyn Sheahan-Bright, who resides in Gladstone, for advice during her publishing journey. In turn, Robyn observes, ‘I’m in awe of Paulette’s energy and passion

in promoting the research she has pursued for decades. Her painstaking work has provided Gladstone with a valuable archive.’

Local heroes who guard the national heritage, usually on a volunteer basis, are many. But how many have published some 3,000 stories? It’s a level of commitment that’s visionary.

Lesley Synge holds an MA in Creative Writing from UQ. Her novella, *When Giuseppe Met Jackie*, won Ravello Tales Award (Italy) and her non-fiction has twice won the Lorna McDonald Essay Prize. Her latest poetry collection is *Signora Bella’s Grand Tour*. She is a founding member of QWC.



Paulette Flint with Gooreng Gooreng Elder Jacqueline Johnson during 2019 Our Priceless Past interviews in Gladstone. Image courtesy Gladstone Regional Art Gallery & Museum.



Competitions & Opportunities

Griffith Review’s The Long and the Short of It

Price:	\$15-25
Prize:	Publication
Length:	3, 500 - 7000 words
Deadline:	15 th March

To celebrate its 75th edition, *Griffith Review* is looking for submissions of fiction and non-fiction by emerging writers who are either unpublished or have only one book published. They want new ideas, fresh voices and bold perspectives that command attention. They are not accepting poetry for this competition.

Peter Carey Short Story Award

Price:	\$15
Prize:	\$2,000 and publication
Length:	2,000 - 3,000 words
Deadline:	18 th March

The Peter Carey Short Story Award is open to all Australian residents. First and second prize entries will be published in the Spring 2021 issue of *Meanjin* and agreement for publication is a condition of entry.

Charles Brasch Young Writers Essay Competition

Price:	FREE
Prize:	\$500, publication, and 1-year subscription to <i>Landfall</i>
Length:	1,500 words
Deadline:	31 st March

Charles Brasch Young Writers’ Essay Competition, an annual award open to writers aged 16 to 21. Essays will be on a topic of the author’s choosing. The competition is judged by the editor of *Landfall*. The winner will be announced and published in *Landfall’s* May issue.

The UNSW Press Bragg Prize for Science Writing

Price:	FREE
Prize:	\$7,000-\$1,500 and publication
Length:	Max 7,000 words
Deadline:	31 st March

To recognise the best of the best, UNSW Press has established an annual prize for the best short non-fiction piece on science written for a general audience. All shortlisted entries are included in *The Best Australian Science Writing 2021*, NewSouth’s annual collection featuring the finest Australian science writing of the year.

Fish Poetry Prize

Price:	€14-€8
Prize:	Publication in the Fish Anthology 2021
Length:	Max 60 lines
Deadline:	31 st March

The Fish Poetry Prize is open to poets of any nationality writing in English. There is no restriction on theme or style. Top 10 poems will be published in the Fish Anthology 2021 to be published in July 2021.

Gemina: \$500 for Tiny Fiction, Nonfiction, Poetry, or Art

Price:	\$6 USD
Prize:	\$500 & publication
Length:	100 words for fiction and non-fiction; 140 characters for micropoetry
Deadline:	1 st April

Sunspot Literary Journal is launching Gemina: \$500 for Tiny Fiction, Nonfiction, Poetry, or Art to honour the power of the small. No restrictions on theme or category.

StoryLinks Short Story Competition	
💰 Price:	FREE
🏆 Prize:	\$250 and publication on StoryLinks website
✍ Length:	Max 1,000 words
🕒 Deadline:	2 nd April

The 2021 StoryLinks Short Story competition is open to all writers of children's stories aged 18 and above.

Imagine 2200: Climate Fiction for Future Ancestors	
💰 Price:	FREE
🏆 Prize:	\$2,000 - \$300
✍ Length:	3,000-5,000 words
🕒 Deadline:	12 th April

Imagine 2200 draws inspiration from Afrofuturism, as well as Indigenous, Latinx, Asian, disabled, feminist, and queer futures, and the genres of hopepunk and solarpunk. They are seeking short stories that centre on climate solutions from the most impacted communities and bring into focus what a just, regenerative future could look like.

