

To the Queensland Literary Awards judging panel,

Thank you for considering my application to the 2023 Queensland Premier's Young Publishers and Writers Award. I hope you find meaning within it.

When I was very young, my parents tricked me into believing a computer was only for word-processing. So that's what I did, as a kid, was sit and type up my how-to-read books, making naive little edits as I went. Many of these edits were likely wrong. I barely had a grasp of grammar.

But what I did have was curiosity, and childlike intuition. I liked typing on the computer because the text on the screen looked like the text in the books that I read over and over again before bed, when I got up in the morning, and during the afternoon, when my allocated thirty minutes of Thomas the Tank Engine was up.

And while writing and editing has always been a big part of my life, 2023 marks the tenth year that I have taken it seriously as a profession. A decade ago, in 2013, I put Queensland University of Technology's Bachelor of Fine Arts (Creative & Professional Writing) first on my QTAC preferences. Shortly after commencing, I was awarded the QUT Undergraduate Creative Writing Prize (2014), the only time that the prize has ever been won by a first year student. I have been publishing consistently ever since.

Through the volunteering and networking I did during my undergraduate, I was able to put together the team that in 2016 founded House Conspiracy, an emerging artist residency and exhibition space that operates to this day. Between 2016 and 2018, my team and I were able to support, pay, and exhibit more than 90 writers and creatives within the space. Since our tenure, dozens more have been supported by an ongoing team of active volunteers.

The skills in writing, publishing, and team management honed during my years with House Conspiracy have since been extended to other projects and contexts. My work with Jerath Head on Pseudonaja Group and with Siang Lu on The Beige Index (both detailed in this application) owe much to the pressure-cooker learning experience that House Conspiracy provided.

Throughout all this work, I have been enormously privileged. Not only by virtue of my identity, but by virtue of my supportive family, of having a place to live while working myself to the bone, and of having access to the resources required to publish at all. Publishing is so often a money-losing venture, and having money to lose is an incredibly lucky position in which to be.

A mentor of mine once told me: privilege is responsibility. If you are well-off, then you have an obligation to make the world well-off, too. This has always stuck with me. Publishing and paying others for their creative work is one small part of my practice in this area, which also includes active organising in the housing advocacy space, as well as an annual tithe of 10% of my income to effective charities. To be awarded the 2023 Queensland Premier's Young Publishers and Writers Award will enable me to do more good work, to create and facilitate and publish more of others' work, and to empower positive change within Brisbane, Melbourne, and the world.

Thank you again for your consideration.

Sincerely,



Jonathan O'Brien

jonathan@jonobri.com

+61 402 992 345

AND WRITERS AWARDS JONATHAN O'BRIEN
23 QUEENSLAND PREMIER'S YOUNG PUBLISHERS
JONATHAN O'BRIEN SUBMISSION PART ONE: WRITER'S
AWARDS JONATHAN O'BRIEN SUBMISSION PART O
ER'S PORTFOLIO 2023 QUEENSLAND PREMIER'S
OLIO 2023 **QUEENSLAND PREMIER'S** YOUNG PUB
AN O'BRIEN SUBMISSION PART ONE: WRITER'S P
NSLAND PREMIER'S **YOUNG PUBLISHERS** AND W
ART ONE: WRITER'S PORTFOLIO 2023 QUEENSLA
IERS **AND WRITERS AWARDS** JONATHAN O'BRIEN
AN O'BRIEN SUBMISSION PART ONE: WRITER'S I
D WRITERS AWARDS JONATHAN O'BRIEN SUBMIS
WRITER'S PORTFOLIO 2023 QUEENSLAND PREMI
UBLISHERS AND WRITERS AWARDS JONATHAN O
PREMIER'S YOUNG PUBLISHERS AND WRITERS
ERS AWARDS **JONATHAN O'BRIEN** SUBMISSION
UBMISSION PART ONE: WRITER'S PORTFOLIO 20
BRIEN **SUBMISSION** PART ONE: WRITER'S PORT
SSION **PART ONE:** WRITER'S PORTFOLIO 2023 Q
S PORTFOLIO 2023 QUEENSLAND PREMIER'S YOU
ON PART ONE: **WRITER'S PORTFOLIO 2023** QUEE
ISHERS AND WRITERS AWARDS JONATHAN O'BR
ND PREMIER'S YOUNG PUBLISHERS AND WRITERS
WRITER'S PORTFOLIO 2023 QUEENSLAND PREM
RS AND WRITERS AWARDS JONATHAN O'BRIEN S
23 QUEENSLAND PREMIER'S YOUNG PUBLISHERS

THIS PORTFOLIO WAS CREATED, CURATED, TYPESET, COMPILED, AND SAVED AS FINAL_FINAL_FINAL.PDF ON UNCEDED INDIGENOUS LAND. WORK WAS UNDERTAKEN UPON SOIL BELONGING TO THE JAGERA, TURRBUL, NGUNNAWAL, AND WURUNDJERI PEOPLES, AND OWES MUCH TO THEIR TIMELESS STEWARDSHIP OF THESE PLACES.

EVERY IDEA I HAD FOR MY AUSTRALIAN LITERATURE SHORT STORY COLLECTION FREQUENT FLY
UR OWN EMPLOYEE NEXT LIBRARY: HAVE YOU SEEN THIS WOMAN? ISSUES EVERY IDEA I HAD FO
NCY TIP: BE YOUR OWN EMPLOYEE NEXT LIBRARY: HAVE YOU SEEN THIS WOMAN? ISSUES EVERY
YOU SEEN THIS WOMAN? ISSUES EVERY IDEA I HAD FOR MY AUSTRALIAN LITERATURE SHORT ST
LAYER

ALL THE BOYS SHE EVER LOVED

GRIFFITH REVIEW 81, AUGUST 2023

FICTION

MICHAEL ZANETTI

I remember the first one like I remember them all. This gangly little five-year-old making himself small in the backseat of the car, the middle seat a gap between him and Lacey as they talked on-and-off the whole drive about whatever it was five-year-olds talked about back then. He'd brought a small cloth bag with him, and he was showing her his action figures, these strong, disproportionate men with large heads and reluctant smiles. When we got to the house, I asked him to take off his shoes on the porch and he looked at me worried.

No shoes inside our house, I said. It keeps the carpet clean.

We don't have carpet, Michael Zanetti said. And then he said: You're older than my dad.

And I looked at him and said something like: Okay, and then he scrunched up his little face as he picked apart his laces and tossed his shoes by the door and that was that.

They spent the day playing, Michael and Lacey. Mel and I took turns keeping an eye on them, popping in every now and again to make sure neither one had hurt the other—but we left them mostly to their own devices, cause what were they gonna do, they were five, and Mel had been reading a book on Montessori, about the importance of independent play. But then after an hour or so, of course—and this was my objection to the whole Montessori thing, because of course—we heard Michael crying out all of a sudden, sensitive kid that he was, and I rushed in to see what was what, and there was Lacey, her hand over his hand on a Thunderbirds action

figure, her other hand on a Barbie Princess with a little cloth over its face, Michael going: Lacey stop it it's not a wedding stop I told you it's a bag cause she's been captured and that's what they put over your head when you're captured come on please no stop.

I asked Lacey what she was doing and she turned to me—her hands not moving from the dolls—and said: They're getting married.

And I said: Does everyone agree that's what's happening?

And Michael Zanetti said: No!

And Lacey said: Shut up Michael!

And I said: Language, Lacey.

And then Mel's hand was on my back and she leaned down and said to the kids: How about some toasted cheese sandwiches? and everyone agreed that sounded pretty good, even Barbie and the Thunderbird, at least according to Lacey.

After lunch it was time for me to take Michael home and I asked Lacey if she wanted to come and she said she did, and Michael and her were getting along pretty good then, as if they'd never argued at all over whether or not their dolls had been married, and then we were out on the porch and Michael was looking at his shoes with his eyes wide and worried. He put them on his feet and then just sort of held the strings and looked at me. He looked like he was going to cry, and so I asked him if he needed help, and just as I did that Lacey wandered over, already strapped up and ready to go, pointing at her shoes and grinning as she grabbed at my hand and turned to Michael Zanetti to say: Come on Michael, hasn't your dad heard of Velcro?

PETER PETERSON, JR

To start with, he had a stupid name, which made me immediately suspicious, because what kind of parents would do that to a kid, and that was on top of the fact that this was the first boy she'd asked to have over in years, signalling the end of that safe phase we'd all had the pleasure of sharing, where she'd only really hung out with girls. Now, here was this twelve-year-old kid on my doorstep, barely getting out a Hello Mr Rogers before Lacey pulled him inside and through the house so he could get changed to go swim in the new pool Mel and I had installed just before summer. Lacey was already in her one-piece, and she offered Peter Peterson, Jr her room for him to get naked in, at which point I intervened and said: We have a perfectly good bathroom for getting changed in, and I showed him where it was.

No boys in your room, I said, while the boy was not in her room, and when she complained I said again: I mean it. He's not going in there today.

Lacey complained that she wanted to show him the new

books we'd gone and bought together the day before, to which I said he could wait by the door while she went in and got those books, and then she could show them to him no problem in the living room, or the hallway even, if that was what she wanted to do, and so she said, in a tone I knew would only become more prevalent three months down the line when she turned thirteen, she said: Fine.

After they were changed and headed down to the pool, and I'd double-checked I was ready for my early-morning flight, I went and joined Mel on the back deck to drink some fresh juice we picked up from the market and also to keep an eye on the pre-teens in the pool.

How's the tongue-twister boy going? I asked and Mel looked at me confused. I said: Peter Peterson is Peter's son. Try saying it five times quickly and tell me this kid doesn't deserve to get bullied.

David. Don't.

Look, he can't even swim.

She's been teaching him.

What, I said, and I frowned, but when I looked down sure enough she was right. There was

Lacey, showing Peter Peterson, Jr how to make it so his arm didn't slap the water on every stroke and instead sort of glided in, slid into the water all smooth-like, and that made me say to Mel: I don't like that, the way she's touching him.

And Mel said: It's fine. Let them be.

And I said: She should at least be able to find a boy who can swim.

HARRY STYLES

At least Harry Styles could swim, as far as I understood. Sure, he lived on a different continent, and whenever he came over it cost me almost four figures in concert tickets to let Lacey go and see him, but in a way these were good things—in my eyes, the ideal boy was the one who came to the city for just one night at a time, was never left alone with her, and just before leaving yelled out to an entire crowd of teenagers that while he and his friends would like to come back around as soon as they could, in maybe a year or so, he could make no promises. He could swim, but not the whole Atlantic.

Of course, even all this distance could not keep Lacey's life drama-free, and one day I got in from my late-Friday flight home and she was in her room and crying and I could tell from her eyes that she'd been at it for a while. I knocked on her door and went in and asked her what was going on. And after some comforting and convincing she finally told me in a flood of tears that she'd been talking to Harry Styles online, that she'd got his private MSN off of one of her friends whose parents had paid for a VIP pass for the last tour, and that she and Harry had been talking a while and that she'd decided to finally send him a photo of her—which of course made me start yelling. She was crying even harder then, grabbing at my arm and saying: No, Dad, no, just my face, Dad, promise, nothing bad, they taught us about that at school, I swear, just my face—which calmed me down a little, enough at least to ask her what specifically had happened, and she said that when he'd seen the photo of her face he'd told her she was ugly, her nose especially, too big and crooked for her face, is what he'd said.

Harry Styles thinks my nose is ugly, Dad, and it's your fault. You should have never made me learn to ride a bike; I wouldn't have a crooked nose if you hadn't made me ride without training wheels so fast, if you hadn't rushed me all the time—and then she collapsed back into tears.

I rubbed her back and said I was sorry.

And she said: I bet I'd be pretty like Mum if it wasn't for you.

Lacey, you're the most beautiful girl in the world, I said.

You have to say that because it's your fault I'm not beautiful. It's your fault I'm ugly, and now Harry Styles thinks so too.

I rubbed her back some more, pulled her head onto my leg to use as a pillow and I stroked her hair until she grew calm, which she finally did, after a while. When her breathing felt normal against me, I asked her if she really thought she'd been talking to Harry Styles, the real Harry Styles, and she said maybe but that she didn't really know, probably not, and admitting that out loud made her calm down a little more, and it was then that I asked her if she thought it might be one of her friends playing a trick on her.

That's a pretty shitty trick, she said.

Hey, language, I said. But yes, it's a pretty shitty trick.

And that made her laugh. Language yourself, she said, and then she nestled into my leg even more.

JOHNNY WILSON

It was Mel who first raised with me the subject of Johnny Wilson. She said: Our daughter's got a boyfriend.

To which I said: Our daughter's fifteen.

To which she said: And now she has a boyfriend.

I said I wanted to meet him, and she said she wanted to meet him too, obviously, and I said: You haven't even met him and you're letting her call him her boyfriend, and Mel said it wasn't a matter of letting her say anything—she'd just come home a couple days ago and said it. She doesn't feel she needs permission, Mel said.

And why am I only hearing about this now?

Because it didn't matter before, but now it does matter because he's coming for dinner tomorrow night and you have to be there and

you have to be nice, and that's the end of this discussion.

And so, sure enough, I was there when he arrived, standing with Mel a couple metres or so down the hall while Lacey, or Lace as Johnny Wilson called her, opened the door for him, saying: Johnny, I'd like you to meet my mum and dad. Mum and Dad, I'd like you to meet Johnny.

I nodded and stood in place, while Mel walked to meet Johnny halfway down the hall and shook his hand and said: My, my, aren't you tall.

My dad reckons I'm still growing, he said, making his way toward me. And speaking of dads, he said, hello Mister Rogers.

I looked up at him and said hello and shook his hand, and Mel called out that it was just fine for Johnny Wilson to call me David, and to call her Mel while he was at it.

Over dinner I asked him what he was picking to study for his last couple years of high school, and he said maybe economics and IT, and maybe also music, to balance it all out. He said was working on making music with computers, to which I said I preferred stuff with guitars, like

Pink Floyd, and he said that Pink Floyd used computers to make some of their music too, and I said: Probably just their later stuff, I bet. And then I asked him if he'd written any songs for our daughter yet and he blushed and she blushed too and Mel said that was very sweet and that she couldn't wait to hear them one day and then she asked if Johnny wanted any more pasta and he said he did, just a little, because he was—he reminded us, looking at me in particular, maybe—he was still growing after all, and then he had another serve after that too cause Mel offered and he was either too polite or too greedy to say no.

