



2011 CASTLEMAINE STATE FESTIVAL 1-10 APRIL

MEDIA KIT

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Literary program

The 2011 Castlemaine State Festival's literary program, curated by award-winning author **Cate Kennedy**, brings together the traditional storytelling voices within the community of Castlemaine and its living histories, with contemporary writers and historians telling their stories.

Living Histories comprises 7 different events that take you into the heart of Castlemaine. The offerings in the first days of the festival include:
historian and storyteller **Brian McCormick** at historic Tute's Cottage inviting you into the fascinating behind-the-scenes world of the 'Two Up School'; a tour of Castlemaine through the eyes of Samuel Thomas Gill – the most notable artist who visited Castlemaine during the 1850s goldrush – with guide **Geoff Hocking**; acclaimed historian **Robyn Annear's** real-life accounts of the stories behind two of Castlemaine's best-known landmarks: the *Castlemaine Library* with its remarkable secret roots in spiritualism in the Mechanic's Institute, and *Keep the Market Building*, an eye-opening historical account of this beautiful Castlemaine icon and how it was only just saved from being replaced by a cream brick office block.

The *Living Histories* series continues with two performances of **Phoenix Vixen Crinoline**, part installation and part performance, written by **Kathrin Ward**, an imagined account of an uncommon marriage played out in the goldfields of 1850s Victoria. Then the renowned **Thompsons Foundry Band**, which has outlived the Foundry itself and has recently celebrated its 125th birthday – invites you to join band members to hear their artistry and their long history.

Finally, festival-goers can immerse themselves in **Living Stories of the Victorian Goldfields**, a richly entertaining and informative series of audio tours of the history and landscape around Castlemaine. Pick up an ipod and wander around Castlemaine listening to well-known storyteller and musician **Jan 'Yarn' Wositzky** combine his talents with those of thirty-five local actors, musicians and historians to bring these vibrant stories alive.

Continuing in the storytelling vein, **It Happened to Me** (2-8 April) is a series of **four nights of mesmerising stories told live on stage** by both well known artists and familiar locals living in the here and now. You'll hear real, unexpected, poignant, dramatic and funny accounts from a stellar range of guests including beloved singer songwriter **Shane Howard**, actress **Helen Morse**, perceptive playwright **Hannie Rayson**, Indigenous historian and author **Tony Birch**, novelist and raconteur **Shane Maloney**, columnist **Mark Dapin**, Victorian Opera Music Director **Richard Gill** and radio journalist **Elly Varenti**, among other national and international Festival artists and guests. Themes include: *Stories from Backstage*; *How I Got Here*; *A Sense of Home* and *You Wouldn't Believe It*, as this unique and unrepeatable festival event ranges across four diverse, entertaining nights.

Another intriguing session of insightful conversation and storytelling will take place throughout the day on 9 April, when Cate Kennedy invites four fellow writers to join her "on the couch" in conversation at the Theatre Royal. In **The Greatest Story Never Told**, authors will describe a story they would love to write, but never have — and their reasons. Guests include **Carmel Bird**, **Shane Maloney**, **Mark Dapin** and **Jarad Henry**.

The **poetry program** takes place in an intimate setting on the 2-3 April, deep inside the heart of **Carman's Tunnel in Maldon**, a space that was made to mine gold. Poetry readings will take place with Australian poets, **Bronwyn Lea**, **Sarah Day**, **Les Wicks** as well as **Andy Jackson** and **Rachael Wenona Guy's** poetry and puppet performance. This very special and intimate series of poetry readings will include works concerned with environment, relationships, family and the epiphanies that have changed the course of a life.

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