2021 Newcastle Short Story Award	
💰 Price:	\$16.50
🏆 Prize:	\$3,000-\$1,000
✍ Length:	Max 2,000 words
🕒 Deadline:	14 th April

A short story competition run by Hunter Writers Centre for all Australians living here or abroad. Stories must not include the name of the author or any identifying marks.

Hyades Magazine	
💰 Price:	FREE
🏆 Prize:	Publication
✍ Length:	1,000 words each for flash fiction; 1-4 poems up to 8 pages in total
🕒 Deadline:	15 th April

Hyades Magazine are open to all writers; however, they prioritise submissions by BIPOC, LGBTQIA+, disabled and other traditionally marginalised creators.

Blackfella Speculative Fiction Anthology	
💰 Price:	FREE
🏆 Prize:	\$500 and publication
✍ Length:	Max 5,000 words
🕒 Deadline:	30 th April

An anthology of Blackfella Speculative Fiction, edited by Mykaela Saunders and to be published by UQP, is seeking speculative fiction short stories written by, for, and about Indigenous Australians.

Daisy Utemorrah Award	
💰 Price:	FREE
🏆 Prize:	\$15,000 and a publishing contract with Magabala Books
✍ Length:	40,000-100,000 words
🕒 Deadline:	30 th April

The Daisy Utemorrah Award is for an unpublished manuscript of junior or YA fiction. The Award is open to all Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples currently living in Australia.

The Lifted Brow Experimental Non-Fiction Prize	
💰 Price:	\$7
🏆 Prize:	\$5,000 and publication
✍ Length:	Up to 5,000 words
🕒 Deadline:	1 st May

The Lifted Brow & RMIT non/fiction Lab Prize for Experimental Non-Fiction is an annual writing prize that aims to unearth new, audacious, authentic and/or inauthentic voices from both Australia and the world. Submissions should convey meaning using unorthodox form, or style, or voice, or point-of-view, or approach/method, etc.

2021 ABR Elizabeth Jolley Short Story Prize	
💰 Price:	\$15-\$25
🏆 Prize:	\$6,000-\$2,500
✍ Length:	2,000-5,000 words
🕒 Deadline:	3 rd May

Australian Book Review's 2021 Jolley Prize is open to all short story writers writing in English. Stories can be any subject, and in any style, as long as it is fiction; non-fiction will not be accepted.

Glendower Award for an Emerging Queensland Writer	
💰 Price:	Free
🏆 Prize:	\$15,000, manuscript development, and publication with UQP
✍ Length:	40,000-100,000 words
🕒 Deadline:	TBA April/May

Awarded for an outstanding unpublished manuscript by an emerging Queensland writer. Authors who have previously self-published a full-length work with an ISBN are not eligible. Unpublished authors must not have an existing binding publishing contract or be in current contractual negotiations.

Publishable	
💰 Price:	\$50
🏆 Prize:	Manuscript development and pitch meeting
✍ Length:	Submit the first 50 pages of a 55,000 – 110,000-word manuscript
🕒 Deadline:	10 th May

Publishable gives up to 25 emerging writers the chance to take part in a tailored Manuscript Development Program. Each writer will be given a personalised timetable designed to strengthen, refine, and polish their completed manuscript. Over a period of two weeks, writers can expect to work with published authors, QWC mentors, and industry experts to improve their craft and take their manuscript closer to publication.

Bridport Creative Writing Competition	
💰 Price:	FREE
🏆 Prize:	£5,000-£1,000
✍ Length:	5,000-8,000 for novels (initially); 250 words for flash fiction; 5,000 words for short story; 42 lines for poetry
🕒 Deadline:	31 st May

Bridport Creative Writing Competition is open for aspiring writers everywhere. It is committed to discovering new writers in poetry, short story, flash fiction and the novel.

The Australian Vogel's Literary Award 2022	
💰 Price:	\$25
🏆 Prize:	\$6,000-\$2,500 and publication
✍ Length:	50,000-80,000 words
🕒 Deadline:	31 st May

The Australian/Vogel's Literary Award is one of Australia's richest and the most prestigious award for an unpublished manuscript by a writer under the age of thirty-five. Offering prize money of \$20,000 plus publication by Allen & Unwin with an advance against royalties, The Australian/Vogel's Literary Award has launched the careers of some of Australia's most successful writers, including Tim Winton, Kate Grenville, Gillian Mears, Brian Castro, Mandy Sayer and Andrew McGahan.