After dinner, Mel drove our daughter and Johnny Wilson to the movies where she gave them some money for tickets, popcorn, and maybe an ice cream after, and she told them she'd pick them up later on. Then she came back and asked me what my problem was, exactly, with the young man Johnny Wilson.

What do you mean?

I mean you were rude. All night, you were rude, and for what? He's just a kid, for God's sake. A harmless kid.

I just—I have to be sure—
Be sure of what?

You know—that he's right. That he can dot his Is and cross his Ts, you know, the important details and stuff. That he can hold his own.

She's not gonna be happy with you, Mel said.

But I said she'd be fine and sure enough, she was, she said she'd had a good night, and that Johnny had too; at least that's what she told Mel, cause she didn't say a thing about it to me, never mentioned Johnny to me so it was only through Mel that I learned she'd broken it off with him just a few weeks later because he wasn't quite the right fit, and I had to keep myself from saying to Mel that I'd told her so.

DAVID SIMPSON

It was a couple years, then, before the next one, and when he did come around I didn't like him from the start. There was, of course, the obvious reason to not like him: he had my name, and I don't think I have to tell you why I didn't like the idea of that. And what's more is I was in a bad mood generally around then, because I was about to take a

generous severance package as part of a settlement for a work accident on-site out west that meant I'd retire early, but with a half-shattered left arm. And so it didn't help at all that at the same time as all that was happening, Lacey decided to introduce to me and Mel this boy who bore my name like a shiny new replacement model.

Mel did most of the talking the night he came round, and I mostly just drank wine, offering him some as part of a test he managed to pass by saying no, though only after glancing at Lacey, who wasn't drinking either, which should have been clue enough, really; he shouldn't have needed to check.

I was pouring maybe my third glass when I asked him where he planned on studying next year, and he said he thought he'd take a gap year first and then come back and maybe go into finance or law, depending on whether he liked his dad or his mum better at the time he finally came to choose. Which one're you leaning toward at the moment? I asked between sips. If you had to—had to pick.

Well, Dad did get me a surf-board for Christmas, he said. So I guess I'd have to pick finance.

Mel and Lacey laughed at that, and I joined in maybe a little too late.

When he left that night with Lacey on his arm, off to go bowling or something, he shook my hand and said Good night, David, like it was some big joke or something, and I said Good night, David back, and then he was gone and immediately after the door shut Mel was on my back and saying: You can't keep doing this, and when I just raised my bad hand up and looked at her, she said: Going so hard on them like that. It's not doing our daughter any favours.

I don't know why you're talking about this like it's some sort of pattern. I've only ever got to meet two of them.

And she said: Exactly.

And I said: I just want whoever she picks to be right for her.

Well, that's up to her, Mel said. And you're not making it any easier for her to figure it out.

Later that night, though, when Lacey got dropped home, maybe too late for my liking, I met her in the living room and

when I said hello she jumped. Dad, she said. Christ.

Language, I said, smiling. How was your night?

She answered my questions briefly. They'd gone to an escape room, and had ice cream in the city, but she didn't really give me much more than the facts. I said to her: This isn't an interrogation. I'm really—I'm really asking.

I know you didn't like him, Dad, she said, and when I tried to object she simply announced she was taking herself to bed, telling me I should sleep it off, too.

BARRY LIEFLING, STEVEN WU, HENRY VAN DER NIET

During Lacey's first semester at university, there was a quick succession of young men who arrived at our front door to pick her up and take her God knows where for the rest of the night. Even though she was at uni, she still hadn't got her driver's licence, mostly because she refused to let me teach her, even though I had the time, since I was just contracting part-time from home.

I only met these men—Barry, Steven, and Henry—once or

twice each and I didn't like any of them. Though at least Steven and Henry were easier to deal with than Barry. For starters, they seemed more regular, closer to her age, and less stubbornly sure of themselves. Plus, they never smelled like tobacco. Barry, on the other hand, smoked like a chimney, just like how my dad used to. Mind you, I never saw Barry smoking, but I always smelled it on him when he came around, and I smelled it on her too when he dropped her back home. He had these godawful tattoos, also, up his whole sleeve, mirroring my bung arm, like he really wanted to show off how able-bodied he was compared to me, draw attention to it, to how he could probably still pick Lacey up, hold her tight, all those responsibilities that were meant to be mine. The few times he came by I made a show of saying goodbye to Lacey, telling her to be safe, to call me if anything happened. I watched him over her shoulder when I hugged her.

Even Mel didn't have much time for that one. I'm gonna make her get her licence, she said. I'm gonna make her let you teach her.

I don't get why you have to make her.

She turned to me, focused for a moment on the mess on my side of the bed we still shared back then, the bottles and plates and papers and cables, and then she looked at me and said: Work it out yourself.

And I didn't like Mel speaking to me like that, which was a thing that had got all too common back then, and I let Mel know that, that I was sick of her treating me like that, and yeah, I got pretty loud about it, but that was no reason for her to start crying all of a sudden, saying: We're not doing this right now; I don't want to—we can't do this right now, which made me get up out of bed and on my feet and insist that we could in fact do this—whatever the hell this was—right now, and then she started crying again and didn't stop until I left the room with a loud grunt and a punch of the wall, an empty wineglass in my bad hand.

FRANCIS BRODEUR

Francis was the first guy she ever brought around to my apartment, which I assumed meant it

was serious between them. She told me over the phone they'd been seeing each other for almost two years, and that she'd decided she'd like me to meet him. I said that sounded really nice, and that I'd like that a lot. We made a date but when I asked her on the phone how she was doing she ignored me and told me she'd see me on Friday with Francis in tow.

It was good timing, the call, cause it gave me good reason to clean up the place a bit, picking up pizza boxes and shirts strewn about the living room, getting the kitchen up to snuff enough that I could put together a semi-impressive salad alongside a deli-bought lasagne.

I had it in the oven to time well with their arrival, and when they did come in, just a few minutes or so late, I shook Francis's hand and then hugged Lacey for a long time. She was wearing thick makeup, and her eyes were dark, but she was smiling, and that was good, and I told her as much. It's been a while, I said. Are you well? You look well.

She's well, said Francis, and this food smells good.

It's just in the oven, I said. Take a seat. I'll get some wine.

I only drink white, said Francis.

I have white, I said, and he said that was good and I went and poured three glasses, and we all sat on the couch in an L shape and I asked Francis about what he did for work, which was accountancy, and I said he didn't look like an accountant, and he said that was something that tended to work in his favour, but looking at him and his missing professionalism, I doubted that it did. I asked Lacey how her work at the legal clinic was going, and she said it was going well, that she was hopefully going to be admitted by the end of the year, and I told her that was great, and Francis said she just had to work a bit harder on staying focused on her study and then she'd be fine. There was a lull in the conversation and Francis asked me when dinner would be and I checked my watch and told him not quite yet and he said: Okay, but soon, right?

At the table I served Lacey and then myself and then Francis, and we talked in bursts about our lives, about how the city was changing as more

money flowed into it, about how it was a shame our suburbs weren't linked by public transport, but that they'd have to have me round one night once Lacey was admitted and they had more time. We want to make time for so much stuff, said Francis. And we all know how much you mean to Lacey.

I looked at her, and she noticed me but did not look back. She shrugged, gazing into her lasagne like it had answers. She didn't speak much the whole time, really, which I guess maybe I could have chalked up to nervousness about me and Francis meeting, only there was something I didn't like about the whole thing, and by the time it was just Lacey and me cleaning up and him sitting swilling wine, I'd already started debating whether or not to call Mel. And it wasn't long after our goodbyes, during which Francis said over and over that Lacey and him would have me over soon, since I wasn't really all that scary after all, and then they left, and I poured myself another glass of wine. And then I called Mel.

When she picked up she just said: David.

And I said: Hey, Mel. Hey. Sorry—I—

We can't do this again.

No, Mel, it's not that. It's—I just had dinner with Lacey, and Francis.

Oh, said Mel. Okay. Yeah. How are they?

I—is she—is Lacey okay?

There was a pause on the other end of the line. And then Mel said: I guess so? I don't know.

I put the phone on speaker, placed it on my pillow. What does that mean?

I mean, David, that I don't know— How do you not know?

Because I'm just one person, David, on my own. I can't figure everything out.

Then it was my turn to pause. I'm worried—about her.

This again, too?

She hasn't said anything to you about him being—I—I don't know—

What? Being what exactly, David?

I stayed silent.

On the other side of the line, Mel started crying. Christ, David. Christ.

I'm sorry, I said. I'm sorry. And then: Do you want to come round? We could—talk.

Talk to someone, she said, by all means.

That's what I'm—

No. To someone other than me.

I was quiet.

Lacey handles herself just fine, Mel said. If she needs help, she'll find it.

I let my head sink into my pillow, and then she was gone for good.

WILLIAM

It was a few years after meeting Francis Brodeur that I met William. Maybe it was years and years. She brought him by my bed in the ward, this shy little thing who clung to her legs, mostly, this gangly kid who'd hardly look my way without her cooing him over and over again. William, she said. That's your grandpa. Have a look. He won't bite. He probably doesn't even have any teeth.

I've got teeth, I said, showing them off. For now.

She laughed a little. They look good, she said. You look good.

I shook my head. You don't have to, Lacey. You don't have to.

She gave me a flat smile and a sigh, and then she placed a box on the tray beside my bed, and the smell of something baked wafted through the sterile room, something like the chocolate

cake her mother'd always make, back in the day, but I didn't look to check, because I was focused on something else, focused on this little five year old dawdling round the back of the room, staring at all the humming machines with their tubes shoved into my body, this kid, confused and a little scared maybe, and all I could think when I looked at him was what last name he had, whether it was mine, whether it was ours, and about whose he was, and whether he'd grow up to have some part of me as part of him, and how strong he'd be, and how good he'd be to her. I was still thinking through all these things when Lacey finally convinced him to come toward me to say a proper hello, and I saw his untied shoelace drag across the floor, and I watched as he tripped over the fraying string and there was nothing, as he tipped to the floor in all slow-motion, there was nothing, oh Lord, nothing I could do to help him or her at all. ■

TOP RESIDENCY TIP: BE YOUR OWN EMPLOYEE NEXT LIBRARY: HAVE YOU SEEN THIS WOMAN? ISSUES EVERY IDEA I HAD FOR MY AUSTRALIAN LITERATURE SHORT STORY COLLECTION FREQUENT FLYER ALL THE BOYS SHE EVER LOVED TOP RESIDENCY TIP: BE YOUR OWN EMPLOYEE NEXT LIBRARY: HAVE YOU SEEN THIS WOMAN? ISSUES EVERY IDEA I HAD FOR MY AUSTRALIAN LITERATURE SHORT STORY COLLECTION FREQUENT FLYER ALL THE BOYS SHE EVER LOVED TOP RESIDENCY TIP: BE YOUR OWN EMPLOYEE NEXT LIBRARY: HAVE YOU SEEN THIS WOMAN? ISSUES EVERY IDEA I HAD FOR MY AUSTRALIAN LITERATURE SHORT STORY COLLECTION FREQUENT FLYER ALL THE BOYS SHE EVER LOVED

TOP RESIDENCY TIP: BE YOUR OWN EMPLOYEE NEXT LIBRARY: HAVE YOU SEEN THIS WOMAN? ISSUES EVERY IDEA I HAD FOR MY AUSTRALIAN LITERATURE SHORT STORY COLLECTION FREQUENT FLYER ALL THE BOYS SHE EVER LOVED

WRITING QUEENSLAND, 2023
NON-FICTION

If you're anything like me, then in the unending hustle of your everyday life you often find yourself fantasising about how a change of location, even just for a week or two, would grant you unending powers of writerly productivity. All you need, of course, is a dedicated space for a dedicated period of time, and all the ideas bouncing round inside your head will flow right out over the page. It'll be nothing like it is now: penning a few dozen words at a time in the stolen moments of your week, in notes apps and bedside journals—this new space will make everything different. And when everything's different, the productivity will come.

Let's say you're lucky, and you make it out—you get to that beautiful farmhouse AirBnB out west, setting down on an old wooden table your laptop, your notebook, your favourite fountain pen, and then what? Well, then you begin to understand very quickly that Kierkegaard was right: anxiety is the dizziness of freedom. In this dedicated time and space, you can write—but you can also do anything else you want. And that's dangerous for a writer.

There's a kind of energy consumption I associate with self-directed writing, tied to how you not only have to do the work, but also have to force yourself to do the work, which really means: double work. You are the taskmaster, and the taskdoer.

In a regular job, you do the work because you get paid, either by the hour or on a salary, and you get paid so long as you complete the tasks you're assigned. Generally, you complete the tasks, because regardless of how you feel on a given day, there are clear external incentives that keep you productive: money, for instance, can help pay for writing residencies.

But when on the residency itself, the only person keeping you productive is you, the writer, transformed into a human Nutri-Grain commercial, only getting out what you put in. And it's hard to put in when you're being constantly beckoned to by rolling hills of country or coastline or—in the best case scenario—both.

So, what's the strategy? Pick a more boring residency location, like the spare back-office that just opened up in your accountant's building post-COVID? I don't think so. If there's one thing all writers are good at, it's getting distracted from writing, regardless of the scenery.

The strategy, I regret to say, is routine. That's what makes a given period of writing successful. Throw out the all-too-optimistic Be Your Own Boss mentality and replace it with

this: Be Your Own Employee. Set goals, set daily expectations, set office hours. If your residency is two weeks long, work out what you want to get done in those two weeks, and then, over a nice glass of wine, lay down the law and tell yourself sternly: here's exactly how it's going to happen.

Set realistic goals for yourself. For me, I've found that's around 1,250 words a day, six days a week. If I get more done on a given day, that's great, but I don't stop until I hit that number. If I write some extra words, that's awesome, but it doesn't affect the next day's goal: every single day, I have to hit at least 1,250. Maintaining the habit is what matters most. Keep it up, and if you write six days a week for two weeks, you can get a respectable 15,000 words on the page. Even at 500 words a day, you can smash out the pivotal

6,000 words needed to push your novel over the line.

