

Program (Friday to Saturday)

Friday

Social Gathering

PFA/Keelty: Friday 4.00 PM onwards

Book Launch — Cursed Shards

PFA/Keelty: Friday 5.30 -5.45pm

With Leanbh Pearson

Guest of Honour — Amie Kaufman

Clarke + Cook: Friday 6.00 to 7.00 PM

Amie Kaufman in conversation with Cat Sparks.

Opening Ceremony

Clarke + Cook: Friday 7.00 to 7.15 PM

Panel — Entrance to Evil, Doors in Dark Fiction

Clarke + Cook: Friday 7.30 PM

The humble door can also be a powerful image, especially in works where your characters have something to fear. This panel discusses door imagery in horror and SFF, and how to convince your characters to open them.

Leanbh Pearson, Daniel O'Malley
& Lisa Fuller.

Panel — The Slush Manifesto

Reid + Jones: Friday 7.30 PM

CSFG's 2023 anthology received submissions in the triple digits and whittled it down to a final shortlist of just 22 works. The anthology's slush readers (and editor) discuss how different stories made different first impressions, talk about the benefits of slush reading, and provide tips to authors on how to make their submission stand out.

CZ Tacks, Charis, Nathan J. Phillips, Rebecca Hayward, AD Ellicott.

Panel — Gore Mode Engage

Clarke & Cook: Friday 8.30 PM

How do we handle blood and guts in speculative fiction? A Conflux After Dark panel (18+).

Zachary Ashford, Lee Murray, Kirstyn McDermott,
JS Breukelaar & Aaron Dries.

Panel — Romancing the Minotaur

Reid + Jones: Friday 8.30 PM

AKA the monster lovers' panel. Love stories that transcend species and sometimes anatomical impossibilities. A Conflux After Dark panel.

Leife Shallcross, Lyss Wickramasinghe, Red Saunders, Kathryn Hore & CZ Tacks.

Saturday

Guest of Honour — Lisa Fuller

Cook: Saturday 9.00 AM

Lisa Fuller in conversation with Amie Kaufman.

Workshop — How to Make Your Origami Dragon

PFA/Keelty: Saturday 10.00 AM

with Nuke

Panel — Ace as Folks

Clarke: Saturday 10.00 AM

Asexual and aromantic representations in SFF, both in writing and in community spaces. Have we moved beyond robots yet?

With Juliette Wade, Emilie Morscheck, AD Ellicott & DP Vaughan.

Panel — Panel Beater

Reid: Saturday 10.00 AM

Panelists talking about how to panel for aspiring panelists. How to pitch, find other panelists, how to behave and how to moderate.

With Leife Shallcross, Lee Murray, Jason Franks & CZ Tacks.

Panel — Is Anything New Under the Sun?

Cook: Saturday 10.00 AM

Is science fiction better at prediction or novelty? And what truly new ideas have we seen in science fiction novels of the past 10 years?

Program (Saturday)

Cat Sparks, Thoraiya Dyer, Alison Scott, Daniel O'Malley & Grace Chan.

Panel — Conflict & Stakes

Jones: Saturday 10.00 AM

Is your plot feeling flat? Characters unmotivated? This panel will teach you how to ramp up the tension.

J Ashley-Smith, Keith Stevenson, Zachary Ashford, Rebecca Hayward & Richard Harland.

Workshop — Writing Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Characters in SFF

Workshop Space: Saturday 11.00 AM

With Alistair Ott & Yaritji Green.

Book Launch — VANDAL

PFA/Keelty: Saturday 11.00 AM

With Kaaron Warren, JS Breukelaar & Aaron Dries.

Panel — Story Thinking: Using Science Fiction and Fantasy to Solve Wicked Problems

Reid: Saturday 11.30 AM

Discusses the work a team of writers at the University of Queensland has been doing to translate skills drawn from SFF to help different industries, from medicine to defence, solve global problems such as climate change and the rise of AI.

With Helen Marshall, Lisa L Hannett, Kim Wilkins, Joanne Anderton, & Pierce Wilcox.

Panel — Fanzines: The State of the Art

Jones: Saturday 11.30 AM

What's the history of fanzines in Australia? What's happening with them now?

With Perry Middlemiss, Leigh Edmonds & Jean Weber.