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Publisher Update

Affirm Press

Only accepts submissions on the first Monday of each month. Note that submissions received outside this window will not be assessed.

Please send all general submissions to: submissions@affirmpress.com.au

Check website for full submission details: <https://affirmpress.com.au/submissions/>

Allen & Unwin

Please note Allen & Unwin only accepts manuscripts correctly submitted through our electronic system. Any hard-copy submissions mailed in will be recycled. Also that, despite its name, The Friday Pitch is open to submissions all week!

<https://www.allenandunwin.com/submission-guidelines>

Black Inc. and Nero Books

Accepts general and commercial non-fiction including history, current affairs, sports, and biography – and for literary and commercial fiction.

Currently NOT accepting submissions for fantasy, science-fiction, travelogues, crime/mystery, erotica, poetry or picture books.

<https://www.blackincbooks.com.au/submissions>

Bloomsbury Spark

Digital only publisher of teen, YA and new adult between 25K and 60K words.

<https://www.bloomsbury.com/au/bloomsbury-spark/submissions/>

Boolarong Press

Mainly publishes history, biographies and Australian children's books, but open to other genres.

<https://www.boolarongpress.com.au/writers/submission-guidelines/>

Carina Press

Harlequin's digital-first adult fiction imprint. Currently acquiring all subgenres and heat levels of romance (excluding inspirational romance), new adult, historical romance, mystery and crime, action adventure, science fiction, fantasy and interactive adventures. Does not accept unsolicited submissions of novellas under 35,000 words.

<https://www.carinapress.com/shop/pages/write-for-us.html>

Escape Publishing

Digital imprint of Harper Collins Australia. All submissions must include a central romance or romantic elements focused on lead characters and an uplifting ending.

<https://www.harpercollins.com.au/escapesubmission/>

Ginninderra Press

Hard-copy submissions only. Accepts non-fiction, poetry, and collections of fiction. Must enquire before submitting children's books. NOT accepting novels at present. Enquire before submitting children's books.

<http://www.ginninderrapress.com.au/getting.html>

Giramondo Publishing

Accepts unsolicited submissions – fiction, non-fiction, and poetry. Check website for details.

<https://giramondopublishing.com/submissions/>

Hachette Australia

Accepts fiction, non-fiction, children's and YA. NOT looking for science fiction/fantasy, horror, illustrated books, cookbooks, poetry, screenplays or academic works.

<https://www.hachette.com.au/submissions/>

Hawkeye Books

Currently closed for unsolicited submissions. Will open up again in 2021. Accepts exceptionally well-constructed page-turners for a mainstream audience.

<https://hawkeyebooks.com.au/submissions/>

Harlequin Books Australia

Seeking strong commercial works of fiction, memoir or non-fiction Australian stories for women. Minimum 80k words.

<https://www.harpercollins.com.au/harlequin-books-submissions>

Mills & Boon

Accepts a wide range of romance. Online submissions open. Visit website for details.

<https://www.millsandboon.com.au/submissions/>

Odyssey Books

Accepts unsolicited fiction, memoir, narrative non-fiction, picture books, and novellas. Traditional publishing with direct submissions welcome; no agent required. No advance paid. Self-publishing options available.

<https://www.odysseybooks.com.au/submissions/>

One More Chapter

Currently closed for submissions, but will open up again very soon. See website for updates.

<https://www.onemorechapter.com/>

Pantera Press

Seeking well-written fiction and non-fiction, with best-seller potential and international appeal. Currently NOT accepting picture or illustrated books, cookbooks, self-help books, health and well-being books, travel books, poetry, play scripts, short stories, compilations, chapter books or children's books (for ages 12 and under).

https://www.panterapress.com.au/submit/#tab_submission

Pan Macmillan

Currently interested in contemporary drama, sagas, psychological suspense, crime and thrillers, historical, and literary fiction; narrative non-fiction, contemporary issues, memoir, history, true crime, lifestyle and health, mind body spirit; junior and middle grade fiction, young adult/crossover fiction.

<https://www.panmacmillan.com.au/submissions/>

Penguin Australia

Currently closed for submissions while staff work remotely due to coronavirus.