I'm at risk of sounding like a productivity guru here, I know—but I've done this enough times to understand: there is no perfect situation for writing, because the least reliable and most consistent variable, the one that's always present, is you. It's only through good self-governance that anything gets done. By keeping a routine, by setting yourself down at your desk each day at the same time until you're done, only then will you be primed and ready for success. Me, personally? On residency I like to get up with the sun, make a pot of tea, and get straight to my desk: the sooner the writing's done, the sooner I can get outside, wander down to the creek, and watch small animals rest and drink across the other side of the water, and I can call out to those animals and brag about exactly how many words I churned out that morning, and they will feel shame in my shadow, for not one of them has ever written a goddamn thing. And let me tell you—if you've never dunked on a platypus, it feels pretty good. ■

This essay and associated residency was made possible by the Brisbane City Council through the Lord Mayor's Young and Emerging Artists Program.

THE BOYS SHE EVER LOVED TOP RESIDENCY TIP: LITERATURE SHORT STORY COLLECTION FREQUENTLY OUR OWN EMPLOYEE NEXT LIBRARY: HAVE YOU SEEN THIS WOMAN? ISSUES EVERY IDEA I HAD FOR MY AUSTRALIAN EMPLOYEE NEXT LIBRARY: HAVE YOU SEEN THIS WOMAN? I SEEN THIS WOMAN? ISSUES EVERY IDEA I HAD FOR MY AUSTRALIAN EMPLOYEE
STATE LIBRARY OF QUEENSLAND, MAY 2021
NON-FICTION

She came in late, my interlocutor. It was well after Jackie Ryan had announced the nature of the day as an “unconference”, qualifying it with a phrase often said of the third O'Brien boy, born a suspicious number of years after me: “there are no mistakes, only experiences”. My interlocutor was a woman of many experiences. When she arrived, shortly after Waveney Yasso's Welcome to Country, my interlocutor pulled out her chair and gave me a half-whispered excuse—this morning she had become trapped in her own shower. A tiled corner cubicle, she said, custom built with a waterproof slot for a book, with a voice-automated page-turning mechanism she explained in much detail that I cannot recall. She used this contraption, she told me, to read while standing under the shower, sometimes for hours at a time. I have a water tank, she explained, so a long shower is always ethical.

She said hello and asked me what I was doing at the conference today, why I was setting up my laptop instead of listening politely, with both eyes forward, like I ought to—saying all this, of course, while the day's first Lightning Talk presenter, State Library of Queensland CEO Vicki McDonald, gave us the contemporary global context of the library. In silent answer to my interlocutor, I pointed at the unconference's programme, and at my name next to my session's title: The story of the day as told by an unreliable narrator. She frowned at this and said nothing else, though indicated with her eyes that she would have more to say later. I was not looking forward to it.

Earlier in the day, I had been informed by another attendee that Mercury was in retrograde. According to the shockingly well SEO'd

website Treehugger.com, during this time, one should “avoid relationship-defining conversations”. This may include, perhaps, conversations seeking to define the relationship we all have with libraries. This unconference, it seemed, was a test of cosmic proportions.

This is not an exaggeration. Indeed, I was tested. Throughout the day, my interlocutor would sometimes nod and make all-too-loud sounds of agreement as people spoke, though often she was muttering to herself bitter refutations and critiques, grumbling about this or that, and over the course of the breaks we took throughout the day, we had the following longform conversation.

To begin, looking me in the eye, she said: Don’t you feel like you’re doing a disservice?

And I said: What do you mean?

Well, don’t you feel like the whole unreliable narrator schtick is counterproductive to the role of libraries? To the idea of effective documentation? Don’t you feel that it goes against so much of what libraries ought to be about? About ensuring, as Louise Denoon said this

morning, that they can remain effective “memory institutions” facilitating, as Teresa Kohne described, the transformation of “today’s everyday into tomorrow’s memory”? If you pollute truth, pure and empirical and honest, with unfounded confabulations, with purposefully unreliable narration, don’t you poison memories, and thus the positions and actions people might make or take based upon those memories? Is it possible that you are ignoring the essential real-world nature of the processes bureaucratic and programmatic that underlie the operations of the complex, multi-stakeholder institutions known as libraries, simply because too much thought about these things bores you? Are you simply attracted, as Kristina Olsson said today, to “the lure and promise of story, of worlds that aren’t yours, of people who aren’t you”?

And I said: Yes, that’s possible. But you can’t dismiss fiction, entirely. If you want to talk about stakeholders, fiction, readers are one of the library’s biggest. I know for a fact my Mum’d fight you if she knew you were going

to make her go out and buy every single one of the Michael Robotham novels she blasts through in a weekend.

And my interlocutor said: No, I’m not dismissing fiction,. That isn’t my goal here. I’m talking about truth, specifically, and empowerment. We have spoken all day today about empowerment. About how, as Jacinta Sutton described, libraries build social capital through their collections. But it is not enough to just build social capital, of course. Traditionally, throughout history, how do you empower someone? With resources, tools, great and hulking engines both physical and intellectual. The invention of fire, the spear, the boomerang. The printing press, the internet, the smartphone. These great material benefits—how do we focus the modern library in such a direction?

We were then interrupted. The day had to progress. Conference participants were broken into pairs, and then into teams, and then lined up for food. I avoided my interlocutor throughout all this—hiding from her behind the corners of the State Library’s angular architec-

ture, taking multiple bathroom breaks, accompanying another writer to a smoker-friendly area of the riverside.

Then: it was time for speed-dating. Every two minutes the bell rang, and we moved around in our concentric circles, and as we did so I spoke to librarians and cultural workers, and I learned how those working in the regions were spending their time, operating in places where libraries exist more prominently as hubs than as mere components of infrastructure. Overwhelmingly, these regional workers were focused on technology education. Working with people young and old to help them understand their devices, these handheld portals to the ephemeral information that once was contained within libraries near-exclusively. I have often been on the record saying that Wikipedia is the greatest achievement of humanity. It is all of our best traits.

After a dozen or so bell rings, we rotated, and I was faced again with my interlocutor, and in my opening remark I told her this thing I thought about Wikipedia and she said: On this, we agree.

Thank God, I said.

And then she said: But agreement isn't interesting, is it? You'd much rather invent for yourself a dramatic conflict.

And I said: But I hate drama. I hate conflict.

And then she said: Okay, but for the sake of the argument, let's say you invent for yourself a dramatic conflict, for the sake of the argument. This brings me back to my core problem with this whole conceit of your role here today, she said, my core problem with inventing fiction, to recount truth. Communication theorist Marshall McLuhan in 1964 famously wrote: "the medium is the message". This phrase has informed much of our literary readings and criticism over the last half-century, drawing attention to form as an equal to content, creating more complex readings and opportunities for metareadings.

My point is this, she said. If you frame, for instance, the recount of a given State Library of Queensland unconference through a sort of Platonic dialogue, you create competitive discussion. The content becomes informed by the

dramatics. So when one member of the dialogue responds, say, to Maureen Engel's statement that "modern libraries are less places than they are principles", by reiterating the importance of the institutions' material components—it sounds like an argument. It sounds like these are not two things that can come together, that instead one must choose between material and principle, rather than trying one's best instead to amalgamate them. That's why I believe we had so many speakers here today, with different, sometimes clashing perspectives. Not to create argument, but instead to find that single thing that so often alludes us, and which I would like to present here as my own statement regarding the contemporary library's purpose: truth.

If we are to talk about this institution's purpose in a modern world where information so frictionlessly abounds and is so often dangerously indiscriminate, and if we add to this what we know from today of the population's demands upon libraries—if libraries are right now educating people on the technical components of their

devices, perhaps the next important step is to teach them the social and cultural components of these same things. Let us return to fiction, here again, briefly, so I may reiterate what someone smarter than me once said: the social purpose of art to teach us how to see. And so perhaps the social purpose of the library is to teach us how to look not just through catalogues and collections—though certainly this is important—but also how to look at the enormous volume of information frictionlessly received through screens, in the home, often on our own.

And why do this? Because we need to empower communities, and the best way to do this is to arm them with truth: to ensure that all decisions made are based upon correct foundations. You cannot affect meaningful change upon a world you misunderstand, and so many movements have failed because they are founded on false premises. If, as Stephen Harris and Shane Rowlands both proposed today, we are to pick a set of explicit political values for which the library stands—setting aside the importance of not politicising

libraries in order to ensure their continuous funding regardless of election results—then those principles, whatever they may be, will only be effectively acted upon by a population with effective access to truth.

I nodded. I was thinking on all of this.

We learn truth through stories, my interlocutor said to me finally. That's the easiest way to tell someone the truth, is to entertain them and then—while they're distracted—teach them something useful. And that's what we've done today at the Next Library Conference. Thank you for hearing me out. ■

semester, and how when we played scrabble together Jane mostly won.

Sandy interrupted my bulletin by announcing—which was her way of asking—that she would be coming to the city to meet this boy Brian whom Jane spent all of semester break talking about, and I bit my tongue then and nodded, which doesn't work so well through the phone, but she just went right on as if she'd seen it, and asked me if bloody Lucia would be here, and I said for her not to talk about my wife like that, but also said that if she came before the weekend Lucia would still be on her business trip, and Sandy said I'll see you Friday, and then she asked to speak to Jane and so I gave the phone to her downstairs where she was watching TV with Roger purring in her lap. She held him close and mouthed Mine at me and poked her tongue out, and I muted the phone before going to snatch the cat from her lap.

Dad, let me have him. He's keeping me warm, she said, and I said Don't you have Brian for that? and that made her blush and say Not right now. I said

Okay, and shrugged. He'll come join me in bed anyway.

We'll see, Jane said, smiling, and then I handed her the phone. She was still on the phone with her mother half an hour later when I signalled I was going to sleep and Jane mouthed Love you, and I said Love you, and then I went up and into bed, but did not go to sleep.

I didn't go to sleep because I was thinking. I was thinking about the thing from earlier, the thing I'd heard, and about how maybe it didn't have to do with Jane at all, maybe it was Brian's thing, what with him being a couple years older, showing her the university ropes—though hopefully no other ropes—as in maybe he asked her to do it, to call him that word she'd never called me, that strangely corruptible term. Yes, that made sense. That made sense that it would be Brian, that kind-seeming and, now that I thought about it, somewhat paternalistic guy, what with his full beard and that way he had of holding her. But then I thought—this is a sort of weird thing for a guy to be into at all of twenty-one; he couldn't have even considered fathering a

child, whereas Jane at least had a father, me, she had me, but then I realised Brian had a father too, which was probably less relevant, unless maybe his desire to be called that word came from an equally-strong desire to emulate and manifest his own father's most authoritarian attributes within a bedroom setting. Before I could think about all this for too long, Roger was scratching at the door, and I got up to let him in, and I held the doona up so he could tunnel in and ball up at my feet under the blankets. I knew you'd come, I said. And with him there at my feet I fell asleep trying to stop thinking about everything, and also watching hardcore porn.

Over breakfast Jane asked if I'd like to join Mum, Brian, and her out for dinner on Friday and I asked her if that was a particularly good idea, and she said it was a good idea, a very good idea, especially since Lucia wasn't around, and I asked What's wrong with Lucia? and Jane raised her hands in innocence and said Don't get me wrong. I really like Lucia, Dad, but you know how Mum gets,

how weird the whole situation makes her feel. And I said Yeah, Mum. Okay.

Jane smiled a flat smile—her mother's smile actually—and there was a short silence. We can do dinner with Lucia when Mum's not here. Brian likes her. I like her. It's just that Mum feels threatened by another woman, you know? Same as how you've never liked any of her boyfriends, and I said I like Brian quite a bit actually, and Jane said she was talking about Mum's boyfriends not hers and I just said Okay, I'll come.

Jane hugged me and said Thanks, and then I put out a can of tuna for Roger, and when he tried to follow me out the door and to the bus stop instead of eating his breakfast I told him I worked as a bureaucrat for Family Court not for Feline Court, and although he didn't laugh or even meow at my joke he did leave me alone like he understood, like he was listening, and then I was on the bus and then I was at work.

After a few hours straight at my desk I went and asked a question of the bludgers at the watercooler. I wanted to know

about the kind of young man who liked being called that word, about the kind of young women who'd oblige. A couple people laughed. They asked if I was looking for a sugarbaby and I said Are you kidding? I've already got my hands full with Lucia and my daughter and my ex-wife.

After a bit of silence someone said somewhat quieter that Steve from finance had a sugarbaby, and that he brought her along to an office Christmas party once but never again on account of all the weird looks they got. And I said How old's Steve from finance? and people shrugged and someone said Fifties? and I said Well that's no use at all.

Someone asked if this had to do with the casefiles I was handling, or if something had happened with Jane, and I said No, no, don't worry, just curious, and I went back to work via Steve from finance's office window, and I felt glad for a moment that at the very least Brian had a full head of hair.

On Friday, we were all set to meet for dinner at seven thirty, though for various reasons, most of them

Roger-related, I showed up at seven thirty-five. Straight away Sandy said As usual, and I said Where's Brian? and Jane said He's late too, and I went over and hugged Sandy just as she started rolling her eyes, and at seven-forty Brian showed up and we all went inside this medium-expensive Italian place called Artimino and were shown to our seats. All four of us on different sides of a too-small square table. Brian across from me as he called Sandy and me Mrs and Mr Walsh more than twice before she corrected him. Mr Walsh and Ms Ellen, she said. But please, call me Sandy. Lucia is Mrs Walsh now, and she's got far fewer wrinkles than me, and a name that matches my ex-husband's.

You look very lovely yourself, Ms Ellen, Brian said somehow without missing a beat.

Sandy, she said.

The poor guy looked down and fiddled with his food for a bit looked embarrassed after that, and Jane took a moment to grab his hand and speak to him quietly. I listened carefully—but never once as she reassured him did she call him that word, and midway through the meal when

Jane said Can you pass the salt, Dad? Brian didn't even flinch. The guy kept his cool, kept his cool so well that by the end of the meal I was thinking that maybe I'd imagined the other night, or that maybe what I'd heard hadn't been Jane at all but instead had just been some pornography they were watching for reasons other than the dirty talk, like maybe to try out the positions or something.