Beyond Tolkien: Worldbuilding for the Modern Writer

Cook: Saturday 11.30 AM

How can we incorporate new ideas into genre traditions? How can we do this with respect and sensitivity?

With Amie Kaufman, Cary J Lenehan, Laura E Goodin, Marlee Jane Ward & Richard Harland.

Building Communities in Antipodean SFF: Writer's Groups, Mentorships, & More

Clarke: Saturday 11.30 AM

How do you meet fellow writers, how can we learn from each other, and how can we build relationships across the Tasman?

With Lee Murray, Sharon Manssen, Lindy Cameron & Sam Hawke.

Panel — It's Groundhog Day! It's Groundhog Day! It's Groundhog Day!

Cook: Saturday 12.45 PM

Handling time loops in your fiction with grace and poise. Or swearing and flailing. Dealer's choice!

With Andrew Frost, Richard Niven, DP Vaughan, AD Ellicott, Davinia Evans & Marlee Jane Ward.

Panel — Working with Illustrators

Reid: Saturday 12.45 PM

Whether you're interested in cover art, graphic novels, or in-story illustrations, this one's for you. What do artists want writers to know? How can we communicate across art forms?

With Lyss Wickramasinghe, Red Saunders & Jason Franks.

Panel — How to Write (and Sell) Short Fiction

Jones: Saturday 12.45 PM

Short fiction is historically one of the ways emerging writers make a name for themselves. This panel explores how to enter the market.

Program (Saturday to Sunday)

With TR Napper, CZ Tacks, Laura E Goodin, Grace Chan, Pamela Jeffs, and Stephen Herczeg.

Panel — All Cops Are Balrogs? Law Enforcement in Urban Fantasy

Clarke: Saturday 12.45 PM

Urban fantasy has a long tradition of borrowing from crime and noir fiction. Its protagonists tend to be investigators, detectives, or otherwise associated with the law. This panel discusses how this trope has evolved over time and continues to change with the cultural view of police.

With Americo Alvarenga, Ian Nichols, Daniel O'Malley & Imogen Cassidy.

Book Launch — Body of Work

PFA/Keelty: Saturday 1.45 PM

With CZ Tacks, Freya Marske, Pamela Jeffs, J Ashley-Smith, Louise Pieper, CH Pearce & Geraldine Edwards.

Panel — Writing for Games

Reid: Saturday 2.30 PM

Board, narrative, tabletop roleplaying, video — the world of games is vast. What can we learn from them? What should you know if you want to write them?

With Helen Marshall, Rik Lagarto, Cary J Lenehan.

Panel — Art of the Anthology

Jones: Saturday 2.45 PM

How to launch one, how to edit one, how to get into one, and what makes a good one.

With CZ Tacks, Adrian Collins, Ellen Datlow, Cat Sparks & Tehani Croft.

Panel — Kill Your Double: Why Do We Hate Doppelgangers?

Clarke: Saturday 2.45 PM

Your evil twin. Your Mirrorverse copy. Your surprise clone. This panel explores the use of things with our faces in genre fiction.

With Matthew R. Davis, CH Pearce, Grace Chan & Lucy Sussex.

Panel — Surviving Adolescence: The SFF That Got Us Through

Cook: Saturday 2.45 PM

Being a teenager is hard, but luckily sci-fi and fantasy are there for us. This panel takes a trip down memory lane and examines the lessons they took from their favourite stories.

With Thoraiya Dyer, Anthony O'Connor, Alison Scott & Matt Tighe.

Workshop — Welcome to my World

Workshop Space: Saturday 2.30 PM

With Juliette Wade.

Book Launch — Traitor's Run

PFA/Keelty: Saturday 3.30 PM

With Keith Stevenson, Cat Sparks & Richard Harland.

Guest of Honour — Ellen Datlow

Reid + Jones: Saturday 4.00 PM

Ellen Datlow in conversation with Kaaron Warren.

DITMAR Awards

Reid + Jones: Saturday 5.00 PM

Whiskeycon

Offsite with Tim Napper 6.00PM

Sunday

Guest of Honour — Helen Marshall

Cook: Sunday 10.00 AM

Helen Marshall in conversation with JS Breukelaar.