<https://www.penguin.com.au/getting-published/>

Rhiza Press

Currently considering unsolicited submissions for young adult fiction through Rhiza Edge and query letters for manuscripts suited to the Rhiza Press digital list.

<https://wombatrhiza.com.au/rhiza-press-submissions/>

Scribe Publications

There will be no submissions accepted in 2020. Accepts unsolicited and unagented submissions during seasonal three-week windows only; the next window is 1 April through to 21 April.

<https://scribepublications.com.au/about-us/submissions>

Sidharta Books & Print

Currently only considers manuscripts that have been professionally read (in entirety) by their own listed editors. Submissions via email with brief synopsis and author bio.

<https://publisher-guidelines.com>

Text Publishing

Broadly interested in publishing fiction and non-fiction, including middle-grade and young adult. Currently NOT accepting poetry, play scripts or picture books, individual short stories, technical manuals, cookbooks, how-to guides, travel guides or educational textbooks.

<https://www.textpublishing.com.au/manuscript-submissions>

Ultimo Press

Ultimo Press is an independent publisher established in 2020 with the simple ambition to become home to Australia's best storytellers. Accepts general and literary fiction and non-fiction. Submission guidelines in the contact section of the home page.

<https://www.ultimopress.com.au>

University of Queensland Press

Submissions only accepted during the first week of each month. Currently accepting unsolicited submissions for literary fiction and non-fiction. Poetry, children's and YA are currently closed for unsolicited submissions.

<https://www.uqp.com.au/pages/submissions>

Ventura Press

Accepting submissions of contemporary fiction, historical fiction, crime/thriller fiction, memoir, mental health, and history. Currently NOT accepting children's fiction and nonfiction, poetry, young adult fiction or non-fiction, or illustrated books of any kind.

<https://www.venturapress.com.au/submissions>

Walker Books

Unagented writers can only submit on Walker Wednesday. Check the website for the upcoming Walker Wednesday dates in 2021.

<https://walkerbooksaus.typeform.com/to/MktCaKMM>

Wombat Books

Accepting unsolicited manuscripts via online submission.

<http://wombatbooks.com.au/index.php/authors/submissions>

Member Milestones

Dr Glen Davies

Dr Glen Davies recently had *Forgetting and Remembering During Pandemics* published in the Our Inside Voices: Reflections on COVID-19 anthology.

Denise Parker

Denise Parker's chapbook, *After the War – A Poetic Memoir*, has been published by Ginnenderra press; her poem, *Mattins*, is being published in the Joy in the Morning anthology; and her poem, *Heart*, was included in the 2020 Poetry d'Amour anthology.

Kellie M Cox

Kellie M Cox's romance suspense series, *The List* and *The Reef*, have been published. The sexy summer beach reads are available at kelliemcox.com.

Allyssa Mackey

Allyssa Mackey was recently announced as the winner of the 2020 Thunderbolt Prize Emerging Author's Award. Her piece was published on newc.org.au in November.

Verity Croker

Verity Croker's poem, *Gondwana Gown*, was recently published in the Tasmanian Times.

Nadia Johansen

Nadia Johansen was a runner in the Emerging Writers' competition for SBS.

Jo Skinner

Jo Skinner's short story, *The Road Home*, was published in the November edition of MiNDFOOD.

Joanne Hattersley

Joanne Hattersley's book, *Ramblings of a Forty-Something Widow*, was released in October. Her children's book, *My Adventures with Bruce*, will be released in 2021.

Melanie Bird & Jennifer Crane

Co-editors, Melanie Bird and Jennifer Crane, have published *Our Spirit: Creative Works of Australian Defence Force Women from 1960s Onward*.

Mocco Wollert

Mocco Wollert had three poems published in Quadrant's October edition and one poem published in Scope's October/November edition.

Jocelyn Hawe

Jocelyn Hawe's short memoir was published in the ebook anthology, *Remember When – Silver Linings*.

Jessica White

Jessica White's hybrid memoir, *Hearing Maud*, won the 2020 Michael Crouch award for a debut work of biography in the National Biography Awards, and was also shortlisted for the Queensland Literary Awards.

Steve Hawe

Steve Hawe's short story, *Love Dust*, and his novel, *My Time of Eagles*, have both been published by Boolarong Press.

