



The Wheeler Centre
Books Writing Ideas

176 Little Lonsdale Street
Melbourne VIC 3000 Australia
+61 3 9094 7809

THE WHEELER CENTRE PRESENTS SIR SALMAN RUSHDIE LIVE IN MELBOURNE

Tuesday 21 October



One of the world's most acclaimed contemporary authors Salman Rushdie returns to Melbourne for one night only to discuss the transformative power of literature and his commitment to the written word. Celebrated for his lifelong work and unwavering advocacy for freedom of expression, Rushdie will appear live at Melbourne Town Hall on Monday 17 August 2026 for what promises to be one of the year's most anticipated literary events.

QUOTE ATTRIBUTABLE TO ERIN VINCENT, WHEELER CENTRE CEO: 'It is a great privilege for The Wheeler Centre to host Sir Salman Rushdie for this exclusive Melbourne event next year. With freedom of speech under threat in western democracies around the world, this will be a conversation of the moment and The Wheeler Centre is honoured to host him for this special occasion.'

Marking Rushdie's first visit to Australia in more than a decade, this wide-ranging conversation will explore the enduring role of the writer in a divided world and the redemptive power of art in times of adversity. Reflecting on his extraordinary life and career, Rushdie will delve into the ideas and stories that

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have shaped a generation and cemented his place as one of the defining voices of the 20th and 21st centuries.

Born in India and educated in England, Rushdie rose to international prominence with *Midnight's Children* (1981), the Booker Prize-winning novel that transformed postcolonial literature and established him as a master of magical realism. His body of work – including *The Satanic Verses*, *The Moor's Last Sigh*, *The Ground Beneath Her Feet*, *Shalimar the Clown*, *Quichotte* and his deeply moving memoir *Knife: Meditations After an Attempted Murder* – spans five decades and has earned Rushdie global acclaim for its wit, imagination and political daring.

Since the attempt on his life in 2022, Rushdie has continued to write and speak publicly with courage and conviction, reaffirming his belief in the power of storytelling to illuminate truth and sustain the human spirit.

Appearing in conversation with author and columnist Sisonke Msimang, Rushdie's Melbourne event will offer audiences a rare opportunity to hear directly from a writer whose work and personal journey have come to symbolise both the freedom and the fragility of artistic expression. The event will also follow the release of Rushdie's new short story collection, *The Eleventh Hour*, to be published in November 2025 – a poignant meditation on life, death and the moments that define us.

From Tuesday 21 October Wheeler Centre members have exclusive access to early bird tickets via wheelercentre.com

Early bird tickets will be released to the general public on Tuesday 28 October.

Salman Rushdie's only Melbourne appearance is presented by The Wheeler Centre. Salman Rushdie's Australian appearances are presented with Festival of Dangerous Ideas.

– ENDS –

Media contact

Alice Lewinsky

alice@commonstate.co

0403 837 351

Media centre: Images available [here](#)

For more information, please visit wheelercentre.com/events

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An Evening with Salman Rushdie

Salman Rushdie, Sisonke Msimang

Monday 17 August 2026, 7pm to 8.30pm

Melbourne Town Hall

Salman Rushdie appears in Melbourne presented by The Wheeler Centre (17 August 2026) and in Sydney as part of the Festival of Dangerous Ideas (22-23 August 2026).

Salman Rushdie is the bestselling author of 22 books, including *Midnight's Children*, which won both the Booker Prize and the Best of the Booker; *Shame*, *The Satanic Verses*, *The Moor's Last Sigh*, and *Quichotte*, all of which were shortlisted for the Booker Prize; *East West*, a collection of stories; *Joseph Anton*, a memoir; *The Jaguar Smile*, a work of reportage; and three collections of essays, including *Languages of Truth*. His 2024 book, *Knife: Meditations After an Attempted Murder*, was a finalist for the 2024 National Book Award for nonfiction. Rushdie is a member of the American Academy of Arts and Letters and a fellow of the American Academy of Arts and Sciences, and he is a Distinguished Writer in Residence at New York University. He is a former president of PEN America and the recipient of the PEN Centenary Courage Award. His books have been translated into over 40 languages. In 2023, he was named one of *Time's* 100 Most Influential People of the Year and has received a Queen's knighthood for his 'services to literature'. His new book, a collection of short fiction titled *The Eleventh Hour*, is published November 2025.

The Wheeler Centre is Melbourne's home for smart, passionate and entertaining public talks, and exists to support writers, readers and thinkers. Through live and digital conversations, debates, readings, performances and discussions, it deepens public engagement with the most pressing topics of the day. It is dedicated to creative collaboration, community engagement, diversity, and innovation.

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