I was thinking about all this when the bill came and Brian tried to pay, and I guess all that thinking is why I said to him No, no. This is a father's duty, which again garnered no reaction, and when he didn't offer to split—I would have still obviously paid in full, but it would have been polite—I went and handled the bill and then Jane and Brian went one way and Sandy and I went the other.

She and I made our way down a concrete mall that streamed with young and old people in both directions, and we didn't speak much till we reached Benson's on the corner for some aperitifs.

You seemed in your head tonight, Sandy said between sips of limoncello. I think he seems nice. I said I thought so too; it'd just been a long week, and she said she thought I was testing the poor boy, and I said I was just doing my due diligence—dad's due diligence, as it were, and she said Okay. Then she ordered more limoncello and we talked about her for a bit, about her job and about the men she'd been seeing and so on, trying to make me jealous maybe, before turning back to the subject of our daughter and her boyfriend. Do you let him stay over? Sandy asked. I said I hadn't been asked, and thank god for that, and Sandy asked if I'd let him and I asked her if I should and Sandy shrugged. They probably have sex anyway. Hell, they're probably having sex right now, and I screwed up my face and said Don't remind me, and she said What do you mean don't remind you; did you walk in on them or something? and I went red in the face and even though I swore it was from the alcohol she said Oh fuck, and started laughing, and I said No, no. No. I just heard them, and Sandy asked if Jane

was loud like her and I told her to stop flirting with me and then for no good reason I also told her what I'd heard Jane call Brian, and that's when Sandy looked at me cold. Oh, she said. It's probably fine, I said. It's kind of funny, really. But Sandy didn't think so. She said for me to not ever dare to tell her that it's funny. Don't you dare, goddammit. Like this is something that's funny and something for you to be happy about. Like the consequences of your not being around are something to be proud of. And I said I don't think it's a Jane thing, I think it's a Brian thing.

Sandy got up from the table then, shaking her head. She said she was going home, but what she meant was that she was going back to hang around in my spare room. And that's what she did. And so I picked up the bill, again, all that limoncello, and then I went home too. I went home and Roger greeted me at the door, thank god, purring at my leg all the way to the bathroom where I showered until the pit in my stomach felt like was about to swallow me whole.

The doorbell rang out. I shut off the water and walked out frown-

ing, still dripping in my dressing-gown, Sandy on the couch frowning too over her tea, and I opened the door and it was Lucia.

Lucia.

I smiled at her. And she smiled at me, and she said Hey there Sandra, and Sandy said Hello Lucia, and then she called Roger over so he'd scuttle off with her to the spare room and when they were gone Lucia kissed me with force and passion and whispered how she got an early flight to surprise me, because she'd missed me so much, she'd needed me, and with that I picked up her soft body and carried her upstairs and tossed her onto our bed. She gasped, and then she got on all fours to look up at me as I moved toward her, looking over those wide and wanting eyes, those parted lips.

Your kitten's come back to play with you, she said, and I told her to keep it down—not because of Sandy or anything, but because I'd just realised that oh my God the cat might be listening. ▣

A divorced man seeks connection.

A divorced man drinks six tinnies on the back deck. He goes for a drive.

A divorced man goes to his son's cricket game. His son loses.

A divorced man calls his sister. She is preoccupied with a success he could never achieve.

A divorced man longs to work in agriculture, like all his friends. Out west, a storm hits.

A divorced man's brother dies in an industrial accident. Unions are a good idea.

A divorced man interacts with a gay man. Civil unions are a bad idea.

A divorced man wants to start dating again. His mother dies a week later.

A divorced man loves his hometown, but wants to move deeper into the traditional Australian outback. If he moves he may never see his son again.

A divorced man wants to go surfing, like he used to, back when things were better, but his board comes off the roof of his car while he's on the M1. He goes anyway, and screams on the shore.

A divorced man starts a social AFL team with his friends. He kicks the winning goal two minutes after the game.

A divorced man never knew his daughter. When they meet, he gets too drunk and she vows to never see him again, even though he apologises a lot, over and over, both drunk and sober, inside the car and out. He promises her the world. He promises he will give her the world. She says: 'You've only got the traditional Australian outback, Dad.'

A divorced man receives a ticket for leaving debris on the M1. He'll deal with it after he's done drinking six tinnies on the back deck.

A divorced man's childhood hero dies. There is no state funeral, but he pours out six tinnies on the back deck for the great man anyway.

A divorced man never bloody knew about income tax. He drinks six tinnies on the back deck.

A divorced man goes camping in the traditional Australian outback. He befriends two vaguely European backpackers and learns something.

A divorced man goes to work and is confronted by a lack of job security typical for his demographic and line of work. He should have learned a trade. Out beyond the window, a tree is felled. He closes his eyes and sees his daughter in the car. Her makeup is running. He asks his boss about income tax.

A divorced man is kicked off his own social AFL team. 'Ha ha,' he says. 'Kicked off.'

A divorced man goes on an online dating site. A divorced man goes to the pub. A divorced man goes to the movies alone

and looks for other people who are going to the movies alone.

A divorced man texts a divorced woman and asks when his son will be arriving today. Later, he drinks six tinnies alone on the back deck.

A divorced man goes fishing. He remembers when he was young always asking his own father when they could go home, and he wishes he had someone asking him the same thing.

A divorced man receives a follow-up letter regarding the debris he left on the M1. After six tinnies on the back deck he sends a reply.

A divorced man enters correspondence with an empathetic bureaucrat named Sally.

A divorced man walks down the road. He sees construction work; he sees shoes tied over the powerline. His town is not what it used to be.

A divorced man is sending continuous letters to an empathetic bureaucrat named Sally. The openings of her letters move quickly from 'To the owner of vehicle with registration number 2117680' to 'Dear Fred' to 'My dearest darling Fred'. They correspond for a while. Sally

replaces a bureaucratic number in one letter with her phone number, which begins with 04, and the divorced man calls her. They have phone sex, once, and he feels empty afterwards and hangs up. Sally keeps calling him and he just lies there. When he goes to call her back, his wireless landline has run out of battery.

A divorced man tries to sustain a long-distance relationship. He tries to install Skype, but finds that technology clashes with his traditional Australian outback values.

A divorced man tries to buy plane tickets online. His computer won't load the sites fast enough, so he goes to Flightcentre. The Flightcentre lady says: 'What are you going to be doing in Canberra?' and the divorced man says: 'I am going to visit my long-distance girlfriend.' The Flightcentre lady says: 'That's nice.' The divorced man says: 'Do you want to get a drink sometime?' The Flightcentre lady marks up his flights without telling him, and takes the bonus for herself.

A divorced man is with his son. He explains to his son that he might have a new Mum soon.

His son says he already has a perfectly good mum, and that this situation interferes with his preconceived ideas of the ideal Australian family.

A divorced man explains to his son that two mums are better than one. He reminds himself that one mum would have been nice.

A divorced man's son isn't sure about a lot of things. A divorced man reminds him that civil unions are bad, and his son asks to go home.

A divorced man gets nervous before flying. He texts his friends apologising for not being able to make the game on Saturday. They remind him he is off the team. Tears gather on the rim of his seventh tinnie of the day.

A divorced man is met at Canberra Airport by a woman he has never met before. He goes to kiss her, but she only hugs him. He wonders how fast a return flight can happen. At the end of the story, she holds his hand.

A divorced man spends a week in Canberra. He wonders why anyone would prefer this place over the traditional Australian outback. He asks his girlfriend and she says cities

make her feel safe. He asks: 'Don't the trees make you feel safe? The horses and the bats? The spiders who are troubling but who are also your only friends?' and she says: 'No.'

A divorced man buys flowers for his girlfriend and sets them up in a vase on her table. He rearranges them as he thinks about his son and his daughter. He goes the toilet and he is still there, crying, when his girlfriend, the empathetic bureaucrat named Sally, comes home. She says: 'You leave tomorrow.'

A divorced man has sex with his girlfriend. This is the whole story.

A divorced man wakes up, walks around an apartment, looks for any trees at all out the window, and then dresses. He gets a lift to the airport. His girlfriend says: 'I don't think we can do this anymore.'

A divorced man gets nervous before flying. He texts his friends apologising for not being able to make the game on Friday. They remind him he is still off the team. Tears gather on the rim of his eighth tinnie of the day.

A divorced man returns home to the traditional Australian outback after some time away.

He feels disoriented and the story hints at depression without ever mentioning it. At the end, the man finds solace in his love of the bush, and traditional Australian outback values.

A divorced man goes back to work after some time away. His boss breaks some news.

A divorced man feels his loyalty has been betrayed, and that he doesn't understand his own country anymore. He calls a lot of people's landlines. Many are disconnected. He doesn't understand why any of this has happened. ■

EVERY IDEA I HAD FOR MY AUSTRALIAN LITERATURE SHOWCASE
YOUR OWN EMPLOYEE NEXT LIBRARY: HAVE YOU SIGNED UP?
TIP: BE YOUR OWN EMPLOYEE NEXT LIBRARY
EVERY IDEA I HAD FOR MY AUSTRALIAN LITERATURE SHOWCASE
AWARD WINNING AUSTRALIAN WRITING 2015
FICTION

Every time we picked Rob up from the airport he was carrying half a dozen vinyl records under his arm. He was always saying vinyl was better, and that he reckoned he knew why, too. Rob reckoned what made records better was that they had no concept of time, or of memory, or of bits and bytes. A record spun. That's what it did. It spun and then it stopped.

One day, Rob stopped too. He'd been spinning, in his own way. Round the world on an aeroplane. He'd been racking up Frequent Flyer points like the Lions rack up goals in a premiership match. That's what he'd said, at least. But the Lions hadn't won in years. I know, he'd said, and then he got out of my car, took his suitcase from the boot, nodded goodbye.

Where's he gone this time? I'd asked Steve, who was riding in the back. Dunno. Somewhere cold?

He's never gone somewhere cold before.

We were always Rob's ride to the airport. He didn't own a car. We all reckoned that was reasonable; he'd have been better off buying a jet, what with how much he used them. Maybe one day, he'd said. For now, I'm just lucky to have you guys.

Maybe.

It was easy for me to do favours like giving lifts from time to time since I worked from home. I did favours for Steve too, because Steve was unemployed, and because sometimes he needed a favour that the dole couldn't cover. Sometimes he'd come to me with a bucket of frozen eggs after sunset, a pair of oversized beanies with eyeholes in them. Go on, he'd say. For old times' sake.

Sometimes Rob joined us on Steve's escapades. He reckoned it was a way of winding down. Steve always made him bring his own balaclava. That's okay, Rob would say. I think I can afford it. And you know what? Afterwards, we'll put a record on the stereo and have some beers out by the pool. He was a generous guy, Rob, when he was around, in the country, on the ground. Though I guess he's in the ground now. Funny.

Funny also was when my wife's kid, who's not my kid, but who liked Rob very much, asked me: Why did Rob have to die? He asked it like he'd ask his teacher about the ancient Egyptians. Curious and matter-of-fact—as though someone somewhere had a certain answer, and as though I would be able to give it to him.

I said: He stopped spinning, Ben. And that was all I said, and I think it was good enough for him; I think he understood. More or less. He's a clever kid, and liked planes himself, which maybe explains why he liked Rob so much. He was always folding paper planes, and he'd always bring out his best one whenever

Rob came round, which was often. This was mostly because Julia was always trying to set Rob up with one of her friends, so we could all go on double dates, and take them to our dance classes—but it never happened. He was away too much; he couldn't commit. He couldn't possibly have been a father, which is all that thirty-two-year-old women care about, apparently. I know this even though I only have one source on what thirty-two-year-old women care about, and she's already got a kid, and he isn't mine. But that's okay.

Rob liked Ben too. He'd answer all the kid's questions about planes, and about wind resistance, and about how it looks and sounds and feels when you're sat by the wing, shooting through the sky. He'd show Ben his records, how they spun, how to flip them without doing damage. All this made Ben glow, which made Julia glow as she nestled up beside Rob, talking about what a wonderful thing he was doing, how much of a catch he was, how she would try calling Melissa, or Samantha, or Rowena again. But he was always out of town the next week.

And even if Rob was sometimes hard to find, it still made sense to us that Ben had attached himself. And it made sense that, when Rob stopped spinning, Ben cried a lot. And that he'd asked questions with the word 'why' in it, which made Julia and I stumble over our answers, trying to remember what shitty things our parents would have said to us in the same circumstances. This was on the long car ride to the funeral, down the sterile outbound M2 toward Logan. Also on the long car ride was Steve, since he'd needed a lift, which was expected. Hell, I even called him in advance and offered. I told him I reckoned he needed a lift. He said he reckoned I was right.

We got to his building, and he was waiting out front. He got in the car and, for a moment, everything changed, and it was like it was night time. Like it was night time, and Rob was there, and Julia had become Rob, and Ben had become a bag of cricket bats and narcotics and questionable intentions, and we were men on a mission, Steve's mission, a mission which Rob gave us strength in doing, and

which required understanding to be completed, and which—

Julia and I had to laugh because of how hard it was raining that day. Because of the joke that came along with it. We heard the joke on the radio on the way in, over the fast, wet scraping of windscreen wipers on glass. They'd put the announcement out on every station. It was too windy. There wouldn't be any planes taking off for the rest of the day.

Everyone mentioned it at the funeral. Everyone said it was so fitting, that Rob had grounded a fleet. The airport was mourning their most regular customer. Even the priest said it, during his sermon. Praise be, said some of the older and more devout attendees. Looking around, there were a lot of people in the hall. Many of them had flown in themselves, a day earlier.

I began speaking with one man, who wore a sweater vest and a receding hairline, and wore them both like choices he'd made. I offered him a drink and he nodded. I said: You knew Rob through work?

Heavens, no. I'm retired myself. Rob's just a friend I met

in an airport terminal, who needed a place to stay. That was about twelve years ago. He was a good guy. He helped my wife so much with her garden. Showed her just where things should be planted, he said. The man looked across the room at a woman. We grow our own herbs now.

I'm sorry he had to stop spinning.

I am too, said the man. Like Ben, he knew what I meant.

But no one knew Rob from work. No one even knew what he did. They knew only that he had always moved, always been moving—that he'd spun and spun and spun, and that he'd had no concept of time as restriction, but had simply burst his pattern across the globe. We knew that he did not stop, that he had no concept of how to stop. Even as the circles he spun shrunk, and became less frequent, he did not stop. Rob knew how to do a great many things, but that wasn't one of them. Something else he probably didn't know how to do was get arrested at his best friend's funeral—but Steve still managed to pull the whole thing off all right.