Workshop — Get Real

Workshop Space: Sunday 11:00 AM

With J Ashley-Smith.

Program (Sunday)

Ghosts in the Seams Character Workshop with Kaaron Warren

Meet in the Novotel lobby at 10:45am, then walk to The Green Shed: Sunday 11 AM till 1PM

Panel — Bidding for Worldcon

Cook: Sunday 11:15 AM

Australia has hosted the World Science Fiction Convention four times, but it's not as easy as putting up our hand. How to build a successful bid?

With Perry Middlemiss, Rose Mitchell, Nathan J Phillips.

Panel — Yarning About Spec Fic

Clarke: Sunday 11:15 AM

First Nations panellists yarn about decolonising the spec-fic space, and how allies can include Indigenous voices and stories appropriately.

With Alistair Ott, Yaritji Green, Lisa Fuller & NC Koussis

Panel — Dating While Creative

Reid: Sunday 11:15 AM

Writing is a solitary pursuit, so how do you meet people? And if those people are also creatives, how do you make it work?

With Jason Franks, Kirstyn McDermott, Jason Nahrung, CZ Tacks & Matthew R Davis.

Panel — New Worlds, New Ideas: Transforming Outmoded Perspectives Through SFF

Jones: Sunday 11:15 AM

Sci fi and fantasy can give a whole new perspective on thorny real-world issues. This panel discusses examples, what to do, and what not to do.

Jones Room — with JS Breukelaar, Anthony O'Connor, Lisa L Hannett, and Grace Chan.

Book Launch — The Hidden Keystone

PFA/Keelty: Sunday 12.15 PM

With Nathan Burrage & Jason Nahrung.

Panel — Self Publishing

Reid: Sunday 12:45 PM

Things have changed a lot in publishing lately, but self-publishing is still viewed very differently from traditional publishing. This panel explores the pros, cons, and things to know.

With Keith Stevenson, Ian Nichols, Chris Andrews, Andrew Frost & Sharon Manssen.

Panel — Climate Fiction and Eco Futures

Jones: Sunday 12:45 PM

Extreme climate events are hitting societies globally amid rising signs of dwindling planetary resilience. Phasing out fossil fuel burning and ending destructive farming are the key actions required. How can writers help fight for the future?

With Cat Sparks, Greg Foyster, Grace Dugan & Matt Tighe.

Panel — Spirits Abroad

Clarke: Sunday 12:45 PM

A discussion of the spirits, monsters, and little gods that immigrated with us to Australia.

With Rebecca Hayward, Leanbh Pearson, Americo Alvarenga & Imogen Cassidy.

Panel — Travelling in Fiction

Cook: Sunday 12:45 PM

We've all read the fantasy novel where the author doesn't seem to realise that horses need food and sleep. How do we handle logistics and transport in worlds other than our own?

With Amie Kaufman, Michael Sisley, Juliette Wade, Nathan Burrage & DP Vaughan.

Book Launch — Remains To Be Told

PFA/Keelty: Sunday 1.45 PM

Lee Murray, Sharon Manssen, Lindy Cameron, Paul Mannerling, Jacqui Greaves, Tracie McBride.

Program (Sunday)

Workshop — Dialogue: Brevity, Beats & Breaks

Workshop Space: Sunday 2:45 PM

With Laura E. Goodin

Panel — Making Writing Work

Reid: Sunday 2:45 PM

Balancing creativity with a 9-5, getting paid, avoiding burnout, and how to sustain a career.

With J Ashley-Smith, CZ Tacks, Sam Hawke & Cat Sparks.

Panel — Writing in the Wilderness

Jones: Sunday 2:45 PM

Whether it's on purpose or by accident, writing can be isolating. How do we handle that?

With Lisa Fuller, Ian Nichols, Juliette Wade, Joanne Anderton, D.P. Vaughan & Daniel O'Malley.

Panel — International Horror

Cook: Sunday 2:45 PM

Four women. Four countries. One genre. Some of the greatest voices in horror from the US, Canada, Australia, and New Zealand discuss how best to scare your way across the globe.

With Helen Marshall, Lee Murray, Kaaron Warren & Ellen Datlow.

Panel — Elves in Space

Clarke: Sunday 2:45 PM

This panel is all about crossing, blending, and breaking genres. What makes this work, and what makes it fall apart?