Jan-Andrew Henderson

I Don't Really Get Jan-Andrew Henderson: A Short Story Collection was published by Black Hart and Edinburgh Literary Heritage and *How it Changed the World* was published by Amberly Press in November.

Joanna Beresford

Joanna Beresford's historical fiction, *Every Year I Am Here*, was launched in November by Atlas Productions.

Sharyn Swanpoel

Sharyn Swanpoel had her short story, *Cupcakes*, published in the Romance Writers of Australia's Sweet Treats anthology and her short story, *Just Alice*, published in the Stringybark Tales anthology.

Hazel Barker

Hazel Barker's short story, *An Angel in Heaven*, has been selected for publication in Tabor's 2020 anthology, Stories of Life.

QWC Membership Benefits

When you become a member of QWC, you become part of a vibrant writing community with access to a wide variety of resources and information.

Writing Queensland (WQ) magazine

Exclusively for QWC members, the quarterly WQ Magazine features articles from industry professionals and writers.

Advertising discounts

Members receive a discount on advertising in WQ and our weekly e-newsletter, a fantastic way to promote your business to an engaged, educated readership of thousands, with wide interests in culture, music, food, family and travel as well as reading and writing.

QWC Member Discounts

QWC members receive discounts on QWC's annual program of workshops, master classes and industry seminars. Presentation of your membership card will also provide you with discounts at the following places:

Bookshops

- 10% discount at:
Byblos Bookshop, Mareeba (discount on second-hand books only); Dymocks, Brisbane City; Dymocks, Townsville; Folio Books, Brisbane City; The Jungle Bookshop, Port Douglas; The Library Shop, SLQ, Brisbane; Maleny Bookshop, Maleny; Mary Who, Townsville; Riverbend Books, Bulimba; Rosetta Books, Maleny; The Written Dimension Bookshop, Noosa Junction; The Yellow Door Books and Music, Yeppoon.

Members-only programs and services (costs apply)

The Writers Surgery offers members 90-minute consultations to discuss their projects (including grant applications) face-to-face, by Skype or by telephone with an experienced editor or published author.

Year of the Writer series is a suite of master classes to help you plan, write and edit your novel.

The Novelist's Boot Camp is an intensive weekend of brainstorming, plotting and practical exercises to get your novel started and well on its way.

Other discounts

- Author Photos by Profile Portraits Australia: \$110 for 3 low res photos (normally \$150); \$140 for 3 high res photos (normally \$195). Contact Giulio on 0417 604256 giulio.saggin@gmail.com / profileportraitsaus.blogspot.com.au (mileage costs may apply)
- Developmental editing and manuscript assessment services by Totally Edited: 10% discount. Contact Richard Andrews at totallyedited.com
- La Boite Theatre tickets \$25 (preview) \$39 (in season).
- Olvar Wood Writers Retreat offers a 10% discount to QWC members on all their writer services: olvarwood.com.au
- \$5 memberships at Dendy Cinemas

Membership Form

To join the Centre please complete the information below or join online at qldwriters.org.au.

Please complete and return to:
Queensland Writers Centre,
PO Box 3488,
South Brisbane
Queensland 4101
p: 07 3842 9920
e: admin@qldwriters.org.au

Applicant's details

Please indicate: ☐ New member ☐ Renewing

Name: _____

Organisation (if relevant): _____

Postal Address: _____

Telephone: _____ Postcode _____

Email: _____

Duration and type of membership

	One Year		Two Years	
	Print	PDF*	Print	PDF*
Full membership	<input type="checkbox"/> \$79	<input type="checkbox"/> \$79	<input type="checkbox"/> \$149	<input type="checkbox"/> \$149
Concession	<input type="checkbox"/> \$59	<input type="checkbox"/> \$59	<input type="checkbox"/> \$109	<input type="checkbox"/> \$109
Passionate (5 yrs)	<input type="checkbox"/> \$349	<input type="checkbox"/> \$349		
Youth (26 and under)	For details go to: expressmedia.org.au			
Organisation	<input type="checkbox"/> \$150			
Overseas Supporter	<input type="checkbox"/> \$50 (no GST)		<input type="checkbox"/> \$90 (no GST)	
Donation^	<input type="checkbox"/> \$10	<input type="checkbox"/> \$20	<input type="checkbox"/> \$50	<input type="checkbox"/> \$_____

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