Here's how it happened. It was after the priest had given

his sermon and done the part with the coffin. Steve and I had been asked to do our bits around then. We'd been asked since, apparently, Rob had no family anywhere. If he did, they weren't the type to attend his funeral, and so it was up to us to keep his memory.

My speech was simple. I spoke about Rob, and about how he'd used my car a whole lot, and I listed some of the weirdest places he'd said he was going when I'd dropped him at the airport.

Hey, that place isn't weird, shouted someone from the audience. That's where I'm from! Everybody laughed, including me.

I spoke about how Rob wasn't given his time, about how unfair the world is, and about how a man as young as he was shouldn't have had to die just because he went somewhere cold and got pneumonia. But, I said, I think he did good in the time he was here. The audience nodded. They knew. These were the people whose gardens he'd fixed, whose fences he'd straightened, whose doors he'd oiled. They knew Rob, and they knew his qualities. So when I spoke about how he'd been with Ben, and about their

shared interest in flight, and about the way he'd brought my family together, everyone smiled. He'd've been a good father, I said, if he'd been given the chance. Julia cried at that. Ben wasn't really looking at the stage. But the world, I said, the world's a little bit shit from time to time, and we've gotta take it, I suppose, and Rob did take that, and he made something good with it. He made music with his life, spinning in a way that only he could.

That last line was corny, I reckon. But everyone forgot it anyway, after Steve was done.

He got up to the microphone, stuffing his hip flask into a pocket on the way up. Heya everyone, he said. Listen, Grahame, that was a beautiful speech you gave just now. Real swell. I miss the bastard! Do you guys miss him?

He was asking the congregation. Some of them nodded. Steve's hand hovered over his pocket, but he hesitated and kept talking.

I miss him like hell. It's not even been too long. Shoulda thought something was up, I guess, when he didn't ask us to come get him from the airport.

When he sorta just... came home. Ah. Ah well. Anyway, guys. Anyway. Let's not dwell on that, okay? The shit stuff. Let's not dwell on that, cause it's not worth it. We got better things to do. Like tell stories of how great the guy was. How brilliant he was to everyone, especially for a rich fuck. And I know they can be scum. But he was the best to me of any guy I've ever known. So let me tell you all a story.

I shifted in my seat.

Rob n I were on a mission. My landlord, he's an arse, and he were raising my rent every couple months, even though he knew I was struggling for work and all. So I come to Rob and I ask for a hand. I say: Listen, can we go give this guy a talking to, and Rob says: Sure, let's go do it. And you know what was so great about Rob? He didn't really ask questions. So when I handed him a crate of frozen eggs and asked him to grab his mask he didn't even blink. Not that I could tell if he were blinking, because he had that ruddy mask on. Looked good in it, too. His beard stuck out the bottom all sexy-like.

So anyway, anyway, we get to the landlord's place, and we get

real close, and I knock on the door, and I hear footsteps coming, and that's when I yell at Rob like Now, and he throws those eggs through all the windows on the house and they all smash into a thousand pieces like Crash and Bam and the alarm—

The church was fidgeting. There were people muttering at each other. The priest nudged me. Get your bloody friend off the bloody stage.

—is when we walk through all the glass and get the cricket bats from the car, two each, one for each hand and all so as to be—

I wanted Steve to be at peace, but I wanted Rob to be remembered well too, and since he was the dead one I walked up onto the raised platform. I walked up to Steve real close and stared at him. He stopped telling the story when he saw me come near him. Maybe he was worried; maybe he knew he'd gone too far. Everyone in the audience stared on. And when I got close to him, I was frowning. And then, when I couldn't hold out any longer, I hugged him. That was when the crying started, and it didn't really end until the police had showed up at the church. They'd been

called in by someone too honest for their own good. Steve went without a word. That isn't strictly true: he got to talk to me, at least, and to tell me he reckoned he'd be okay. And of course he would. Steve's a good guy. He's the kind of guy to give a confession at a funeral.

The cops drove away.

What an extraordinary story, said a young woman to me.

I'll say.

I had no idea Rob had it in him! Brilliant. Really shows how much it takes to know a man. Properly, I mean. Gosh.

You don't think it's kinda messed up?

I think it's just so cool—but Rob, wow. Gosh, he was always so nice—and now someone's called the cops on him at his funeral! It's a strange world.

I thought for a bit about whoever'd made the call.

She said: I think it's thrilling that Rob had another side to him, don't you?

I looked her over. I reckon so, I said.

I'm an old girlfriend of his, she said, and when I tilted my head she went on. Did he never talk about me?

No.

Oh, well, go figure. It was just a long-distance thing anyhow. Wouldn't have expected anything more.

Did you love him?

I suppose I did, yeah.

And then she walked away, followed slowly by everyone else, and by nightfall everyone had left. Most people don't want to see the sun set on God's house while they're mourning, which I think is fair enough. And the cop cars had made everyone want to leave even sooner. Most people didn't even come back to mine for a drink afterwards, what with after hearing Steve's story and all. I reckon maybe they'd stopped believing in Rob, because he had a crazy friend named Steve. But I knew Steve wasn't crazy—he was more sane telling that story than anyone'd believe, and more sober. After all, I was there, that night, with the landlord and the eggs. I was the getaway driver, but he left me out of the speech. So Steve wasn't as blasted as he had us all reckoning. He just wanted an excuse to show he felt sad, and to tell the truth, the way he knew how.

It wasn't till a week later, after I'd got Steve out on bail, that the letter came in the mail. Just when everything had begun coming normal again. Just then—that was when things went back to being sorta sad, was when the letter came. Rob had left something behind, in his name, for us. Though technically, he'd left it for Ben. See, all the spinning Rob had done while being thinned out over time by the stylus of life, warped and scratched and beaten—it'd all added up to something. The time he spent up in the air, above the clouds, looking over the plane's wing, smiling down upon us. All of it accumulated to a certain degree. Those folded paper planes of Ben's had paid off in Frequent Flyer points. ■

**ALL WORKS BY JONATHAN O'BRIEN, 2014-2023.
THANK YOU FOR YOUR CONSIDERATION.**

AND WRITERS AWARDS JONATHAN O'BRIEN
23 QUEENSLAND PREMIER'S YOUNG PUBLISHER
IAN O'BRIEN SUBMISSION PART TWO: PUBLISHER
WARDS JONATHAN O'BRIEN SUBMISSION PART T
ISHER'S PORTFOLIO 2023 QUEENSLAND PREMI
OLIO 2023 **QUEENSLAND PREMIER'S** YOUNG P
AN O'BRIEN SUBMISSION PART TWO: PUBLISHER
NSLAND PREMIER'S **YOUNG PUBLISHERS** AND W
ART TWO: PUBLISHER'S PORTFOLIO 2023 QUEEN
HERS **AND WRITERS AWARDS** JONATHAN O'BRIEN
AN O'BRIEN SUBMISSION PART TWO: PUBLISHER
D WRITERS AWARDS JONATHAN O'BRIEN SUBMIS
PUBLISHER'S PORTFOLIO 2023 QUEENSLAND PR
MIER'S YOUNG PUBLISHERS AND WRITERS AWA
PREMIER'S YOUNG PUBLISHERS AND WRITERS
ERS AWARDS **JONATHAN O'BRIEN** SUBMISSION
BMISSION PART TWO: PUBLISHER'S PORTFOLIO
BRIEN **SUBMISSION** PART TWO: PUBLISHER'S P
SSION **PART TWO:** PUBLISHER'S PORTFOLIO 202
ER'S PORTFOLIO 2023 QUEENSLAND PREMIER'S
PART TWO: **PUBLISHER'S PORTFOLIO 2023** QUEEN
ISHERS AND WRITERS AWARDS JONATHAN O'BR
ND PREMIER'S YOUNG PUBLISHERS AND WRITERS
PUBLISHER'S PORTFOLIO 2023 QUEENSLAND P
RS AND WRITERS AWARDS JONATHAN O'BRIEN S
23 QUEENSLAND PREMIER'S YOUNG PUBLISHERS

**NOTE: A HIGHER-QUALITY VERSION OF THIS FILE
IS AVAILABLE FOR DOWNLOAD:**

[JONOBRI.COM/QLA-2023](https://www.jonobri.com/qla-2023)

THIS PORTFOLIO WAS CREATED, CURATED, TYPESET, COMPILED, AND SAVED AS FINAL_FINAL_FINAL.PDF ON UNCEDED INDIGENOUS LAND. WORK WAS UNDERTAKEN UPON SOIL BELONGING TO THE JAGERA, TURRBUL, NGUNNAWAL, AND WURUNDJERI PEOPLES, AND OWES MUCH TO THEIR TIMELESS STEWARDSHIP OF THESE PLACES.

Everything Everywhere All at Once

Dir. Dan Kwan & Daniel Scheinert (2022, IMDb #99)

SHARE 00



BUY IT | STREAM IT

What's Short Round and kicks ass with a fanny pack all over? Ke Huy Quan (Waymond Wang), that's who. This legend started out as a child actor in *Indiana Jones and the Temple of Doom* (1984) and *The Goonies* (1985), before roping out in the 90s and transitioning to film production, with turns as a stunt choreographer on *X-Men* (2000) and *The One* (2001), before flirting with the auteur path as an assistant director on Wong Kar Wai's sublime *2046* (2004).

As for the Ke Huy Quan-issance, we have *Crazy Rich Asians* (2018) to thank for re-igniting his passion, by convincing him there might be more, and better, roles for Asian American actors this side of the century.

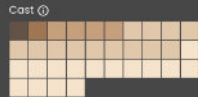


And what about the film's lead? Well, there may just be *exactly one actor* in the entire multi-verse – beige or otherwise – who can sing, dance, fight, crack wise and deliver judgmental motherly patners on cue and make us love her for it, and that's Michelle Yeoh (Evelyn Wang).

Film Details



SCORE: BEIGE FEVER



Dataset Overview

Quick Facts

Films	250
Actors	9577
Watchtime	22 days, 11hrs

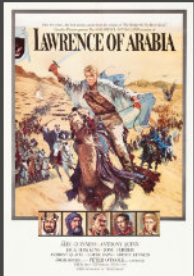
Beige Score Distributions

Creamy	60.8%
Beige Fever	30%
Middlebeige	3.2%
Down to Brown	2.8%
Welcome to Beigewatch	3.2%

Lawrence of Arabia

Dir. David Lean (1962, IMDb #95)

SHARE 00



BUY IT | STREAM IT

Choice Beigemeter™ exchange of the film, between Lawrence (Peter O'Toole) and Ali (Omar Sharif):

Lawrence: I'm not the Arab revolt, Ali. I'm not even Arab.

Ali: A man can be whatever he wants. You said.

Lawrence: I'm sorry. I thought it was true.

Ali: You proved it.

Lawrence: Look, Ali. Look. [Finches white skin] That's me. What colour is it? That's me. And there's nothing I can do about it.

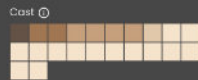
Well, Lawrence ain't entirely right. Brownface is always an option. Just take a look at Figure 1. O'Toole's co-star, Alec Guinness (Prince Faisal).



Film Details



SCORE: BEIGE FEVER



AS FEATURED IN:

FINANCIAL REVIEW

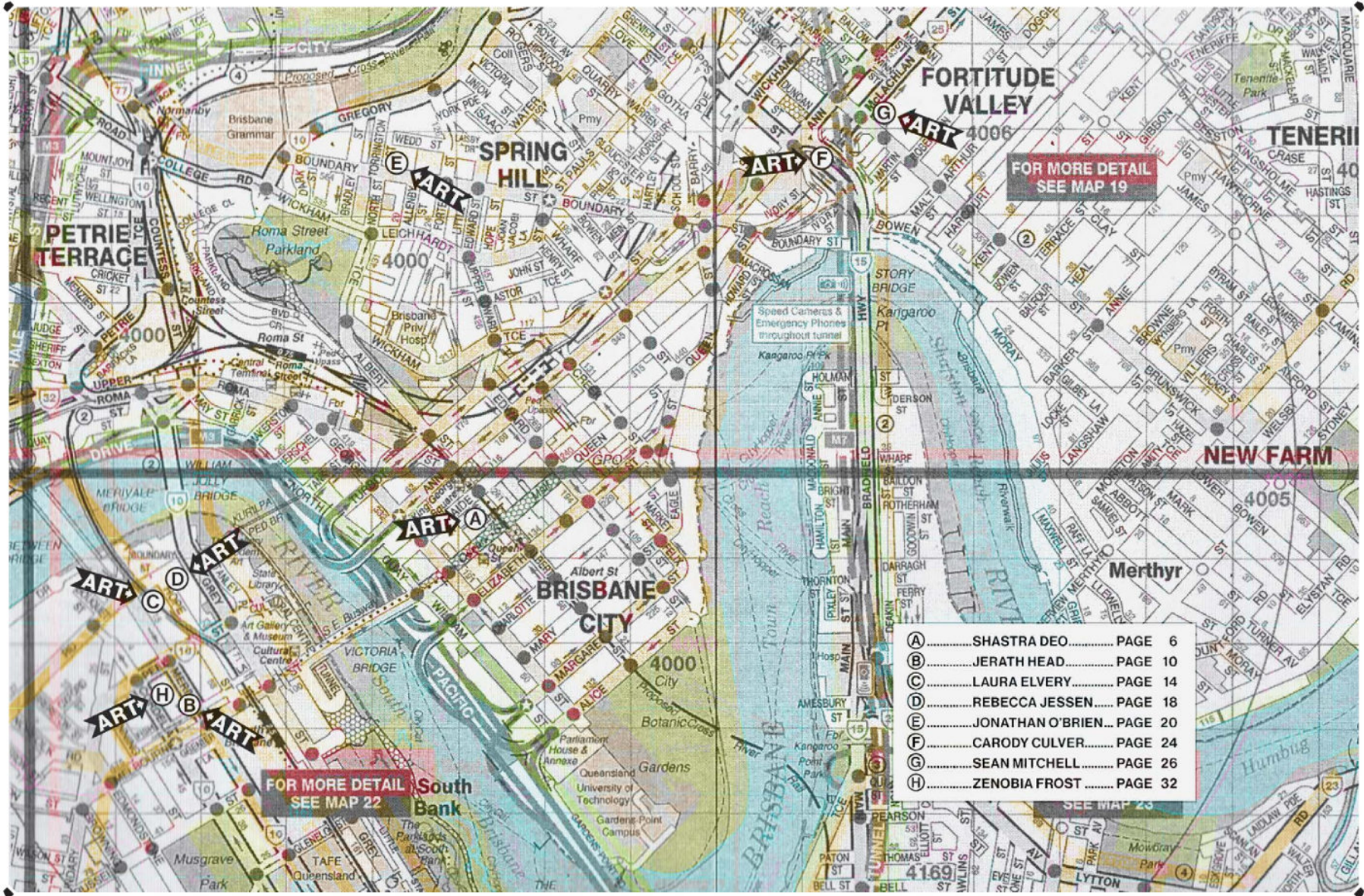
WGTC

MURPHY LIVE MAGAZINE

PEDESTRIAN

Women's AGENDA





A	SHASTRA DEO	PAGE 6
B	JERATH HEAD	PAGE 10
C	LAURA ELVERY	PAGE 14
D	REBECCA JESSEN	PAGE 18
E	JONATHAN O'BRIEN	PAGE 20
F	CARODY CULVER	PAGE 24
G	SEAN MITCHELL	PAGE 26
H	ZENOBIA FROST	PAGE 32



A STREET ZINE

NEW WRITING

When we bought a Bostitch No-Jam Booklet Stapler from Amazon for \$6.75 to bind together Pseudonia's first project, A // Zine, we vowed to make good on the investment: one day, maybe, just maybe, we would staple something else.