With Richard Harland, Pamela Jeffs, Jacqui Greaves, Helen Marshall & Anthony O'Connor.

Panel — Sympathy for the Devil

Cook: Sunday 4:00 PM

Crafting wickedly compelling protagonists, antiheroes, & villains we love to hate. Panelists discuss how to get the best fiction from the worst people.

With J. Ashley-Smith, Pamela Jeffs, Stephen Herczeg, and CH Pearce.

Panel — Traditional Publishing

Reid: Sunday 4:00 PM

What is a query letter? Do you need an agent? Should you self-publish instead? A panel about the traditional publishing model

With TR Napper, Lucy Sussex, Freya Marske & Sam Hawke.

Panel — The Art of Revision

Jones: Sunday 4:00 PM

We can't all afford a professional editor, so here's a panel about how to edit your own work while avoiding despair.

With Richard Harland, Nathan Burrage, Matthew R Davis & Davinia Evans

Panel — Faerie Etiquette: A Survival Guide

Clarke: Sunday 4:00 PM

Hospitality is sacred in many real-world cultures, but in fiction, a cultural misstep can be dire. This panel discusses greetings, shared meals, and the consequences, with examples ranging from the myth of Persephone to Pan's Labyrinth.

With Jane Virgo, Val Toh, Louise Pieper, Leife Shallcross & JM Merryt.

Guest of Honour — Grace Chan

PFA/Keelty: Sunday 5.00 PM

Grace Chan in conversation with Nathan J Phillips.

Trivia Night

Reid + Jones: Sunday 6:00pm

Join Nuke and Elizabeth for a fun evening of speculative trivia, testing your knowledge of books, authors, music, TV, film — and whether black holes are ways in or out, or both...

Program (Sunday to Monday)

Banquet

Clarke + Cook: Sunday 6-8:00pm

Panel — Insatiable

Reid + Jones: Sunday 8:00 PM

Sometimes cannibalism is a symbol of savagery and the other, but modern works like HANNIBAL and BONES AND ALL have a different take. This panel dissects that feeling you get when you love something so much you want to eat it. A Conflux After Dark panel (18+).

With Leabh Pearson, Aaron Dries, and Zachary Ashford.

Panel — It Can't Bend Like That

Clarke + Cook: Sunday 8:00 PM

Discussing the absolute worst sex scenes we've seen in fiction, and how to avoid those mistakes. Got a really awful sex scene you want us to dissect? Submit to chair@conflux.org.au.

With Rebecca Hayward, Jacqui Greaves, CZ Tacks & Red Saunders.

Monday

Guest of Honour — Perry Middlemiss

Cook: Monday 10.00 AM

Perry Middlemiss converses with Leigh Edmonds.

Workshop — The Road Not Taken Poetry

Workshop Space: Monday 11:00 AM

With Silvia Canton Rondoni.

Panel — Character Arcs

Jones: Monday 11.15 AM

It's almost impossible to have a story without characters. No matter what genre you're writing, our panel can help you nail down the tricky bits of character arcs.

With Matthew R Davis, Keith Stevenson, Richard Harland, JS Breukelaar & Grace Chan.

Panel — Truck-Kun and You: Portal Fantasy, Isekai, and Transmigration for the New Reader

Cook: Monday 11.15 AM

This panel discusses the entire genre of portal fiction, with a detour into similarities and differences between Western portal fantasies and East Asian isekai and transmigration stories. For a start: why do so many stories open with the protagonist getting hit by a truck?

With Lyss Wickramasinghe, Jason Franks & Rebecca Hayward.

Panel — Frozen Protagonists from Futurama to the First Avenger

Clarke: Monday 11.15 AM

A character flung from the past to the future is a classic of several genres. Why do we love a fish out of temporal water so much?

With David McDonald, Richard Niven, DP Vaughan & Andrew Frost.

Panel — Love, Lust & Longing

Reid: Monday 11.15 AM

Building a whole new world? Conflict on an intergalactic scale? That's easy. This panel is about the hard stuff: writing convincing romance.

With Amie Kaufman, Louise Pieper, Leife Shallcross & CZ Tacks.

Panel — Monstress

Clarke: Monday 12.30 PM

Writing monstrous women: the good, the bad, and the ugly.

