



The Wheeler Centre
Books Writing Ideas

176 Little Lonsdale Street
Melbourne VIC 3000 Australia
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Media Release
Tuesday 6 August

The Wheeler Centre's Spring Fling returns this October: Ben Shewry, Lucia Osborne-Crowley and Gina Chick to share in *Wild Abandon*



Melbourne's The Wheeler Centre will shake off the winter chill – no matter the weather! – with the return of its month-long Spring Fling event series this 3 to 31 October.

Celebrating the theme of *Wild Abandon*, this year's program invites audiences to embrace the unexpected and consider new ways of understanding. From game-changing chefs and potent truth-tellers to form-breaking novelists and agenda-setting thinkers, *Spring Fling* is a season of renewal and change.

Now in its third year, the annual event series brings together an exciting roster of writers, musicians, actors, poets, creatives and comics – many appearing exclusively with The Wheeler Centre – for a curated series of conversations, showcases and special events across Melbourne and statewide.

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The Wheeler Centre's CEO, Erin Vincent, said: 'Spring Fling is fast becoming a highlight of the spring event calendar in Victoria and in its third year, we are thrilled to bring audiences a fabulous line-up of leading speakers from Australia and abroad. This year, Spring Fling extends across almost the entire month of October to give audiences as many opportunities as possible to attend our events, at a time when Victoria is coming alive for the new season.'

UK-based Australian writer **Lucia Osborne-Crowley** returns to home soil to present *The Lasting Harm*, her powerful account of the blockbuster trial of Ghislaine Maxwell. As one of only four reporters admitted into the court, the paralegal turned freelance journalist was in the room as evidence of grooming and sex trafficking was brought against Maxwell day after day. At this in-conversation with human rights lawyer **Jennifer Robinson**, Osborne-Crowley will recount the testimonies of survivors and dissect the impacts of trauma on memory.

In an exclusive Wheeler Centre appearance, filmmaker, satirist and writer **John Safran** gets personal as he re-examines his place as a Jewish person while on the hunt to track down a well-known celebrity (identity to be revealed). Speaking with **Mahmood Fazal**, Safran unpacks *Squat*, his new memoir about identity, belonging and the rather unexpected period he spent squatting inside a luxurious Los Angeles mansion.

For this year's **E. W. Cole lecture**, proud Bundjalung and Widubul-Wiabul woman **Vanessa Turnbull-Roberts** presents her powerful vision for transformative change in the wake of Australia's enduring systemic injustices against First Nations peoples. Grounded in her own experience of forced removal, Turnbull-Roberts examines the out-of-home care system and practices of family policing to raise a passionate call to action for reform and justice.

Hear from **Ben Shewry**, chef-owner of the world-renowned Attica restaurant, on the personal drive that has propelled his innovative Melbourne restaurant, Attica, to national and global acclaim. Shewry joins host **Marieke Hardy** for an unforgettable look inside the sometimes-brutal world of cheffing at the highest level in a live recording of Hardy's popular podcast *Marieke Hardy is Going to Die*.

Acclaimed author **Bruce Pascoe** and partner **Lyn Harwood** reflect on life, Country and their own sustainable food and land management practices in a special dining experience hosted at The Moat. Over a seasonal lunch menu of Aboriginal food, Pascoe and Harwood will provide personal and practical insights from their recent memoir, *Black Duck: A Year at Yumburra*.

At the Athenaeum, **Gina Chick** shares her extraordinary journey through the weeds of grief and the wilds of nature as she won the hearts of Australian viewers while winning the inaugural season of *Alone Australia*. A true force of nature, Chick will tell her remarkable story of resilience and share her unique blend of strength, spirit and humour.



Celebrate the launch of Lebanese-Palestinian writer and 2020 Next Chapter recipient, **Hasib Hourani**'s debut poetry collection at Kines Brunswick. A powerful allegory of occupation and subjugation that refuses to lose hope, *rock flight* has been praised by the likes of Maxine Beneba Clarke as passionate, necessary, 'a poetry-triumphant'.

Be amongst the first to hear from esteemed writer and two-time Miles Franklin Award-winner, **Michelle de Kretser** following the release of her highly anticipated new novel, *Theory & Practice*. In conversation with **Sophie Cunningham**, de Kretser will reveal how she expertly dismantled the very idea of what a novel should be to produce a captivating portrayal of young adulthood.

Beloved national treasure **Noni Hazlehurst** takes audiences behind-the-scenes of a brilliant career when she appears In Conversation at The Capitol. Hazlehurst will share stories from her new memoir, *Dropping the Mask*, beginning with the early years hosting *Playschool* and acting in cutting edge films like *Monkey Grip*, to raising two boys as a single mother and many more years spent telling stories on stage and screen.

Pay tribute to **Shaun Micallef** – at his own request – in a laugh-out-loud evening at The Capitol. Off the back of the release of his new comic collection, *Slivers, Shards and Skerricks*, a troupe of Micallef's fellow mischief-makers will gather for a night of stand-up, comedy and performance that will ensure proper recognition of a soul nowhere near done with making Australians chuckle.