But A Street Zine is about much more than a return on investment. It's about celebrating the proliferation of street art across Brisbane's walls in recent years, and extending on the joyous process of creating our last set of publications. It's about showcasing talented Queensland artists, and making something beautiful.

If A // Zine was a response to Australia's lockdown in the early days of COVID-19, this publication was intended to mark our return to the streets. In Brisbane we have returned, at least for the time being—but each of us has loved ones elsewhere who are struggling through the uncertainty of a world still very much on hold, and so this zine is for them as well.

A Street Zine contains a selection of Brisbane's finest writers and people—some new contributors, and some familiar faces. Each has nominated a piece of local street art and penned a response, which we have published alongside glowing photographs of the pieces themselves. Together, these words and images create private moments from public art, and draw attention to the city's history and complexity, providing humour and reflection and moments to pause and observe.

So please, pause and observe, and we hope you enjoy this zine, this byways zine, this please don't get lost zine, this streets of your town zine. We enjoyed making it.

J + J

PROJECT ART

LAYERING TECHNIQUES

BY JERATH HEAD AFTER BAO HO

1. The street here sits atop land that once bore a pocket of rainforest and swamp. Merivale Street runs south and east, passing over ground that used to be part of Mungrove Park, many years ago, before development hemmed it in, a park that is the last remnant of an Aboriginal camp which in all likelihood predated European settlement of these lands and is the unofficial political capital of Aboriginal Brisbane.

In safe people gathered in Mungrove to protest a state of emergency under a state government that denied Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people civil liberties under the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Protection Act 1978, despite the nation having recently voted in a referendum and the federal government having amended the Act to make it less restrictive. As people protested, Bob Woodward and Neville Bonner declared the park Aboriginal land—once more, still.

2. The squat red building sits on the corner of the street and the lane, an addendum to a larger structure. It was once brown wood and brick, a shelter built in the years of World War II, when the Brisbane line was allegedly drawn and the city's residents expected bombs to fall on them the way they had fallen on Darwin in 1942. That same year, Brisbane became the centre of command for a theatre of war in the Southwest Pacific and saw a Supreme Commander from the United States take up office.

Soldiers from the United States began to walk brazen through the streets, walked unopposed over Australian perceptions of dignity and fairness. A snuffing sentiment was contained until one night in November 1942 when it ignited into a brawl that became many, spreading out over the inner city. In one such brawl, as Australian soldiers attempted to relieve a Private from the US Military Police of his shotgun the shot left the gun and

*The above text is a work of fiction. It is not intended to be taken as a historical account. It is a work of fiction.



And they said: No, you're being dishonest. And I said: No, I'm not, it's true. And they said: How do you know? And I said: Because I see the mural every day. And they said: But how close have you looked, and do you know about Nomi Eather? To which I said: I've looked close enough thank you very much; it's just across the road from where I live—and no I don't know Nomi Eather.

At this, my interlocutor shook their head and let out a sigh. The rest of the group had excused themselves to get drinks, perhaps because they know the one rule of the party had been broken: there wasn't meant to be a dialogue, because dialogue meant the chance of conflict. And even though my drink was also empty, I was not free to leave. My interlocutor said to me then: Look, okay, for starters, the school is called IES College, and the IES stands for International Education Services. And even if it did stand for International English School, the mural wouldn't really be ironic, because that young girl is a specific young girl who's now a woman and whose name is Nomi Eather, and she's portrayed silencing the viewer

as a tribute to the history of this place—the mural, after all, overlooks Spring Hill's Boundary Street. You're not stupid; you know what that history means.

And I said: Sure, okay, sure, but don't you think that it's kind of silly to use this sort of imagery in front of a school? Don't you think that this is a little too much context needed to understand such a public work of art?

And they said: I don't know, maybe. Maybe it's ill advised, and maybe it makes absolutely no sense. But even if that's the case, it doesn't mean you get to come in and spread misinformation based on assumptions you've made just so you get to seem clever or funny for a bit. Now, I'm gonna go get a drink. Do you want to come?

Much later that night, on the way home from my interlocutor's house, I stopped by the mural. I saw them for the first time the plaque that explains the piece, featuring an excerpt from an interview with Nomi Eather herself, whose father was a member of The Campfire Group, an art collective once based out of a Torrington Street house, right nearby the IES College campus. In her words featured on the plaque, Eather explains that the reference photo for the mural, taken by Mick Richards in 1934, 'became a symbol of [The Campfire Group's] collective ideal'. Several artists, she says, 'kicked off their solo careers there and together they generated projects for Indigenous education and cultural awareness.'

On reading this, the mural's nature became clear to me: it serves as an invitation to a deep history, and it is this new clarity that renders my pithy story unflinching. And while it feels bad to be corrected, and to part ways with one's own easy answers, I have to remind myself that these feelings are selfish, and illusory, and that if art does indeed have a social purpose, then it is probably to teach us how to see, a task no work can complete if we refuse to meet it halfway, to at least try looking closely, in case there's just a little more truth to be found. ☺

A () Zine, issue one, featuring art by Savannah Jarvis and words by Myles McGuire, put together by Jerath Head & Jonathan O'Brien, and published by pseudonaja.group.

When we first sat down with the idea to make a zine during quarantine, the whole country was in roughly the same boat. Quarantine meant staying home, and we figured staying home meant we'd all be missing each other, and we'd all be looking for things to do. And then we thought—just because we can't see people doesn't mean we can't make something together.

We reached out to some of our favourite Brisbane creatives, who are also some of our favourite people. We said—we don't have any money or particularly coherent ideas, but it'd sure be nice to work with you and put some of your work in front of the public during this time, and to maybe pair you up with someone else to make something that is each of you, and also its own thing, and also uniquely Brisbane.

As it turned out, the coronavirus lockdown meant different things to different people. In Queensland we were fortunate, many of the people involved in this zine particularly so—some found themselves busier than they thought they would, and others ended up busier than when lockdown began.

So this zine became a slow process. This was almost exclusively our fault. But everyone was patient, and didn't complain, and gave freely of their time and energy. Savannah and Myles didn't know of each other prior to this, which was a risk that in the end paid off: Myles's poems here bounce off Savannah's paintings, amplifying their playfulness with an insistent wit. Together their works are pure colour and joy; deceptively simple yet bold and enticing—a nice summary as it stands of this parenthetical zine, this quaranzine, this one-of-eight zine. We enjoyed making it.

J+J

1



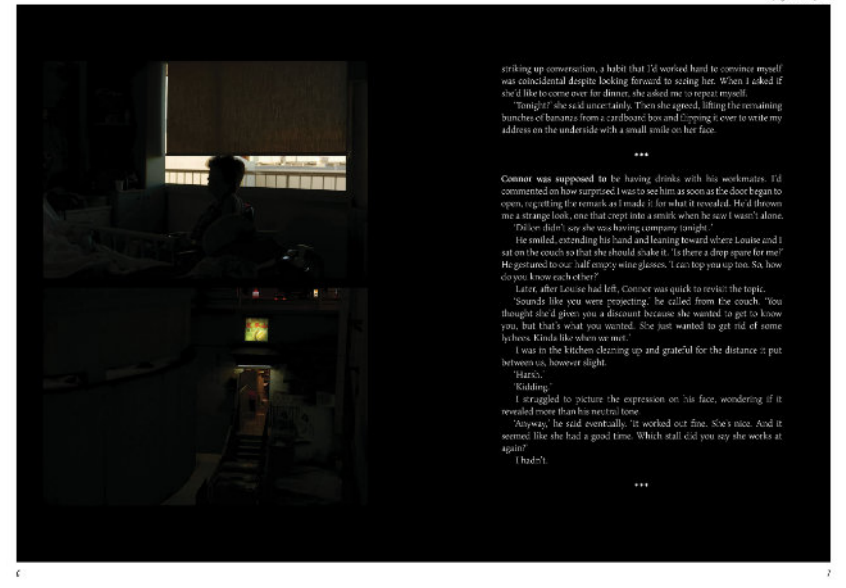
6

Jackie Ryan is a pop culture adventurer. She authored *WTF Show the World: Expo #8* (UQP 2018), which won the Queensland Premier's Award for a Work of State Significance and the USQ History Book Award, and shortlisted for The Courier-Mail People's Choice Award. Jackie produces the Australia Award-winning *Beige Five* comic book series and founded the comedy writing collective the Fanciful Fiction Auxiliary. She holds a PhD in history and political science from UQ.

Candy Calver is a freelance writer and senior editor at Griffin Review. She's written for *Pepperpot*, *Books+Publishing*, *Kill Your Darlings*, *Punkie*, *The Toast* and others. She's also a co-editor for the comedy writing collective the Fanciful Fiction Auxiliary, which has performed at Brisbane Powerhouse, Woodford Folk Festival, Brisbane Writers Festival and Queensland Poetry Festival, among others. She owns sixty-seven jumpuits.

Pseudonaja is a small independent literary group based in Brisbane. A () Zine is their first project. More details, including financial breakdowns and digital versions of this publication, can be found online at pseudonaja.group. You can reach out to the collective at pseudonaja.group@gmail.com.

A () Zine (© Savannah Jarvis)



striking up conversation, a habit that I'd worried hard to convince myself was coincidental despite looking forward to seeing her. When I asked if she'd like to come over for dinner, she asked me to repeat myself.

"Tonight?" she said once I said. Then she asked, lifting the remaining bunches of bananas from a cardboard box and dumping it over to write my address on the underside with a small smile on her face.

Connor was supposed to be having drinks with his workmates. I'd commented on how surprised I was to see him as soon as the door began to open, regretting the remark as I made it for what it revealed. He'd thrown me a strange look, one that crept into a smile when he saw I wasn't alone.

"Dinner, huh?" she asked, looking surprised.

He smiled, extending his hand and leaning toward where Louise and I sat on the couch so that she should shake it. "Is there a drop spare for me?" He gestured to our half-empty wine glasses. "I can top you up too. Six, how do you know me better?"

Later, after Louise had left, Connor was quick to revisit the topic.

"Sounds like you were projecting," he called from the couch. "You thought she'd given you a discount because she wanted to get to know you, but that's what you wanted. She just wanted to get rid of some leftover Kinda's like when we was."

I was in the kitchen cleaning up and grateful for the distance it put between us, however slight.

"Hence."

"Kidding."

I struggled to picture the expression on his face, wondering if it revealed more than his neutral tone.

"Anyway, he said eventually, 'it worked out fine. She's nice. And it seemed like she had a good time. Which still did you see the works at again?'"

I hadn't.

7



Illustration: Matthew Not in the Chamber
Digital artist
© 2020

A [Revised] [Cultural] [Time]

Wish I Were There

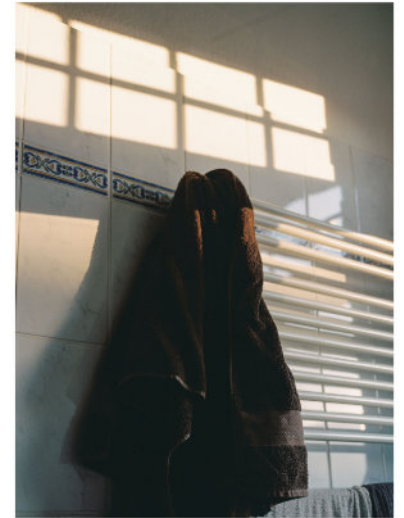
Welcome to the ultimate COVID-19 pandemic holiday destination: your home! Filled with all the amenities you already know and love and probably haven't paid off yet, your humble abode can give you a truly unique holiday experience when you're in isolation—one without the expense, the hassle or the fun. So relax, unwind and let familiarity breed a new kind of contempt! Here's our hazy round-up of the top in-home destinations to occupy your body and mind while you're on the domestic's adventure of a lifetime.

Illustration: Matthew Not in the Chamber
Digital artist
© 2020
(Check the page!)