With Kirstyn McDermott, Kaaron Warren, Jacqui Greaves, Aaron Dries, and Red Saunders

Panel — Writing Fast & Slow

Reid: Monday 12.30 PM

Some writers get up at 5am every single day. Some writers finish one book in two weeks and never write again. This panel will help you figure out what works for you!

Program (Monday)

With J. Ashley-Smith, Sam Hawke & Kathryn Hore.

Panel — Stranger Lands

Cook: Monday 12.30 PM

Portal fiction as reflections of the immigrant, diaspora, and cultural outsider experience.

With Lyss Wickramasinghe, Americo Alvarenga, and Lee Murray

Panel — In a Manner of Writing

Jones: Monday 12.30 PM

You are cordially invited to the marriage of speculative fiction and historical romance. Who does this well, and what can Jane Austen teach us about contemporary SFF?

With Freya Marske, Sharon Manssen, and Louise Pieper

Double Book Launch

PFA/Keelty: Monday 1.30 PM

With Leabh Pearson, Louise Pieper & Zachary Ashford.

Five Minute Fiction

Boardroom: Monday 2.30 PM

The rules are simple: you have five minutes to read an excerpt of a work in progress. Have fun!

With Kaaron Warren.

Panel — Now You're Thinking With Portals: Lessons from the Video Games

Cook: Monday 2.30 PM

The Portal franchise started with nothing but a blank white room and a fancy gun, and yet it remains beloved. This panel discusses what made the Portal games so effective in terms of narrative, character, and setting.

With Emilie Morscheck, CH Pearce, Americo Alvarenga, Rik, and CZ Tacks.

Panel — Sticking the Landing

Cook: Monday 2.30 PM

How to finish a story in a way that satisfies, makes sense, and avoids deus ex machina.

With JS Breukelaar, Amie Kaufman & Ian Nichols.

Panel — Editing Professionally

Reid: Monday 2.30 PM

What does an editor do? How does one become an editor? What do editors want from writers? Editors from traditional publishing houses and freelance editors who contract with single authors will discuss.

With Ellen Datlow, Adrian Collins, Lyss Wickramasinghe, and Jason Nahrung

Panel — Speculative Medicine

Clarke: Monday 2.30 PM

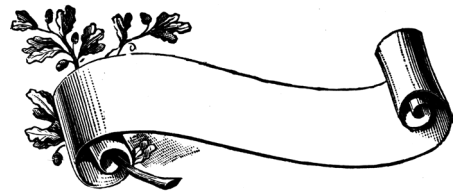
With Grace Dugan, Freya Marske, Yarijji Green & Grace Chan.

Closing Ceremony

PFA/Keelty: Monday 3:45 PM

Dead Dog Party

Novotel Bar 4:00 PM



Workshop Details

Saturday 11:00pm-1:00pm

Writing Aboriginal Characters in Spec Fic

Join this collaborative and interactive space to share knowledge and stories, and be ready to leave with a long list of what to do next. Us mob can only share our stories and the stories that have been shared with us (with permission), and we do not speak for all Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander writers or readers. Attendees are encouraged to bring pieces that include Indigenous characters (that they liked or disliked) and also their own work to share. Come with an open mind and heart, tread carefully on stolen land, and bring all your seemingly dumb or awkward questions.

Attendee max — 10.

Dr Yaritji Green is a Yankunytjatjara/Djaru woman who is living up in the Kimberley working as a Doctor in an Aboriginal Health Service. She likes to write in her spare time. Yaritji's short story 'Kunmanara' from *Cultural Baggage* is currently being taught in Australian Literature in Dusseldorf University, Germany. She won the Red Orchre Award for her short story 'Fifty-Seven', and got a highly commended for her second story, 'The Lying Jezebel'.

Alistair Ott (They/He) is a Wiradjuri Queer artist, academic, & advocate. Born on Gundungurra and raised on Ngannawal Land, they were taught their family's language and stories from their Ngama and Mudyigang. Alistair works at the Australian National University as an Indigenous Academic Associate and PhD Student. They were awarded Out for Australia's 30 under 30 in 2022 & their short story 'Our Time, Our Home' is being published in *An Unexpected Party* by Fremantle Press in 2023. He hopes to continue writing stories that spark joy for queer blakfullas like himself. Dyiramadilinya badhu Wiradjuri!