The Spring Fling edition of Books & Ideas at Montalto sees one of the country's most adored broadcasters and journalists, **Virginia Trioli**, survey a career spent covering life's big moments. With host **Clare Bowditch**, Trioli will reflect on the small moments that bring her joy amongst the less appetising courses of life.

Three First Nations performers experiment with form to examine sovereignty, resistance and creative practice in ***The Wilds Within: Language, Story and Country***. **Nardi Simpson, Jazz Money and Lanियuk** will discuss their creative practices and how they intersect with depictions of the natural world, and share powerful performances of spoken word, poetry, and music.

Stirring the Pot: A Feast of Erotic Storytelling and Performance presents a sizzling lineup of writers and performers sharing sexy morsels of erotic writing and performance, including special guests from Melbourne Fringe Festival.

Atop the beautiful rooftop garden terrace of narm ngarrgu Library, emerging writers run wild at the Spring Fling edition of the popular Next Big Thing series. Debut writers **Keshe Chow, Sophie Matthiesson, Kylie Mirmohamadi** and **Lucinda Price** will present their work at this early opportunity to hear from some of Australia's brightest new writers.



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Events for families includes an interactive choose-your-own adventure stage show in celebration of **Andy Griffiths'** rollicking new series *Adventures Unlimited: The Land of Lost Things*; a special story-time session with TV presenter **Tony Armstrong**, where he'll share the magic of his debut children's book, *George the Wizard*; and The Wheeler Centre and ACMI present a screening of **Spike Jonze's** big screen adaptation of *Where the Wild Things Are*, followed by Q&A with bestselling children's authors **Sally Rippin** and **Anna Walker**.

Spring Fling tickets are available to Wheeler Centre members from midday Tuesday 6 August until midday Thursday 8 August or until the allocation is exhausted.

General on sale available from midday Thursday 8 August.

– ENDS –

Media contact

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Media centre

Images available [here](#)

NOTES TO EDITOR

- Spring Fling runs 3 to 31 October
- The 2024 Spring Fling theme is *Wild Abandon*
- Spring Fling tickets are available to Wheeler Centre members from midday Tuesday 6 August until midday Thursday 8 August or until the allocation is exhausted
- General on sale available from midday Thursday 8 August
- Become a member for only \$40 and get 10% off select Spring Fling events and priority access
- The full Spring Fling program is available wheelercentre.com

The full list of Spring Fling events and dates are listed below. For more information, please visit wheelercentre.com/events

Hasib Hourani: rock flight

Hasib Hourani

6pm, Thursday 3 October

Kines Brunswick

Storytime with Tony Armstrong: George the Wizard

Tony Armstrong

12.00pm, Thursday 3 October

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The Land of Lost Things with Andy Griffiths

Andy Griffiths

1pm, Friday 4 October

The Capitol

Where the Wild Things Are

Sally Rippin, Anna Walker

2pm, Saturday 5 October

ACMI Cinema 1

Gina Chick: We Are the Stars

Gina Chick

6.15pm, Tuesday 8 October

Athenaeum

The Wilds Within: Language, Story and Country

Jazz Money, Laniyuk, Nardi Simpson

6.30pm, Wednesday 9 October

The Wheeler Centre

Kasey Chambers in Conversation: Just Don't Be a D**khead

Kasey Chambers

6.00pm, Wednesday 9 October

Geelong Library & Heritage Centre, The Dome

Noni Hazlehurst: Dropping the Mask

Noni Hazlehurst

6.30pm, Thursday 10 October

The Capitol

Virginia Trioli at Montalto

Virginia Trioli, Clare Bowditch

6.30pm, Friday 11 October

Montalto

The Next Big Thing: Wild Abandon

Keshe Chow, Sophie Matthiesson, Kylie Mirmohamadi, Lucinda Price

6.30pm, Monday 14 October

Narrm Ngarrgu Library

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Ben Shewry is Going to Die

Ben Shewry, Marieke Hardy
6.30pm, Tuesday 15 October
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The 2024 E. W. Cole Lecture

Vanessa Turnbull-Roberts
6.30pm, Thursday 17 October
The Wheeler Centre

Stirring the Pot: A Feast of Erotic Storytelling and Performance

Ella Baxter and other guests
7.30pm, Friday 18 October
The Wheeler Centre

Black Duck Lunch with Bruce Pascoe and Lyn Harwood

Bruce Pascoe, Lyn Harwood, Daniel James
12pm, Saturday 19 October
The Moat

Lucia Osborne-Crowley: The Trial of Ghislaine Maxwell

Lucia Osborne-Crowley, Jennifer Robinson
7.00pm, Tuesday 22 October
Union Theatre, University of Melbourne

Tim Winton: Juice

Tim Winton, Michael Williams
6.30pm, Wednesday 23 October
Union Theatre, Arts and Cultural Building, University of Melbourne, Parkville

Squatting with John Safran

John Safran, Mahmood Fazal
6.30pm, Thursday 24 October
The Wheeler Centre

Michelle de Kretser: Theory & Practice

Michelle de Kretser, Sophie Cunningham
6.30pm, Wednesday 30 October
The Wheeler Centre

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A Tribute to the Latest Shaun Micallef book

Shaun Micallef, Mark Humphries, Veronica Milsom, more to be announced

7.00pm, Thursday 31 October

The Capitol

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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