A [Revised] [World] [Time]

"Yeah, what?"
Hard sleep, heavy sleep. Who said what?
"Be that."
Hub!
"What? You like that motherfucker!"
Fight. Shit.
Lurch out of bed and pull on trousers—no time for underwear. Briefest of thoughts: what if my pants come down in the about-to-escape? Someone cries pitifully in the dark outside, stumble out the back door. Can't see a thing.
"C'mon, c'mon!" Coming from the street out front.
I rush to the front door, fling it open. From the deck I can see silvery-shadowy figures on the ground, in the middle of the road, entwined. I take another step and see more figures, reclined on the curb, looking on with apparent serenity.
Sounds of struggle continue from the entangled figures. A strange gurgling noise.
Then a man's voice: "Yeah, yeah, c'mon! Iuck me with your strap-on."
Hub!
"Oh you like it? Yeah, fuck me with your strap-on."
Oh okay. The man says so loudly.
"She's falling in," a female voice says. I can see now that she is on his back, legs wrapped around his waist, arms wrapped around his neck. Tight enough that the man can only choke out his request a third time.
"What does one say? Guys, what the hell? Would you be quiet? It's Monday. Lockdown does strange things to the mind."
One of the reclining curb figures—propped up on an elbow, leg extended—slowly turns its head and regards me. Says nothing and turns back with equal languor, its movements like that of a cat blissfully ignoring its owner's pleas for interaction. Actually, now that I'm writing, more than a cat it brings to mind that statue of Oscar Wilde on the corner of Merrion Square in Dublin, reclined on a stone, one corner of his mouth turned up in faint bemusement. Living in death as he could not in life: undisturbed, indifferent, and without disquiet.
I walk back into the house and close the frost door behind me. Lay down again on my bed in the dark.



HOUSE CONSPIRACY

EMERGING ARTS ORGANISATION

2016-18

PROJECT SUMMARY

- Founding Creative Director of House Conspiracy
- Curated, interviewed, and published 90+ local emerging artists
- Published *The Conspirator* (2018), a 500-copy full-colour arts anthology documenting the artists and the organisation's internal workings
- Produced 55-episode podcast with 500 monthly listeners average
- Featured by the *Brisbane Times*, *The Courier Mail*, *The Saturday Paper*, and more
- Managed a budget of more than \$50k
- Paid more than \$20k in fees to Brisbane-based artists and creators
- Thanks to careful succession planning and documentation, House Conspiracy continues to operate today

OVERVIEW

House Conspiracy is an emerging artist residency space founded in late 2016 and opened in February 2017.

Throughout my two-year tenure as Creative Director (2016-18), we supported dozens of artists including writers such as Bri Lee (prior to *Eggshell Skull's* publication) and Rebecca Cheers (previous winner of this award).

All creatives were paid a stipend, and had their work professionally documented and published in *The Conspirator*, the capstone project of my tenure at House Conspiracy.

FINANCIALS

House Conspiracy was founded as a fully-fledged not-for-profit organisation, registered with the Australian Charities and Not-for-profits Commission. The

total income during my tenure was \$53,328.65. Expenditure was \$52,200.53. This is all documented and published in more detail within *The Conspirator*.

OUTCOMES

House Conspiracy's key publication, *The Conspirator*, is a full-colour, professionally printed coffee table book in two parts:

1. Documentation of the artists and their respective practices
2. Documentation of the house, including the essential processed undertaken when starting and running an organisation of House Conspiracy's complexity

Through this two-part structure, the publication has remained a lasting celebration of Brisbane's finest emerging creatives, as well as a document

of how and why we did what we did, and how others can do the same thing.

In this way, *The Conspirator* aims to create a legacy for House Conspiracy that goes beyond itself: even if and when the organisation closes its doors for the last time, this document will outlast it, and will demonstrate to others exactly what sort of magic is possible, so long as you put in the work. The book remains available in select bookstores around Brisbane. ■



HOUSECONSPIRACY.ORG

You are holding in your hands a book. The book weighs roughly a kilogram, and is the culmination so far of a strange little project called House Conspiracy. This artifact, the one you are now reading from, is built on the foundations of borrowed time. Around the edges of meetings, between recording podcasts, and in the earliest of mornings we gathered the very best parts of this year-long project and arranged them.

We wanted to create an anthology that was also a celebration. We wanted the book to both stand on its own and as a testament to the one year, fourteen residency cycles, and ninety-one individual artists that House Conspiracy facilitated between February 2017 and January 2018. From cover boy Adam Anderson's exploration of Cosmo-paedic Extravaganza in *Ethereal Clown*, to the delicate beauty of Julia Scott Green's *Passage* photographic series, to Vena Cava Productions' full takeover of the House for their immersive performance of *Dream A House*, this book captures the breadth of Brisbane's arts culture. In the pages that follow you will find writers, performers, and visual artists of all kinds, working and exhibiting together: House Conspiracy, above all else, has been a successful experiment in building interdisciplinary community.

Friends, this is the final piece I wrote for this book. I saved it on purpose. I knew that if I was going to all at once sign off on this monster of a publication, as well as on my year of work at House Conspiracy, then I was going to do it right. I was going to do it when things were actually, truly over. And they are—at least for me.

Thank you to everyone who made this possible. To the artists, the volunteers, and my co-workers, with special mention of Cinnamon Smith, who has worked hard alongside me throughout the duration of this whole crazy process. I must also thank Aron Oroszvári and Nick Duff, without whom this publication would be a mess of typos and semicolons. I thank Joseph Lynch for lending his eye to House Conspiracy for a year—without him, this book would not be half the beauty it is. To Elizabeth Cowie and our mysterious benefactor: thank you for all that you do, and good luck taking the House wherever it goes next.

For now, let's remain grounded in the present. Hold this book in your hands. The *Conspirator* is a year in the life of a house in the middle of a small town called Brisbane. Remember: many things in this world are possible. It was an honour to capture just a few of them.

All the best and enjoy,

Jonathan O'Brien
Founding Creative Director
House Conspiracy





CYCLE 01
BEN WARREN, LINZHI, PIED DESIGN STUDIO,
LIAM HEIRNE, & ANNELIZE MULDER

What we do have, such a slender delight for a woman's state of mind is that it is, and only in each other brought about by chance. The three men, you will have well known, I have seen, and I have heard...

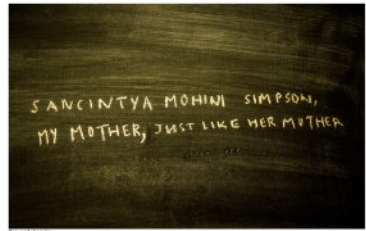
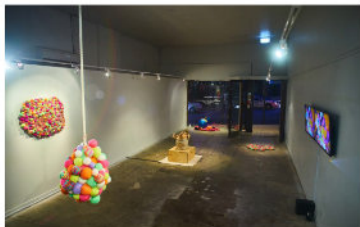
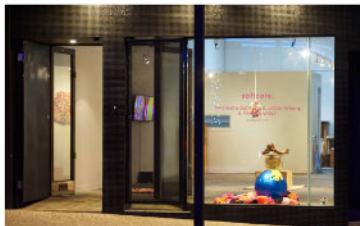
When the opportunity is presented to me, I must see it as a thing, not as a duty. We played for me tonight, and I was not at all prepared for the prospect of being so crowded with these young people who had been so kind to me, and I was not at all prepared for the prospect of being so crowded with these young people who had been so kind to me...

And my mind is now entirely engaged with the idea of the play which we have just seen, and I am not at all prepared for the prospect of being so crowded with these young people who had been so kind to me...

The whole room had been commencing with an air of solemnity. The men, as far as they were concerned, were all at a loss to know what to say. They were all at a loss to know what to say. They were all at a loss to know what to say. They were all at a loss to know what to say.

The whole room had been commencing with an air of solemnity. The men, as far as they were concerned, were all at a loss to know what to say. They were all at a loss to know what to say. They were all at a loss to know what to say.

Text above originally published in the play script by Shakespeare.



CYCLE 02
ANNE-LIZE MULDER

A part of a large project led by the Man Group's Sustainability team, the 'My Mother' project was developed in the UK. The project was led by the Man Group's Sustainability team, the 'My Mother' project was developed in the UK. The project was led by the Man Group's Sustainability team, the 'My Mother' project was developed in the UK.

CYCLE 02
ANNE-LIZE MULDER

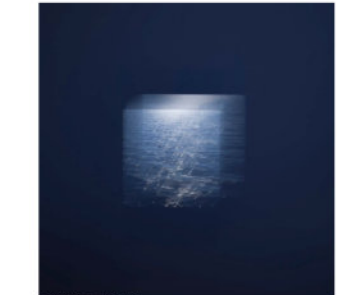
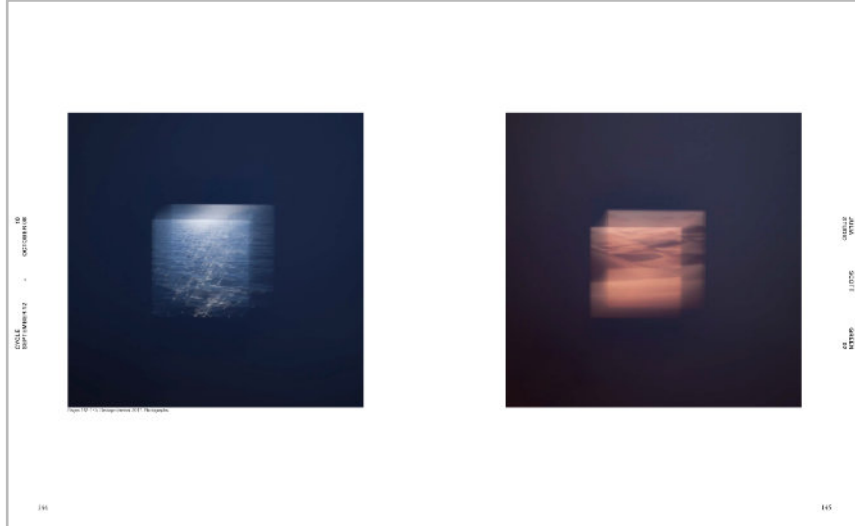


Image 03 by Annelize Mulder, 2017, in collaboration with the Man Group's Sustainability team.

concrete in 2016, there was no demand for additional units and the opening rates in Brisbane. It's likely that more of these units will be completed in 2017, which is a good sign for the market.

We are being cautious about the market. The demand for these units is not as strong as it was in 2016, and we are seeing a lot of units that are not being completed. This is a concern for the market, and we are seeing a lot of units that are not being completed.

PART SIX: THE LAUNCH

We will be launching the units in Brisbane in October. The launch is a key milestone for the project, and we are excited to see the units being completed. The launch is a key milestone for the project, and we are excited to see the units being completed.

The launch is a key milestone for the project, and we are excited to see the units being completed. The launch is a key milestone for the project, and we are excited to see the units being completed.

PART SEVEN: THE DETAILS

We will be providing more details about the project in the coming weeks. We will be providing more details about the project in the coming weeks. We will be providing more details about the project in the coming weeks.

in the design and build. It's a key milestone for the project, and we are excited to see the units being completed. The launch is a key milestone for the project, and we are excited to see the units being completed.

The launch is a key milestone for the project, and we are excited to see the units being completed. The launch is a key milestone for the project, and we are excited to see the units being completed.

We will be providing more details about the project in the coming weeks. We will be providing more details about the project in the coming weeks. We will be providing more details about the project in the coming weeks.

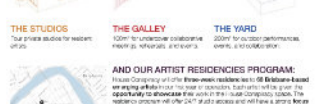
We will be providing more details about the project in the coming weeks. We will be providing more details about the project in the coming weeks. We will be providing more details about the project in the coming weeks.

HOUSE CONSPIRACY

HOUSE CONSPIRACY IS A NEW CONTEMPORARY ARTS SPACE OPENING IN FEBRUARY 2017. EMPOWERING ARTISTS TO CREATE A MORE DIVERSE AND VIBRANT BRISBANE.

- HOUSE CONSPIRACY IS:**
- A place for exhibition and studio space
 - A place for artists and community
 - Providing spaces for artists who need it
 - Open to the community at all times
 - Dedicated to new thinking, for the now and future
 - A place for the new generation of artists
 - Connecting new artists with the public
 - A place for the new generation of artists
 - A house transformed into a living artwork

FEATURING THREE DISTINCT SPACES:



AND OUR ARTIST RESIDENCIES PROGRAM:

We will be providing more details about the project in the coming weeks. We will be providing more details about the project in the coming weeks. We will be providing more details about the project in the coming weeks.

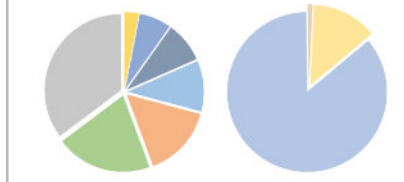
RENTAL MARKET INSIGHTS



Party delegates and members of the House Conspiracy team are seen in a meeting room. The team is discussing the project and the future of the space. The team is discussing the project and the future of the space.

FINAL FIGURES	
INITIAL RENOVATIONS COST	\$2,243,96
INITIAL RENOVATIONS TIME	1,569 HRS
TOTAL RENOVATIONS COST 2017	\$1,914,93

RENTAL MARKET INSIGHTS



EXPENDITURE (AUD) '16 - FEB '16		INCOME (AUD) '16 - FEB '16	
CITY PAYMENTS	1.07%	OTHER*	0.18%
MEMBERSHIP & DONATIONS	0.76%	MEMBERSHIP AND DONATIONS	0.07%
TRAVEL AND OTHERS	0.81%	EVENTS	0.11%
COMMUNICATIONS AND OTHERS	10.34%	GRANTS AND TRUSTEESHIP	66.97%
RENT	18.74%	TOTAL INCOME	\$1,044,00
RENOVATIONS	20.41%	TOTAL EXPENDITURE	\$2,243,96
OFFICE EXPENSES	30.21%	REMARKS	\$1,044,00

GRANT APPLICATIONS		GRANT NAME		DATE SUBMITTED		RECEIVED	
DOUG WALL FOUNDATION	GENERAL ARTS FUNDING DRIVING	20/1/16	YES				
AUSTRALIA COUNCIL	ARTS PROJECTS FOR COMMUNITARIANS	4/3/16	NO				
ARTS QUEENSLAND	QUEENSLAND ARTS SHOWCASE PROGRAM	14/10/16	YES				
BRISBANE CITY COUNCIL	CREATIVE GRANTS	26/1/16	NO				
BRISBANE CITY COUNCIL	INNOVATION AWARD	7/1/16	NO				
WISLEY MISSION	COMMUNITY FUND CHARGE	13/1/16	NO				
QUEENSLAND GOVERNMENT	QAWELLING COMMUNITY BENEFIT FUND	RECALLING	CRIC2				

We will be providing more details about the project in the coming weeks. We will be providing more details about the project in the coming weeks. We will be providing more details about the project in the coming weeks.