Saturday 2:30pm — 4:30pm

World in my Eyes — worldbuilding integrated with deep point of view

In this workshop, we'll discuss how to mesh worldbuilding and character so your character becomes the ambassador to your world. A world takes on different dimensions when shaped by what the character knows and does not know, and by how

the character judges people, places, and events. We'll be getting granular here — discussing what kind of words in what combinations create the sensation of deep point of view, and how those techniques can be used to illuminate world details.

Attendee Max — 15.

Juliette Wade is a linguist, anthropologist, discourse analyst, and lover of worldbuilding. She is the author of *The Broken Trust series* from DAW, as well as shorter fiction in *Clarkesworld* and *Analog*. She lives in the eastern suburbs of Melbourne with her family. She loves fictional character names but only uses them for the house cats.

Sunday 11am — 1pm

Ghosts in the Seams Character Workshop

Participants will walk to the Green Shed Underground, a large clothing shop, where they'll dress up as their character and try to find out what makes them tick. The shop will open exclusively to us, and you don't have to buy anything!

Kaaron Warren has been teaching writing workshops for 20 years, in haunted places all over the world. She's published five novels and seven short story collections and was guest of honour at World Fantasy, Stokercon, Genrecon and Geyscon.

Sunday 11am — 1pm

Get Real: Connecting with direct experience to bring your fantastic fiction to life

As writers of speculative fiction, it's too easy for us to get caught up in the idea, the fictional universe, the fantasy elements that distinguish the world of our imagination from the 'real' world; the physical world that we — and all our (non-AI) readers — inhabit. And yet, it is the evocative details, the uniqueness and specificity of our direct experience, however mundane, that breathes life into our stories, and which connects us most viscerally with our readers. Through a series of timed exercises, participants in this workshop will safely explore personal observations, experiences and memories, learning how to add depth, colour and realism to their stories, and bring their fiction — however fantastic — vividly to life.

Attendee max — 6.

Workshop Details

J. Ashley-Smith is a British-Australian writer of dark fiction and co-host of the *Let The Cat In* Podcast. His first book, *The Attic Tragedy*, won the Shirley Jackson Award. Other stories have won the Ditmar, Australian Shadows and Aurealis awards. His short story collection, *The Measure of Sorrow*, is out now from Meerkat Press.

Sunday 2:30pm — 4 :30pm

Dialogue: Brevity, Beats & Breaks

Good dialogue is a crucial driver of narrative. This workshop teaches proven techniques for honing skills to make your characters' interactions effective, evocative and sparkling with clarity, brevity, and power. Author, teacher and playwright Laura E. Goodin demonstrates how to avoid the dreaded "As You Know, Bob" and Infodump, as well as methods for harnessing dialogue to develop characters and move the plot along via rhythm, tempo, economy and sound.

Laura E Goodin lives in Victoria and is interested not only in the wondrous and sublime that form the core of speculative fiction, but in how music, drama, and other performance arts can incorporate a bit of surreality, unreality, and hyperreality. She spends what little spare time she has emulating Xena, Warrior Princess via horseback riding, fencing, martial arts and camping. She is also an enthusiastic bell ringer at St James Old Cathedral.

Monday 11:00pm — 1:00pm

The Road Not Taken Poetry Workshop

The Road Not Taken poetry workshop explores the paths that ultimately bring writers from all walks of life into poetry. Inspired by Robert Frost's poem, this workshop aims to reflect on the small choices we make as poets and how they have a big impact both on our work as well as ourselves. Exercises will be provided to explore different approaches to writing verse and creative word play. This workshop is open to writers of all levels. Participants must bring their own writing tools.

Silvia Cantón Rondoni is a Spanish-born Australian queer poet and writer. Her poetic debut occurred during lockdown in 2019. She was commissioned by IFWG Australia to create her first poetry collection *Stark Naked* as well as a poetry anthology *Infectious Hope*. She also hosted the *Pandemic Poetry* podcast available on Spotify.

Silvia works as a Spanish translator. She lives in Canberra with her fiancée, award-winning New Zealand writer Paul Mannering and their young family.