AFTERPARTY: THE REALITIES OF HOUSE CONSPIRACY

Jonathan O'Brien

The House Conspiracy team is now in the final stages of the project. The team is now in the final stages of the project. The team is now in the final stages of the project.

PART ONE: THE NUMBERS, A REFLECTION

Providing an update on the project and the realities of House Conspiracy. The project is a key milestone for the market, and we are excited to see the units being completed.

1. The House Conspiracy team is now in the final stages of the project.
2. The House Conspiracy team is now in the final stages of the project.
3. The House Conspiracy team is now in the final stages of the project.
4. The House Conspiracy team is now in the final stages of the project.

RENTAL MARKET INSIGHTS

We will be providing more details about the project in the coming weeks. We will be providing more details about the project in the coming weeks. We will be providing more details about the project in the coming weeks.

We will be providing more details about the project in the coming weeks. We will be providing more details about the project in the coming weeks. We will be providing more details about the project in the coming weeks.

RENTAL MARKET INSIGHTS

42 MOLLISON STREET: A HISTORY

Hilary Davies

The current owner of 42 Mollison Street, Hilary Davies, has a rich history with the property. The property has a rich history with the property. The property has a rich history with the property.



We will be providing more details about the project in the coming weeks. We will be providing more details about the project in the coming weeks. We will be providing more details about the project in the coming weeks.

The history of 42 Mollison Street is a fascinating story. The property has a rich history with the property. The property has a rich history with the property.



We will be providing more details about the project in the coming weeks. We will be providing more details about the project in the coming weeks. We will be providing more details about the project in the coming weeks.

We will be providing more details about the project in the coming weeks. We will be providing more details about the project in the coming weeks. We will be providing more details about the project in the coming weeks.

RENTAL MARKET INSIGHTS

**OCTOBER LESSON #2:
WHEN SOMEONE IS DOING WORK YOU DON'T
WANT DONE, DO NOT NEGOTIATE. SAY: 'STOP'**

Otherwise, things will only get worse.



**OCTOBER LESSON #3:
CURATION IS NOT SNOBBERY;
IT IS THE ESSENCE OF INTEGRITY**

If you do not curate your image and your artists, then something which doesn't even come close to representing your venue will end up being the first thing people see when they walk by.



**OCTOBER LESSON #4:
MANY THINGS CAN BE RESOLVED
THROUGH GOOD COMMUNICATION**

Even after miscommunications and misgivings, if you sit down and have an open conversation with someone, it is possible to start fresh and reach a decent compromise.



LESSONS
O'BRIEN

LESSONS
JONATHAN

**NOVEMBER LESSON #1:
DO NOT TRY TO BE ALL THINGS
FOR ALL PEOPLE**

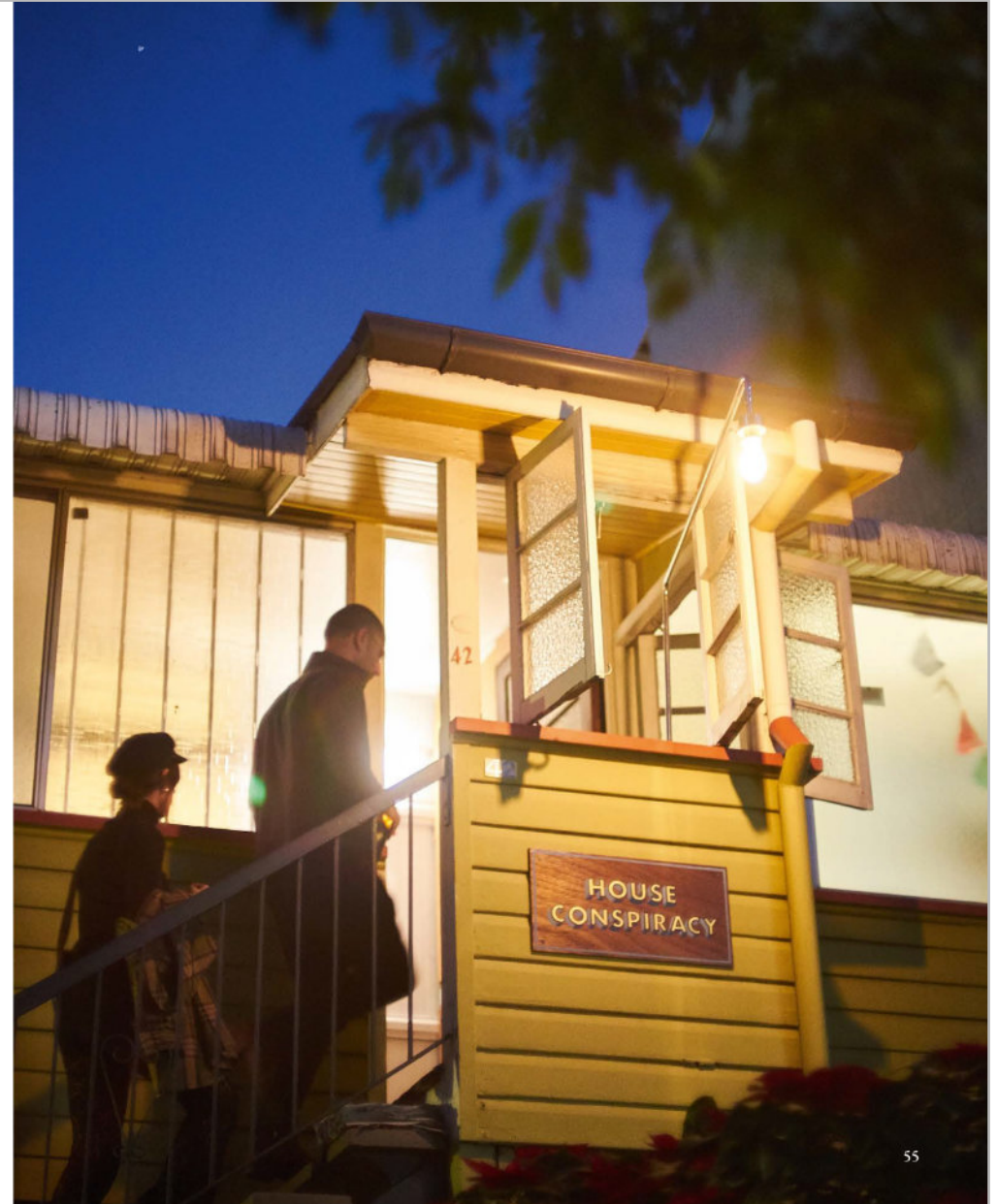
Do the thing you are most passionate about well. That will draw the crowd you want and will satisfy them. Otherwise you'll burn out. There's a reason House Conspiracy stopped actively advertising that we had spaces to hire: we didn't have the energy to manage both that and our Residencies program effectively. We didn't turn anyone away from our space; we just stopped telling people about it. From what I can tell, this is pretty standard practice in the Brisbane arts scene. We all want to give but we are all short on resources.

**THE FINAL LESSON:
AMBITION IS A TRAIT, NOT A VIRTUE**

There is nothing inherently admirable about ambition. There are, for instance, many ambitious fools. I am one of them. And so it is essential also that you are ambitious for the right reasons. Your ambition must be tied to two things. The first is an intense work ethic—you must be able to execute on your ambition, and if your ideas are truly ambitious, then they will take a lot of time and effort to execute. And so you must be prepared to work.

The second, more important thing you must be tied to is a genuine desire to do good in the world, and to make life better for other people. Everything you do with your ambition must be filtered through these altruistic values—if you lose sight of them, then you will betray yourself and the world, and you will burn out. And that would be no good.

So be ambitious, but be kind and work hard too. Find other people who work hard. Go out and do what you have your eyes set upon. You will be okay. ☺



**ALL PROJECTS BY JONATHAN O'BRIEN
AND COLLABORATORS, 2016-2022.
THANK YOU FOR YOUR CONSIDERATION.**

JONATHAN O'BRIEN

WRITER & PUBLISHER CV
MORE: JONOBRI.COM

AWARDS (AWARDED)

Flinders University AusStage Prize
2020

*Brisbane Lord Mayor's Young and
Emerging Artists Fellowship*
2020

*State Library of Queensland Young
Writers Award*
2017

*QUT Undergraduate Creative Writing
Prize*
2014

AWARDS (SHORTLISTED)

*Young Writers & Publishers Award
(Queensland Literary Awards)*
2021

*Glendower Award for an Emerging
Queensland Writer*
2020

*Monash Undergraduate Prize for
Creative Writing*
2016

*Richell Prize for an Unpublished
Manuscript*
2015

AWARDS (LONGLISTED)

*Commonwealth Short Story Prize
(Commonwealth Foundation)*
2023

FICTION

All The Boys She Ever Loved
Short fiction. Published by Griffith
Review, August 2023 (forthcoming)

*Ocean Spray + Fastest Typewriter In
The West*
Short fiction. Published by Fanci-
ful Fiction Auxilliary, October &
December 2021

Issues

Short story. Published in
Voiceworks issue #122 'Reflex',
Autumn 2021.

Inheritance, Thief, Paralysis, + Brisbane
Microfictions. Published by
Pseudonaja Group, December
2020.

*Every Idea I Had For My Australian
Literature Short Story Collection*
Short story. Award Winning
Australian Writing, 2018

*The Google Search History of Henry
Thumb, August 2015*
Short story. Scum Mag, 2017

The River Boys
Short story. Monash Under-
graduate Prize for Creative
Writing Shortlist, 2016

*—and anyway, we promised you a
story, didn't we—*
Short story. Voiceworks #104,
2016

Stingos
Short story. Voiceworks #102,
2015/16

*& (or, The End Is On Its Way It Just Got
Lost Is All!)*
Novel manuscript. Inaugural
Richell Prize Shortlist, 2015

The Sound Will Still Ring
Short story. Voiceworks #10,
Spring 2015

Frequent Flyer (published as Vinyl)
Short story. The Lifted Brow: Red
Eye Edition, 2015

NON-FICTION

*Top Residency Tip: be your own
employee*
Writing Queensland, 2023
(forthcoming)

*Brunswick needs more housing, but it
keeps getting in its own way*
Op-ed. Brunswick Voice, April
2023.

Deep / Listening
Essay. Queensland College of Art,
Michael Louttit, March 2022.

On Seeing The Mural
Essay. Pseudonaja Group, Septem-
ber 2021.

*Next Library: Have You Seen
This Woman?*
Essay. State Library of Queens-
land, Next Library Conference,
May 2021.

Lavelle
Essay. STABLE, Brisbane Art
Design Festival, Natalie Lavelle,
April 2021.

People Are the Landscape: A Reflection on Writers' Residencies

Essay. Queensland Writers Centre, 2019

You Are Busier Than Your To-Do List

Essay. Impact Boom, 2018

Exhibition Essays (Various)

Essays. House Conspiracy, 2017–18

Official Festival Reviews (Various)

Criticism. Anywhere Theatre Festival, 2015–16

On The Cusp of a Millenia

Essay. Eyeline Magazine, 2014

EDITORIAL

A Street Zine

Coeditor with Jerath Head, Pseudonaja Group, 2021

A () Zine

Coeditor with Jerath Head, Pseudonaja Group, 2020

The Conspirator

O'Brien, J. (Ed.) (2018). *The Conspirator*. 1st ed. Brisbane: House Conspiracy Inc.

POETRY

From Now On

Poem. QUT Glass #1, 2019

Femi

Poem. Voiceworks #111, 2018

two.

Poem. *The Good Room: These Frozen Moments*, 2017 & 2018

Solicited Advice

Poems. *Nomad Travelling Theatre*, Queensland Poetry Festival, 2017

PANELS, FESTIVALS, & READINGS

The Beige Index: Collaborative Work

Co-presenter with Siang Lu. Willy Lit Fest, June 2023 (forthcoming)

Funny About That + Whodunit?

Panel chair. Brisbane Writers Festival, May 2023 (forthcoming)

The Beige Index: How We Got Here

Co-presenter with Siang Lu. *Murphy Live Magazine*, December 2022.

Literary Death Match

Reader, Competitor, & Winner. *Literary Death Match & Brisbane Writers Festival*, May 2022.

The Day as Told by an Unreliable Narrator

Official Presenter. Next Library Conference & State Library of Queensland, May 2021.

Far Write, Projects and Partnerships, Doing it Yourself, My Problematic Fav, + Late Night Readings

Panels, Workshops, Readings. National Young Writers Festival, 2019

Literary Salon with Anwen Crawford and Magnificent Guests

Reading. Queensland Writers Centre & State Library of Queensland, 2018

Making New Things Work

Panel. Gold Coast Home of The Arts, 2017

Building Communities, Art Festivals Are Bad!, + Late Night Readings

Panel, Debate, Reading. National Young Writers Festival, 2017

Emerging Writer Salons

Host & curator. *Avid Reader*, 2017

Protect Caroline

Spoken word. *Yarn*, 2017

Make Queensland Love Art Again

Host & Facilitator. *Pitch Drop*, 2017

Various Readings

QUT & *Avid Reader Literary Salons*, 2015–16

THEATRE

So It Goes

Curator. QUT, 2019

EERTREE

Writer & Producer. *Tone Black Productions*, 2018

Armchair Apocalypse

Writer. Sarah Winter, 2017

The Bohemian and The Machine

Producer. *Terra Nemo Theatre Company*, 2016

Hunt

Writer. *Anywhere Theatre Festival: Official Launch*, 2015

a library for the end of the world

Writer. *Vena Cava Productions*, 2014

MUSIC

Wheyete

Writer and vocalist. Tony Brumpton: Wheyete, 2023 (forthcoming)

Neither Found Nor Returned

Writer. Isha Ram Das: Neither Found Nor Returned, 2019

The Glow

Writer. Isha Ram Das: Agastya, 2015

PODCASTS & RADIO

Write Offs

Radio co-presenter. Weekly. 4ZZZ, 2019–20

House Conspiracy Podcast

Writer, Host, & Producer. 55 Episodes. House Conspiracy, 2017–18

Loveletters to Fuckbois Presents

Producer. 13 Episodes. Wightman & Stark, 2017

CURATION

softcore.

Curator, designer, & essayist. This Must Be The Place, 2017

Two Fools

Co-curator & performer. This Must Be The Place, 2017

Open House 01–14

Curator. House Conspiracy, 2017–18 